

# When Should the Wrists Roll?

At my hitting club in SeaTac, WA, I have been observing a swing flaw by members for quite some time. I am referring to the rolling of the wrists early in the swing, particularly just before contact. I can remember being told by my youth coaches to roll my wrists when I hit, however, they failed to tell me when, where or how during the swing the wrists should roll. Should they roll before contact, at contact or after contact? We were led to believe that somehow the action of rolling the wrists created the power to propel the ball to the outfield.

Simply stated, you should never roll your wrists (*i.e., a sideways motion*) before you hit the ball. Actually, the wrists don't "roll" at all, instead they "hinge" toward your forearms just before being released forward into the ball. To see what I'm referring to, hold your bat out in front of you and cock or hinge your wrists upward in the direction of the tip of your nose and the wrists will hinge.

A powerful wrist snap results in the rapid acceleration of the bat through the hitting zone. The wrists begin to "rollover" only after the ball leaves the bat into a smooth follow through. After the wrists are hinged then release the hands to the ball in a palm-up/palm-down position (*see insert*). Remember to "drive" the barrel head through the ball keeping it longer on the incoming ball path for a squared-up hit.

The Rolling of the wrists is actually part of the FOLLOW-THROUGH and not the swing to the ball. We roll our wrists over to facilitate the follow-through. Have the bat head rotate completely around the body for a continuous swing action and releasing the top hand helps. Wrists should work like you're planting an axe into a tree trunk. You would not roll your wrists when launching an axe into the tree, if you did, you'd miss striking the blade directly and mashing the side of the axe.

The bat is launched to the ball by pushing and throwing your hands as they release to the ball, again there is no rolling of wrists. This move creates what is called "impulse" in physics (*i.e., the force generated divided by the time it takes to complete the movement over distance traveled*). So, the baseball adage "quick to the ball" makes sense according to physics. Remember to keep your lead arm almost straight (*i.e., but not totally barred*) to create maximum leverage and length to your swing. The arms are only fully extended after the ball has left the bat.

Summary of Important Points:

- Rolling wrists before contact is ineffective,
- Cock the wrists straight back toward your forearms which is referred to as "radial deviation",
- Release the wrists with the top hand palm-up and the bottom hand palm-down to the ball,
- Do not "flip" the wrists sideways which is a very weak hitting motion when striking the ball,
- Release wrist hinge quickly to create maximum power.
- Attack the ball like burying an axe into a tree trunk,
- Rotate your trunk to bring the bat to the launch position and not by just using your arms,
- Use the turning of the barrel technique into the plane of the incoming pitch for best results,
- Begin rolling the wrists after contact.

Happy hitting,

**Art Eversole**

Video showing correct timing of wrist roll: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SduvPZodFOQ>



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