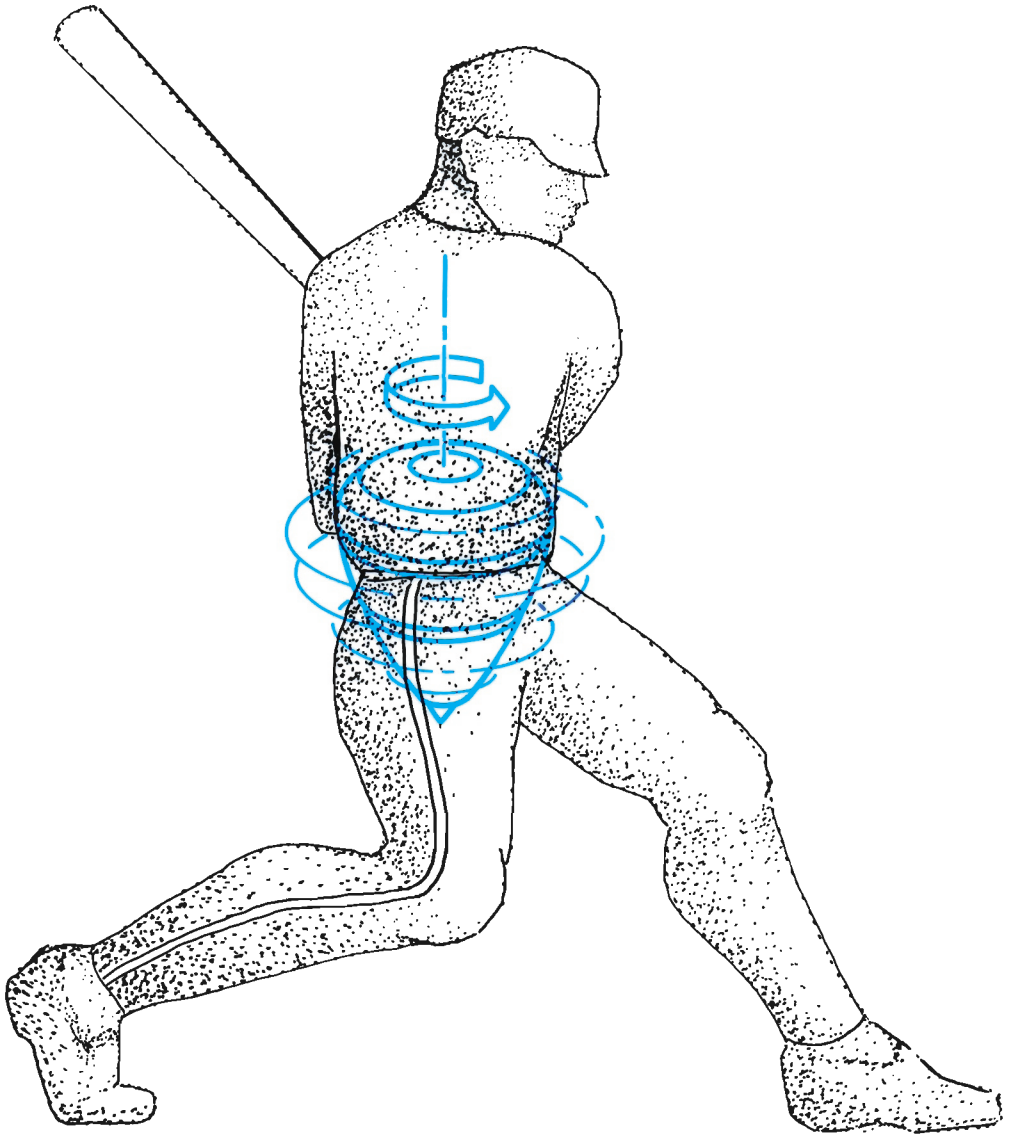


BATTING BASICS

Science of the Perfect Swing



John W. White

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Science of the Perfect Swing

Just Judy Desktop Publishing Services
Livermore, California
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Second Edition, July 2011

