

# MASTERCLASS

FOR ANY  
YOUNG LADS  
OUT THERE...



## THE BATTING DOCTOR

WITH GARY PALMER



### HOW TO BAT v LEFT ARMERS

MANY RIGHT-HANDERS struggle against left-arm over pace bowlers, especially the ones who swing the ball back in to them. This problem is apparent with all ages and standards of cricketers – even with international players. Why is this? It's because batters generally develop their technique against right-arm over bowling, throw downs and also the bowling machine from the same angle. To my mind, we need to be more specific with our practice and learn to master techniques from various angles: too often, coaches neglect the left arm over angle. This month I look at the key technical points specific to playing against the left-arm over bowler who swings the ball back in to the right-hander. All these points are most relevant to driving in the v off the frontfoot but the principles are the same for driving off the back foot.

PICTURES: PA PHOTOS



**1 OPEN FEET AND SHOULDERS** SLIGHTLY more to align yourself to the angle of the bowler. Your back swing needs to go back towards 1st/2nd slip thus aligning to the bowler. This should happen naturally if your feet and shoulders are slightly more open than they are when you face the right-arm over bowler.  
**Common faults:** a) Stance too sideways on (feet and shoulders) and therefore initially poorly aligned to the bowler. This is where the process begins of tipping to the offside, being blocked off and playing around the front pad.  
b) Backswing too straight and therefore hidden behind the body. This means the bat has to swing like a golf swing to get at the ball and therefore the batter plays across the line and ends up too chest-on. At the point of contact you will be too side on and therefore blocked off and in a poor position to access the ball.

**4 THE 'V' BETWEEN MID-OFF** and mid-on which is your basic target area for the right-arm over bowler should now be adjusted more towards the leg side. Now the V should be between very straight mid-off and wide mid-on: this will help you naturally align your body position to where you are looking to hit the ball and you will be well balanced. To drive well through mid-on and mid-wicket you need to work harder to maintain a dominant top hand throughout the shot. It is all too easy to bring the bottom hand in and hit across the line thus collapsing your final shape.  
To play the left-armed well, you must be able to play the on drive very well with perfect technique. If you have the

### in practice

Adjusting your angles to the left-arm-over fast bowler



**2 PUSH YOUR HEAD** and NOT your shoulder towards the ball. Too often players lean towards the ball with their shoulder causing them to tip towards the off side and therefore play around their front pad.  
Your front and, more importantly, back foot need to point up the wicket more, to better align your hips towards where they are trying to hit the ball. The heel of the back foot must be raised prior to hitting the shot to ensure good balance and alignment.  
**Common faults:** a) Front or, more importantly, back foot lands too sideways thus making the batter blocked off. Again, this is because the hips are too sideways thus limiting your reach and balance.  
b) putting the front foot outside the line of leg stump when playing the on drive thus getting squared up. This results in tipping to the off side and also trying to play the ball to square on the offside.

confidence to play this shot you it will make facing the left-armed easy because you will be playing straight towards the correct target area in your revised V.  
**Common fault:** a) Too much bottom hand in the drives causing hitting across the line.  
b) Wanting to hit the ball on the off side because the V between mid off and mid on has not been specifically adjusted to the left armed and therefore you are trying to hit the ball in the wrong areas against the swing.  
Gary Palmer has coached a roster of county and international players and helped young players from outside the system to win pro contracts. For info on courses and one-to-one coaching: [www.ccmacademy.co.uk](http://www.ccmacademy.co.uk)



**3 LOOK TO MAKE CONTACT** with the ball slightly further forward of the front pad than usual when the ball is on middle and leg stump line, but still remember to let the ball come to you. When playing the on drive make contact with the ball in line with the front foot to encourage good balance.  
Take a slightly smaller stride: this will allow you to open up and adjust your shoulder position to the ball swinging in to you thus giving you good access to the ball. This is especially important when playing the short ball off the back foot. Look to hit the ball through mid-on and straight mid wicket when it pitches on leg stump line, rather than flicking the ball through square leg.  
**Common faults:** a) Making contact with the ball level with the front foot  
b) Taking too big a stride, which limits the batter's ability to let the ball come and adjust as the ball swings in.

