

The Mental aspect of seeing and hitting effectively

Why is seeing the ball well so difficult for a batter?

- **Effect of fear, anxiety, tension**
 - Muscular tightness and poor breathing patterns result
 - Concentration is also affected ◻ eyes may react to irrelevant cues
- **Hitter is forcing himself to hit**
 - "I gotta/in gonna" syndrome
 - Causes tension, as referred to above
- **Divided Attention** ◻ You can really only handle one function at a time. Options include:
 - *Thinking* (internal function)
 - Kid needs to quiet his mind and focus on seeing the ball
 - *Seeing* (external function)
 - The right and only function!!!
 - *Hitting* (physical function)
 - Kid can't think of mechanics ◻ he should be on auto-pilot.
- **Improper use of eyes**
 - Good hitters have consistent eye patterns
 - Where they look
 - Near release point (Broad focus)
 - To Release point (fine focus)
 - When they look
 - Broad Focus ◻ Beginning of windup or into the stretch
 - Fine Focus ◻ hand break
 - Type of focus they have
 - Broad Focus -General area of interest (usually logo on cap or pitcher's head)
 - Fine Focus ◻ specific area of interest (always Release point).
- **Tendency of eyes to move ahead of objects they are tracking**
 - Often caused by not seeing the ball out of the pitcher's hand @ release point
- **Overswinging**
 - Head moves out vs. tracking (with nose) all the way in.
 - If your head doesn't follow the ball from the pitcher's hand into the hitting zone, you're not seeing the ball as long as you can.

Optimal Coaching:

- Teach mechanics and burn into muscle memory in practice. Coach AND player focus on mechanics **only** at practice and before games.
- Establish relaxed and confident mentality at the plate
- Bear down on PROPER EYE PATTERN in batters box
 - When doing Strategy/thinking ◻ batter steps out of box.

Optimal Hitting:

- Visualize beforehand
 - Get thinking, analyzing, planning out of the way before you get in the batters box
- Let your eyes take control
 - Relax, clear your mind, and put your body on autopilot
- Establish consistent eye patterns
 - Avoid concentrating too soon
 - Go from broad to fine focus ◻ establish rhythm
- See the release
 - Train yourself to see the ball come right out of the pitcher's hand
- Track the ball
 - Zone 1
 - From release point to ◻ way to the plate
 - If having trouble in this zone, you're not seeing release
 - Zone 2
 - From ◻ way to 6 feet in front of batter
 - Where movement/spin become obvious
 - Zone 3
 - Last 6 feet
 - Keep tracking ◻ and keep head down for an instant after contact

Or, more simply put, track the ball the whole way from the release to contact.