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
<i>Preface</i>	i
<i>Acknowledgements</i>	ii
<i>Introduction</i>	iv
Chapter 1	FUNDAMENTALS
Section I. The Duel	3
Section II. The Batter's Style	4
Section III. Objective and Fundamental Principles	5
Section IV. Weight Shift and Body Rotation	7
Chapter 2	THE BODY-ROTATION SYSTEM
Section I. Batting Mechanics Overview	11
Section II. Ice Skaters and Spinning Tops	13
Section III. Seeing the Ball Well	14
Section IV. An Integrated SYSTEM of Batting	16
Section V. Putting it All Together.....	18
Section VI. Golf, Anyone?.....	21
Section VII. Illustrations	22
Chapter 3	BODY-ROTATION BATTING MECHANICS: STEP-BY-STEP
Section I. Introduction.....	35
Section II. Selecting a Bat	36
Section III. Gripping the Bat	37
Section IV. The Stance	40
Section V. The Stride.....	44
Section VI. Body Rotation and THE Decision	46
Section VII. The Swing.....	48
Section VIII. The Follow-Through.....	52
Section IX. Timing and Adjustments.....	53
Section X. Slump Analysis	55
Section XI. Modifications for Softball.....	56
Chapter 4	THE WEIGHT-SHIFT SYSTEM
Section I. Weight-Shift Batting Mechanics.....	61
Section II. Weight Shift: Step-by-Step	63
Section III. Weight Shift: Special Features.....	65
Section IV. Body Rotation vs. Weight Shift: A Comparison	65
Section V. Hybrid Systems.....	69
Section VI. Are There Any Other Systems?	70

Chapter 5	RECOMMENDED BATTING MECHANICS	73
Section I.	An Optimized Hybrid (Mostly Rotation)	75
Section II.	Individualized Style Adaptations	76
Section III.	Summary	76
Chapter 6	SPECIAL TOPICS	79
Section I.	The Duel Revisited and Batter Protection ...	81
Section II.	The Mental Aspects and Team Tactics.....	82
Section III.	Strategy for Pitchers	86
Section IV.	Switch Hitting	87
Section V.	Bunting	87
Section VI.	Instructing Young Batters	91
Chapter 7	DRILLS	97
Section I.	Shadow Batting (Dry Run Hitting).....	100
Section II.	Batting Tee	100
Section III.	Fence-Buster Drill (or Soft-Toss Drill).....	102
Section IV.	Nearly “Regular” Batting with LWPB’s (Short-Toss Drill)	103
Section V.	“Regular” Batting Practice	105
Section VI.	Woodchopper	105
Section VII.	Miscellaneous	106
Summary	THE BAT, THE BALL, AND THE HITTER	109
Appendices	BATTING STEPS, ISSUES, AND ADJUSTMENTS	113
Appendix A	Sequential Batting Steps	115
Appendix B	Mechanical Adjustments for Individual Style and Situations	119
Appendix C	Miscellaneous Issues for Batting Mechanics	121
About the Author		123
Bibliography		124

PREFACE

Any undertaking in Science builds upon the work of previous researchers in the field. This book is no exception. This work owes much to people who have studied batting throughout the years. Some of my debt is recorded in the Acknowledgements section below. However, it is crucial to single out the important roles played by Ted Williams and by Charley Lau in laying the groundwork for this analysis.

The Scientific Method requires that theories be proposed and that their validity must be experimentally tested. This process must be done objectively and without bias. Many baseball enthusiasts have shown support for our attempt to extend the ideas of Williams and Lau and to reconcile their different approaches.

Unfortunately, the baseball community has experienced occasional bursts of passion as the relative merits of body rotation vs. weight shift have been debated. During the course of research, I have run into a few people who have misinterpreted the analysis as a personal attack on Williams or Lau. I have been disappointed by this reaction. I believe that all ideas should be subject to careful scrutiny, with an eye toward their improvement. Likewise, it is anticipated that my analysis will be improved by others.

Some findings are more likely to stand the test of time than others. Particular confidence seems appropriate for the central issues that are dominated by the laws of physics. An example would be the need for a vertical torso when using body-rotation mechanics, because of the principle of gyroscopic stability. Finally, there are many choices that batters must make that depend on their unique individual characteristics. These might include such decisions as the choice of a bat or the location of the feet in the batter's box. I expect the reader to disagree with some of this analysis, hoping that these occasions are infrequent. Most of all, this book may help to stimulate further research and a dialogue that is both enthusiastic and objective.

John W. White
Livermore, California
July 2011

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The catalyst for the existence of this book was the author's reaction to reading the *The Science of Hitting* by Ted Williams. And that reaction was: *Oh, my God!*

Thanks to the many people associated with the Livermore American Little League who have given ideas, suggestions, and support in a variety of ways. This includes Ed Alley, Bill Anderson, Sam Dalhed, Vaughn Draggoo, Bob Hancock, Roy Hedtke, Bob Lanier, Ed Larsen, Bob Murray, Sue Stull, and Ken Wilde. Thanks to Griffin White and his teammates for trying out the ideas in the book. Thanks also to Mike Ross for his thorough review of the manuscript and many helpful suggestions.

