

A batting stance doesn't have to be rocket science

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A batting stance is like a pair of baseball shoes: one size doesn't fit all.

A child who develops a hitting style at an early age won't necessarily maintain that style as he grows, says Troy Silva, a hitting instructor for Rijo Baseball.

Developing a hitting stance doesn't have to be rocket science. "If you're dealing with a T-ball kid, just let them grip and swing the bat," Silva says. "As they get a little more advanced, a little more aware of their body, you can make things happen."

Comfort is a top priority in any stance. Most coaches fail when they believe in only one hitting method. Players then become uncomfortable or awkward, and end up underperforming or no longer enjoying the game.

For the most part, it's ok to allow a younger player to pattern their batting style after a major leaguer they've seen on TV. "Let (the kids) be who they are," he explains. "If it's working, don't change it."

One misconception among players and coaches is the stance dictates performance. This is false, Silva says. A player's feet can be placed shoulder-length apart or a little wider toward the pitcher. They can be a little bit open or a bit closed, and the knees can be slightly bent. Hands should be somewhere close to their shoulder with a bit of rhythm and movement.

"What I tell people all the time is, go watch a big league game have a kid copy their favorite player for a while, see if it works," Silva says. "The only time I ever change the stance is if it's creating specific problems during their swing. Most of the time, it doesn't really happen."

Even the stride can be a matter of personal preference. Coaches can encourage each player to try out different striding methods to see which works best for them. Pay close attention to what seems to be comfortable and what they struggle with. Are they striding toward the ball too much, or not enough? Should they have a big leg kick, or none at all?

Above all, Silva encourages coaches to let their players be themselves. "If a kid is doing something outrageously wrong, or visibly bad, then you've got to change it," he says.

Silva and his staff have conducted over 75,000 hitting lessons in the past 14 years, using online training videos. Silva is the author of the book "9 Innings of Hitting", an in-depth guide for baseball and fast-pitch softball players who wish to improve their hitting.

For more information about Rijo Baseball and its online video resources, click [here](#):