

SWING TIMING - MAKING ADJUSTMENTS

WHAT IS TIMING?

Timing in hitting is one of those mysteries that coaches and players talk about, but frequently can't explain. It means different things to different people, but there is no doubt that timing is one of the critical elements of success in hitting.

For the purpose of this unit we will define timing as;

"the ability to have the bat in the precise contact spot at the exact instant the ball arrives there."

THE START

Over the years research has established the mechanics of a "good" swing, when it should start, how it should flow and what it should look like. The consensus is that the swing starts with a step or stride, which should be forward, toward the ball or the pitcher. This notion is strongly supported by batting coaches and other hitting "experts".

THE STEP INITIATES THE SWING

If the step initiates the batting action, and the swing must not start until the step is completed, then swing timing then becomes a question of: **WHEN TO STEP!!**

However, game execution is more complicated than that. Competent pitchers throw very fast pitches, which means the batter must decide and swing within miniscule time frames. Add to that the pitcher's ability to change speeds on successive pitches and we can see the difficulty in timing the swing. Keeping these points in mind, we can summarize the research in this area with these statements, which have general application to all softball hitters.

RESEARCH RESULTS

- 1. AGAINST FAST PITCHING, THE BATTER MUST START THE STRIDE BEFORE THE PITCH IS RELEASED.**
- 2. THE TIMING OF THE STRIDE MUST BE GAUGED ON SOMETHING OTHER THAN THE PITCH ITSELF, SUCH AS THE PITCHER'S MOTION.**
- 3. IN ALL CASES, THE STRIDE MUST BE COMPLETED AND THE STRIDE FOOT FIRMLY PLANTED BEFORE THE SWING STARTS.**
- 4. A BATTER SHOULD MAKE A DELIBERATE MOVE TO SWING AT EVERY PITCH, AND BE PREPARED TO STOP THE SWING IF THE CUES SO INDICATE.**