I am indebted to Dean Stotz at Stanford University for reviewing the first draft and providing constructive criticisms. Thanks to Paul Moore of the University of California at Berkeley for reviewing a later draft of the text. I am particularly grateful to Walt Hriniak of the Boston Red Sox for helping me understand more clearly the weight-shift system and the teachings of Charley Lau.

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Since the first edition was developed in the late 1980s, there have been an uncounted number of useful contributions for which a great appreciation is further noted.

A very important acknowledgement is due to John Oldham, who implemented *Batting Basics* in four years as head coach at Santa Clara University. During this time the Broncos won the league (WCC) championship three times!

Fast-pitch softball is featured in this second edition, and appreciation goes to Diane Ninemire and her coaching staff with the Golden Bears women's softball team at the University of California at Berkeley. Their insights have been helpful. Appreciation also goes to Chuck Hamilton, a baseball coach who played at a very high level of amateur men's softball, for

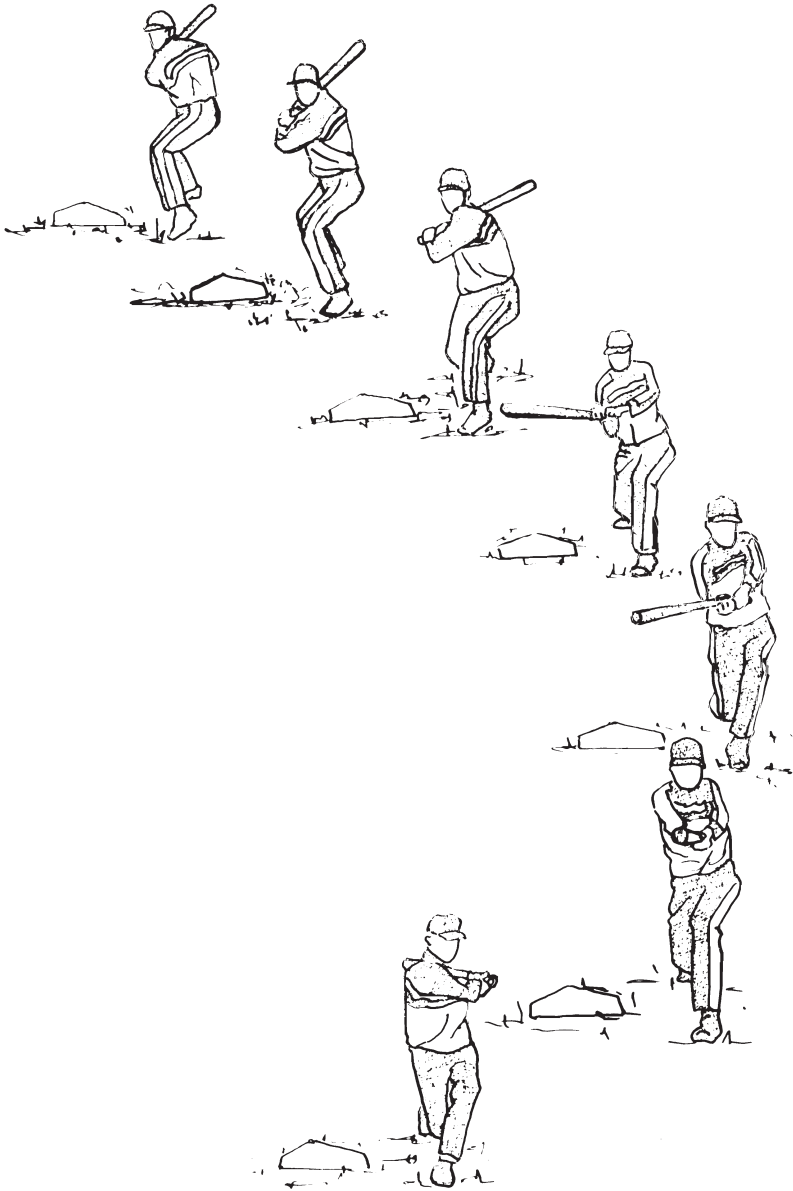
his helpful comments and understanding.

Finally, I must acknowledge the very important contribution of Joe McManus and the crew at Quail-Type, Inc., for their creativity and craftsmanship during publication of the first edition of this book. Likewise, thanks are due Judy Eckart for similar contributions to the second edition. For the degree to which this book is attractively presented, they are due much credit.

Any errors and shortcomings are solely the author's responsibility.

**Ted Williams researched hitting
by swinging a bat until his hands bled.**

Glory to Ted Williams!



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