

# Hitting Part 2: Hands & Arms

## Skills: Hands & Arms Before The Load

*To be quick & strong with the bat and ready to react to the pitch, the hitter's hands and arms need to be properly positioned.*



- Lay bat across fingers, NOT deep in hands;
- Line up 2<sup>nd</sup> or door-knocking knuckles;
- Relaxed, but strong grip;
- Place hands inside back shoulder, 8" to 10" away from body;
- Top hand level with top of back shoulder;
- 45° bat angle, with knob slanting down toward plate (*the bat should NOT be straight up and down*);
- Middle of bat parallel with back ear;
- Shoulders level with each other;
- Elbows level with each other at 45° angle to ground;
- Arms bent at 90° angles;
- Wrists, elbows and shoulders positioned to move back together during the load and to the ball during the swing.

## Drills: Hands & Arms Before The Load

### Drill #1 – The Proper Grip:

While standing, place barrel of bat on ground in front of your body between your legs with knob facing up to sky. Bend over slightly at the waist and grab the bat handle with your hands where your fingers are attached to your hands. Do not place the bat too deep in your palms. The bat should be lying across your second knuckles. Pick up the bat and rest the barrel on top of your back (*hitting*) shoulder with your elbows touching your sides. Your hands should be centered in front of your chest with the knob of the bat pointing down toward the plate at a 45° angle. Check the alignment of your knuckles. Your door-knocking knuckles should be somewhat lined up with each other. Avoid having your top hand second knuckles aligned with the third set of knuckles on your bottom hand. If you see this, the bat is slipping too far back into the palm of your hand. If you are holding the bat correctly, you will be able to point both of your index fingers toward the sky. Also, check your grip pressure. It should be – relaxed, but strong. Repeat this drill until you can automatically or naturally achieve the proper grip.

### Drill #2 – The Lift Drill: {Part 1 of a 4-part drill called The Lift, Load, Land & Launch Drill}

Place the bat on the top of your back shoulder in the exact way as describe in Drill #1. Slowly and smoothly lift the bat off your shoulder (*like a slow elevator*), keeping the bat angled at 45°, until your hands are 8" to 10" away from your body and inside your back shoulder. This should be a slight up & back, angled lift. The thumb on your top hand should be somewhat level with the top of your back shoulder. The middle of the bat should be parallel with your ear. The barrel of the bat should be behind your back shoulder and NOT “wrapped” around your head. Check to see if both your arms are bent at 90° angles and your elbows are comfortably pointing toward the ground at 45°. Your elbows should be level with each other, as well as your shoulders. Wrists, elbows and shoulders should be positioned to move together as one unit when you load back to the launch position. Note: You have not yet loaded to your launch or swing position. This drill is simply to help you find your most relaxed, comfortable and consistent pre-load positioning of your hands and arms.

## Life Lessons: In God's Hands

**In baseball**, proper placement of the bat in our hands, combined with correct positioning of the arms and hands, allows the bat to be used most effectively. When our hands, arms and bat are in the right place, we can have confidence in our swing, trusting in our mechanics to produce more consistent impact and positive results – hard-hit baseballs.

Likewise, **in life**, if we position ourselves completely in God's Hands (*our talents, possessions, plans and every aspect of ourselves and lives*), we can have confidence in God to produce in us His character and His plan for our lives, so we can be most effective in this world. If we place our trust in God and allow His Hand to guide and direct us, we will live more consistent and positive lives, pleasing our Heavenly Father, while impacting others for His Kingdom. Make it your attitude today, and everyday, to put your life in God's Hands. Pray to God the words found in **Psalm 31:5**, and watch Him use you effectively: ***“I entrust my spirit (life) into your hand.”*** (NLT)