

# Awareness Drills for the Hitter

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*“Whatever you’re practicing that’s what you’re getting good at”*  
*Me*

## I. Performance Assumptions:

### A. All training and drills for hitting are designed to have the hitter:

1. Make solid, consistent contact in fair territory
2. Be able to adjust to different pitch locations in strike zone
3. Be able to adjust to different speeds and spin/rotation (pitch trajectories)

### B. Awareness Goals

- should reveal to the hitter what movements are most effective
- drills should help them determine what movements are stronger, quicker, and give them the best balance (control)

## II. Definitions

### A. Awareness

-is knowing, seeing, or feeling what is happening in the moment....the now.

-awareness for the hitter is knowing, seeing, and preferably feeling what is going on with his/her swing at the moment....or very close to the moment of the swing.

### B. So what Sherlock....how does it make my hitters better!

Premise #1: The hitter must adhere to a certain set of principles or actions to achieve an effective swing

Premise #2: An effective swing or components thereof are either known intuitively or knowledge is imparted from an all knowing...all seeing, all feeling hitting guru (you the coach)

Premise #3: All hitting gurus (coaches) prefer certain swing habits...(the preferred)

Premise #4: All hitters desire to have effective swings...(the preferred)

Premise #5: All hitting gurus (coaches) desire hitters to change to the preferred

Premise #6: All hitters (well almost all) desire to change to the preferred

Premise #7: To change to the preferred one must know what they are doing now.

-Therefore awareness of what's happening with your swing now is necessary before one can change to a preferred method of swinging.

-Through awareness one change change, adjust, or correct more effectively

### C. Requirements for Awareness Training:

1. Can be utilized regardless of what mechanics are being taught
2. Can focus on outcome (results) or process
3. Can be individualized
4. Most can training can be accomplished without special equipment
5. An awareness scale to fit the purpose of the drill
6. Adequate repetition to develop a "feel difference"

### D. Examples of Awareness Drills:

#### 1. Mechanics

- a. base (length of hitting base at conclusion of stride)
  - stride board/mat
  - check + or -
- b. front foot (position of front foot at contact)
  - open (pointing to pitcher) vs. closed
  - open 0.....1....2.....3.....4.....5 closed
- c. front knee-degree of flexion at contact
  - stiff/straight vs. flexed
  - stiff 0....1....2....3....4.....5 (90 degrees flexion)
- d. backside turn/release- degree of heel up and foot rotation
  - no turn vs. full turn or release
  - no turn (heel down) 0....1....2....3....4....5 (Full turn/release)
- e. stacking/posture ( position of torso at contact)
  - tall vs. severe body tilt
  - tall 0....1....2....3....4....5 (severe body tilt in any direction)
  - Back/forward/towards the plate/away/away

#### 2. Sequencing (Good for pre BP/warm up activities)

- a. T'ai Chi
- b. Slo Mo

3. Takes (Rate em)
  - Your swing is only as good as your take
  - quality of the take position (position of body/hands/bat.. at the full foot contact)
  - 0 to 10 weak 0..1..2..3..4..5..6..7..8..9..10 strong/swing ready
  
4. Degree of Swing Balance
  - swing as hard as you can and maintain balance
  - poor balance 0.....10 (strong/solid)
  
  - can use with punching bag and/or stride board
  
5. Barrelhead Awareness
  - a. over vs. under
    - under miss....way under.....slightly under.....right on....slightly over... way over....over miss
  
    - can use with high tee
  
  - b. sweet spot awareness (ball/bat contact)
    - towards handle -5.....0 (sweet spot).....+5 end of bat
  
    - can use with fungo
    - can use 2 oz. under/over
    - can alternate hard ground ball and long fly ball
  
6. Solid Contact
  - game #1: rate it 0 to 10 0 miss.....10 Solid Contact
  - game #2: How many in a row 7 or better
  - game #3: Team vs. Coach 1<sup>st</sup> one to 10 wins
  
7. Visual Tracking
  - a. Colored Ball (Red and Blue quarter size dots on ball)
    - call out the color as soon as you recognize
  - b. Hot and Cold Hitting
    - hit the red/take the blue
  
8. Pitch Location/Hit Location (Thru vs. Pull off)
  - a. Pull off.....Slightly around.....Thru
  - b. Pull off scale: Thru 0...to....5 (Severe pull off)
  - c. Tee and Rope Drill w/target (Quick/middle/flow)