



Soft Toss Drills

1. Regular/Warm-up toss

--Loosening up the body

This drill should be used at the beginning of the hitting workout. It is the only drill that does not stress a specific hitting area. However, it is beneficial in that it prepares the body and gets the hitter ready for the other drills. Ten to 15 swings are adequate.

- a. The eyes should be on the imaginary pitcher.
- b. The hitter reacts to the “ready” call.
- c. Easy, smooth swinging with the goal of warming up the body.

2. Inside fastball toss

--Recognition of the pitch located on the inside half of the plate with increasing velocity

The inside fastball probably is the most difficult pitch for young hitters to hit. The reason for this is young hitters don't see a lot of good fastball pitchers and many pitchers are reluctant to throw inside. This drill very effectively simulates the inside fastball. The toss should be directed at the front knee of the hitter. The velocity of the toss should gradually be increased in accordance with the hitter's increased success.

- a. Keep the hands close to the body.
- b. The bat head should be in front of the hands on contact.
- c. HIP EXPLOSION – The hips and back foot shoelaces should be facing left field for the RH hitter and right field for the LH hitter.
- d. Hit the ball in front of the plate.
- e. Fight for arm extension on contact.

3. Double Toss

--Keeping the weight back

The biggest area of concern for young hitters is in the stride foot and keeping the weight back. As pitchers develop, they learn the importance of changing speeds on their pitches. Hitters need to learn the importance of keeping the weight back. This drill can be started with the hitter already taking his pre-stride. The stride should be included later. The tosser has a ball in each hand and rhythmically in a yo-yo fashion shows the balls to the hitter. He then tosses one ball to the hitter. He should toss the ball with different hands and on varying time counts to try to keep the hitter off balance.

- a. The hitter must keep his weight on the back side until he sees a ball tossed.
- b. The hitter should start with no stride and, as he gets better, incorporate a shout 2”-3” stride.
- c. The eyes should be on the tosser and not on an imaginary pitcher.

4. High toss

--Staying on top of the ball

--Eliminating dropping the hands

Many studies have proven hitters have more success when hitting hard ground balls and line drives (vs. fly balls). This drill emphasizes hitting down on the ball. This also will help hitters who have the problem of dropping their hands. The tosser is directed to the hitter's upper chest area. After having success in this drill, the tosser should change locations from knees to chest. This drill also helps teach the hit-n-run.

- a. Try to hit the top half of the ball.
- b. Still try to make contact with the sweet spot of the bat.
- c. When using this as a hit-n-run drill, take the same approach—but emphasize hitting the ball the other way and on the ground.

5. Drop toss

--Timing of the swing

--Eye-hand coordination

This drill is a bit difficult when first attempted, but it really helps the hitter's timing. The tosser can either stand on a chair or stand erect and hold ball high. He should position himself about one foot in front of hitter. The ball is dropped from the tosser and hitter attempts to hit. As the hitter has success, tosser can push the ball down to increase velocity.

- a. The hitter should begin this drill with already taking his stride. This will make it much easier. The stride can be incorporated later.
- b. The hitter has to be patient with this difficult drill.