

Continual Coaching-hitting tips to teach:

1. A positive belief that practice pays off – I am constantly telling batters that I know, and they must believe, that work turns into hits, and often at unexpected times, as with facing a dominant pitcher.
2. Trust in swing – most players lack the experience to be able to adjust hitting mechanics from one at-bat to the next, let alone from pitch to pitch, as even the pros have trouble doing that, but they must believe their current swing is good enough to get the job done.
3. A relaxed body with an aggressive mind – physical tension is a detriment to hitting success, but mental tension is good to have the necessary adrenaline for awareness and reaction.
4. A good grasp of strike zone – a constant work in progress for young hitters but a major key to hitting development.
5. A knowledge of their strengths – understanding which pitches a player hits best sets up their early-in-the-count game plan.
6. The importance of having the hitter expect every pitched ball to be over the middle of the plate. Before pitching the ball ask the hitter where he expects the ball and make sure he says over the middle. Then throw it and see how he reacts. If it comes at him teach him how to get out of the way, usually by turning away from it or ducking.
7. A yes-yes- yes, or a yes-yes-no hitting philosophy. When the ball leaves the pitcher's hand – Yes -this is my pitch, half way to home – Yes this is the one. When the ball gets into the swing zone, yes it's a good one to hit or No, hold up.
8. The realization that foul balls are not a bad thing. Most ball players get upset when they foul balls off, at least in batting practice. When throwing batting practice, I do not let them get down over foul balls. I try to explain that foul balls are hitters' friends and that just getting a piece of the ball is a sign of a good swing. Additionally, I tell hitters that any contact is better than the alternative, of no contact. Along the same lines, I inform batters that fouling off pitches makes them a tough out, which is a good thing.
9. When hitting in games and practicing timing in batting practice and not the hitting mechanics, 100% focus on the ball. Clearing the mind and concentration on only the ball will slow the action down, and help batters get in the zone.