

Yes, Yes, NO!

A lot of players that I first work with either don't have an approach at the plate or they have an approach that makes it difficult to be aggressive. We still have hitters in our lineup that try to react to the pitch and read it before deciding whether to swing.

ESPN'S Sport Science did an episode on the speed of softball showing that a pitch traveling at 70mph at a release point of 37 feet gives the batter .35 seconds to react to the pitch.

[Click here to view ESPN's Sport Science video: The Speed of Softball](#)

If our approach isn't YES, YES, NO that .35 seconds goes by even quicker. By starting with the mindset of YES the batter only has to choose visual cues that are NO's. We focus on those visual cues being high/low, inside/outside and rise. Anything else is (hopefully) within the strike zone and we're taking a hack at it. When we have players strike out looking, I will always check in with them on what their mindset was on that pitch. A lot of times the answer will be "I was looking for this and she threw this instead" admitting that they got away from thinking just YES, YES, NO.

We have two rules on our team regarding what players are allowed to think about during an at bat. They are allowed to focus on breathing (with the goal of 2-3 deep breathes) and YES, YES, NO and that's it. The mechanics of their swing, the scoreboard, the crowd and everything else has to be eliminated so that their .35 seconds can be focused on giving them the best chance to hit the ball hard. If you're looking for a way to improve your team's hitting, ask yourself about how much time you spend on routine and approach.

Take some time to sit and talk with your players about their current routines and approach and I think you'll be surprised at the answers. I think you'll find that they're not as ready to get into a Batters' Box Battle as you'd like them to be.

-Coach Lisle

