

Batting Tip #4 - The Stride

Young ball players need not stride a long distance. A simple lift of the front leg a couple of inches is fine. This will help not to swing up and help take a more direct route in throwing your hands at the ball.

A good point. Over-striding can cause a player to shift all of his weight to the front foot too early to handle breaking or off-speed pitches. A short, soft stride keeps the head on the same plane, which makes it much easier to see the baseball.

Batting Tip #5 - Head Movement

Q. When hitting, a player's head should only move slightly up and then down due to the weight shift back and the small step forward.

A. Head movement should be minimal and only the player's eyes should move down as they follow the ball from the pitcher.

To help kids keep their head down while batting. Place a tennis ball under their chin while swinging. They need to hit the baseball before the tennis ball falls from their chin. This should help them to watch the ball coming in but making them keep their head down and not pull out of the swing too early.

By Cal Ripken Jr.