

6 BRUTAL HITTING MISTAKES AND HOW TO FIX THEM

(Source: <http://www.softballspot.com>)

MISTAKE # 1. Looking At Your Nose

PROBLEM: The batter does not have the head turned far enough toward the pitcher. This prevents both eyes from picking up the ball and the batter has difficulty seeing the ball. The back eye is blocked from seeing the ball by the batter's nose, thus the batter is "looking at her nose". The batter is basically hitting "one eyed" ... so they lose most of their depth perception and clarity.

SOLUTION: Have your girls turn their head toward the pitcher until their face is facing the pitcher and both eyes are seeing the pitcher fully. A good saying often used is "show the pitcher both of your ears". This will always make sure the head is in the correct position.

MISTAKE #2. Poor Grip

PROBLEM: Improper grip reduces bat speed and bat control. Two simple grip mistakes cause this problem. Either the batter's hands are slowed by a grip that is too tense or too tight, or the batter is gripping the bat with the palms rather than the fingers.

SOLUTION: The batter should strive to stay loose with the hands. Effort should be made to reduce tensions and use a relaxed grip. Slight movement of the fingers may serve to keep the "grip stress" down. The batter should hold the bat in the fingers away from the palms. This grip allows maximum hand speed and bat control.

MISTAKE #3. Overstriding

PROBLEM: Overstriding is a common mistake. Batters that often get "jammed" may be in fact causing their own problems by overstriding. Overstriding causes the batter's head and eyes to "jump" up and down during the swing, so tracking the ball becomes very difficult. Also, a large stride usually results in a longer than necessary swing with less hip involvement.

SOLUTION: Batters should use a short or a "no stride" approach. A short stride of 3 to 6 inches is often enough. In fact simply picking the front foot up and putting it back down is all the stride that is needed. Try Sue Enquist's "stride" drill at 14:18 of the video to fix this common problem! <http://www.softballinnercircle.com/signup/elite.php>

MISTAKE #4. Opening Up Too Soon

PROBLEM: The front side is opening too soon causing the batter's "whole body" including head and eyes to pull off the pitch. This flaw often causes the barrel to lag and a reduction in bat speed. Much less plate coverage is allowed.

SOLUTION: Have the batter strive to keep the "knob to belly button" relationship during the swing. The belly button rotates with the knob of the bat. On inside pitches she will still "open" but the timing will be perfect. On middle and away pitches the batter will not open or rotate so much. "The belly button to knob" relationship maintains correct timing mechanics.



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MISTAKE #5. "Locking" The Front Arm

PROBLEM: The batter "locks" or straightens out the front arm when the hands and bat are taken back to the "power" or "trigger" position. This flaw causes the batter to be late starting the swing. It also reduces bat speed, increases the bat's distance to the ball, and often causes premature wrist roll.

SOLUTION: Keep a bend in the front elbow. Keep the hands together and working together. Keep the hands close to the body and do not take them back so far that front arm flex is lost.

MISTAKE #6. "Hitch" In The Swing

PROBLEM: Batters that have a "hitch" in their swing often have difficulty hitting the fastball. They usually get "jammed" and are often late on medium speed pitches. The batter is not "triggering" correctly. In other words, she is dropping her hands before taking them to the "power position" or what is often called the "launch position". This lowering of the hands causes her to be late to the strike zone.

SOLUTION: Take the hands slightly up and then back rather than dropping them. Sue's "quick bounce" drill (at 17:00 of the video) is PERFECT for teaching this skill. Try it a few times per week and your girls will be pummeling the ball like an Olympic level cleanup hitter...

