

5 Batting Practice Tips



Whether you're on the diamond or inside a batting cage, batting practice should always be done with a plan and a purpose.

One of the biggest mistakes I see are young players simply going through the motions of batting practice. While the most extreme cases can include a hitter aimlessly hacking away, even those that think they have a plan--because they lay down a bunt or shoot a few balls to the opposite field--are not really hitting the cages with a purpose.

Here are some tips to make the best out of every batting practice session:

Batting Practice Tip No.1: Track the Ball

Each and every pitch work on picking the ball up early, to identify pitch and location. I cannot stress how important is it to practice this and make it a habit. The return on your investment can be staggering if you just put a little effort into this. Almost no one does this on a consistent basis during practice. Those who do are usually the top hitters.

Batting Practice Tip No.2: Work on Your Strengths

But don't you mean work on your weaknesses? I'll get to that in a minute, but chances are your strengths are a big part of your make-up. Continue to develop your bread and butter while you bring up the rest of your game.

Batting Practice Tip No.3: Fix Your Weaknesses

Can't bunt? Learn how. Can't hit to the opposite field? Work on it. Get a good, honest assessment of your strengths and weaknesses and then act to improve.

Certainly you can't work on everything at once, but if you commit to a certain time frame to work on each, you will improve drastically over time. For example, lay down 20 sacrifice bunts before you take a swing. It only counts if it's a quality bunt or a strike. Work on hitting to the opposite field for 20 swings. It only counts when you are successful.

Batting Practice Tip No.4: Know What You're Looking For

Before a pitch is ever thrown at you -- both in batting practice and a game -- you should know what you goal for that pitch is. It may change three times in a single at-bat, but you need to know each and every pitch.

No one on base and looking for a pitch to drive? Then only swing at that pitch. Hit and run is on and you need to get the bat on the ball? Well, you better be ready. Man on third, one out and you are looking for a ball waist-high or slightly higher to drive? Don't swing at a pitch at your ankles. I think you get the idea. Just doing this can raise your average significantly (I've seen over a hundred points in some cases) and help you be more productive for your team, which is obviously most important.

Batting Practice Tip No.5: Stay Mentally Strong

Batting practice is the time to think. When it's game time, you want the work you put in to take over. If your practice is high quality, you give yourself a much better chance to succeed.