



KEYS TO HITTING DIFFERENT TYPES OF PITCHES

1. **Four Seam Fastball:**

Get a good one to hit: If a pitcher has an average one, you want to get the ball down in the zone. A hard 4 seam up is hard to hit.

2. **Two Seam fastball:**

Get it up in the zone, about thigh high. Lay off when knee high because it will sink out of the strike zone. When a 2 seam is up in the zone it usually flattens out.

3. **Slider:**

Recognize it early. A tight slider will have a small dot. A poor one will have a loose dot. Like the 2 seam FB, look for it up. Lay off the slider if it starts outside the strike zone. Sliders that start inside will break over the plate. From a same side pitcher, approach hitting the slider to the opposite field gap.

4. **Curveball:**

Recognize it early. Look for the 12/6 rotation of the seams just after release. A pitcher will slow his arm down on a poor curveball. Keep your hands and body back. If you commit he hands early, you will have little success hitting this pitch. Pitchers have success when the curveball breaks late. If it starts out over the plate, or slightly above knees it generally will break down, out of the strike zone. As a hitter, you want the curveball to come DOWN to you. You also want to stay down and wait for the ball to come to you. In your mind you want to be thinking about hitting the ball right back up the middle.

5. **Change up:**

Look for any different type of motion or slowing of arm speed. Like the curveball, you must stay back. Early recognition is so important.

6. **Split Finger Fastball:**

Biggest key is to look for it up in the strike zone. Pitchers will often use this as a strike out pitch. Rotation you will see is the ball tumbling.

PITCHER'S HABITS TO LOOK FOR:

1. Slowing arm speed and body down on off speed pitches.
2. Changing grip on the ball.
3. Change of arm angle.
4. Look for patterns in particular counts.

PITCH COUNTS

0-0: The most important pitch to a pitcher is his first pitch. Your first time up, you are going to want to take the breaking ball with a 0-0 count.

0-1: The pitcher isn't going to give you any pitch here that you can hit hard. This is the pitch he will try and throw to the black. You still want to look for a pitch to drive. If you swing at a pitcher's pitch here, low and away or a curveball down, you are giving into what he wanted you to do.

1-0: Anytime you are ahead in the count you want YOUR pitch. Usually the pitcher will try and challenge you here. Get the pitch you can hit hard. If not there, take it.

1-1: The pitcher will try to make a great pitch on this count. He will try for the corners or throw an off-speed pitch. Look for the ball in the area you like best and don't swing unless it is there. Think swing on every pitch until you recognize it is not your pitch.

0-2: This is where you have to guard the plate. A good pitcher won't waste way out of the strike zone. A pitcher's goal is to throw a ball just off the plate where you can't get to it. Many pitchers will either try to throw a curveball off the plate to get you to chase or a fastball in, then the curve off the plate. Don't allow yourself to swing at balls and get yourself out. Teach yourself to be a confident 2-strike hitter.

1-2: You will probably see what he considers his best pitch in this count. You will not see too many pitches in the middle of the plate-he will be throwing for the black. You must cover the whole plate. Battling him here can be a big lift to your team.

2-2: Pitchers do not like to go 3-2, generally in this situation he will throw a pitch he can most likely throw for a strike. Many times whatever he throws 2-2, he will also throw 3-2. Have a 2-strike approach. Don't chase anything out of the strike zone.

2-0: Only swing at YOUR pitch here. Many pitchers believe they can throw breaking balls in this count because they feel hitters will swing at anything because they are geared up for the fastball. Stay relaxed on the counts you are ahead in. Keep it simple and think about hitting your pitch right back up the middle. **DON'T OVER SWING.**

2-1: This is one of the biggest counts in an at bat. If the pitcher throws a ball here, he is in trouble. If you swing at a ball out of the strike zone you are looking at 2-2 instead of 3-1. Pitchers with good off-speed command will throw the breaking ball here. Don't give in to him, swing only at your pitch. If he hangs the breaking pitch, CRUSH IT!

3-0 & 3-1: Pressure is on the pitcher to throw a strike. 80% of walks score. Don't swing at anything except a fastball or your pitch. Don't be afraid to take a walk here. A walk is a very big offensive weapon.

3-2: Control the strike zone and foul off tough pitches. Never give in to the pitcher.