

# THE BASIC HITTING APPROACH

Baseball for me was instinctive, born within me, given to me as a gift from God.

-Willie Stargell



## THE POINT OF HITTING IS TO SIMPLIFY

Hitting the ball effectively is about executing a few simple checkpoint consistently.

### THE BASIC APPROACH

When I first started looking at myself as a decent hitter it was when I was able to have a **clear** understanding of what it was I was trying to accomplish at the plate. I wasn't a big guy. Only standing about 5'9, weighing about 160. My approach was to get on base, hit line drives, and see as many pitches as I could.

My physical make-up wasn't conducive for a lot of home-runs even though I was able to hit them.

There is a time and place for everything.



Regardless of what kind of hitter you are however, you are going to need a few key things that you will adopt into your "basic approach" so that regardless of the game's situation, you'll always be able to rely on the fact that you have the basics covered and you've mastered the foundational aspects of your swing. This will help you when the pressure is on or when a micro-managing coaches attempts to change your swing.

## UNDERSTANDING WHAT KIND OF HITTER YOU ARE

Just to reiterate the aforementioned importance of understanding what kind of hitter you are, it's worth repeating that you need to know this because far too many hitters fail to truly understand this- which robs them of their ability to take advantage of their natural gifts and turn them into weapons.

Like what was mentioned in the **Draft Secrets** manual. An honest assessment of what your capabilities are will be required before you take the next step into becoming the type of hitter you aspire to become.

### STANCE

In regards to your hitting stance. Comfortability is important so long as it's promoting correct mechanics.

It goes without saying that you can't be successful for very long at the plate without feeling physically comfortable but if having too much of a hitch in your pre-swing, having your hands too far from your body or dropping your hands is what feels comfortable to you than a few adjustments will need to be made at the cost of comfort at least in the beginning.

Overall, there needs to be flex in your stance. Your head should be mostly just above your center of gravity and there should be some rhythm. I've never seen a successful hitter who had a **stationary** or **static pose** as a hitting stance.

Being relaxed in an athletic position is showcased in every single sport, so hitting a baseball which will eventually be coming at you possibly at 90 plus will only be possible when you're athletic at the plate period.

**Important:** As a hitter you may find yourself playing for a coach or baseball program that enforces a **"cookie cutter"** style of hitting. Not conforming just isn't an option for some players. The best thing to do is continue to focus on what your pre-swing movement are despite your batting stance. Like I have said many times before, focus on:

- 🍪 getting proper separation
- 🍪 demonstrating minimal head movement
- 🍪 keep your bat head on the plane of the pitch as early as possible for as long as possible

If you can do these consistently, it will not matter how your hitting stance looks. You could be doing the Gan-man style dance at the plate and if you're doing the above hitting check points, you'll be fine. Don't let micro-managing coaches distract you or even discourage you from being the type of hitter you want to be.

## PLATE COVERAGE & SETTLING IN

Plate coverage is VERY important but what's more important is your knowledge of the strike zone. Good plate coverage doesn't "always" necessarily mean that the bat-head covers the whole plate entirely.

Being able to cover the parts of the hitting zone on pitches that tend to handle the best is what's most important.

If you're the type of hitter who has trouble hitting the inside pitch but excels at letting the ball get deep and driving the ball the other way- then standing a bit further from the plate might be a better approach.

Another factor to keep in mind in regards to your positioning in the batter's box is your own physical make-up and overall hitting approach.

## WHAT'S YOUR GRADE?



### Getting comfy!??!

Plate coverage is VERY important but what's more important is your knowledge of the strike zone.

## DIFFERENT STROKES FOR DIFFERENT FOLKS!



### IT'S A HAPPY MEDIUM!

"For most it's having the the "door knocking" knuckles of your top hand lined up in-between the spec of your top knuckles and your "door knocking" knuckles of your bottom hand."

Are you a bigger guy with longer arms?

Are you a line-drive hitter that tends to dive into the plate like Derek Jeter?

Are you a smaller speedy guy who likes to put the ball in play and use your legs to beat out hits?

I would strongly suggest experimenting with hitting in different areas in the batter's box.

Take note of big leaguers that stand in the front of the batter's box and in the back of the batter's.

The closer they are to the front, the better they will be at hitting breaking ball pitches that break just before the strike zone but the less time they will have to hit the fast-ball.

Vice versa for hitters who stand in the back.

Find out what works best for you. The only way to know for sure is to practice and make lots and lots of mistakes.

## BAT HANDLING

The general consensus is to have the bat handle in the fingers of your grip. I agree. What I don't agree with is when uneducated coaches teach their players to have their **"door knocking"** knuckles lined up while holding the bat.

Does that even feel comfortable? Coaches teach this because it sounds and looks logical but it's not.

Hitters at the higher levels don't do this. They go with what's comfortable.

For most it's having the the **"door knocking"** knuckles of your top hand lined up in-between the spec of your top knuckles and your **"door knocking"** knuckles of your bottom hand.

It's a happy medium and promotes a healthy grip on the bat without allowing the bat to get too deep in your hands.



## WRIST ACTION

Despite what you hear about whipping the bat-head through the zone by snapping your wrists. I say forget about it.

Whatever happens in regards to bat-speed after you have initiated your swing is a result of your hard-work and sound mechanics. Let your wrists work by themselves!

## PULLING THE BALL & HITTING THE OTHER WAY

I think it's important to learn however, how to pull the ball just as well as you hit the ball the other way. A good pitcher will attack both sides of the plate just to see if there are

any holes in your swing.

If you're a strictly pull hitter then you may get a steady dose of fast-balls on the outside corner followed up with soft pitches away.

If you have an inside out swing, be prepared to have a pitcher pound the inside part of the plate with fast-balls until you can prove that you can catch up to that pitch and pull it.

If you're still hitting opposite field chinks the other way, I would still say they'll attack the inner half.



**Is your  
hitting  
approach  
simple?!**

You can look at pulling the ball and hitting the other way as tools in your tool box while looking at hitting the ball up the middle as your weapon.

If you can master hitting the ball up the middle on most pitches, you'll be a tough out.

## OVERALL APPROACH TO HITTING

The point is to keep things as simple as possible. **Always only focus on 1 or 2 things to work on and forget everything you have learned and practiced once you have stepped into the box.**

From that point on, every decision you make should come from the level of instinct. The less you think and the more you trust, the more effective you'll be. Every time.

Oh and yes.....don't forget to have fun.