

The Winning 8U Batting Order Strategy

The key to a successful 8U batting order strategy **is identifying your good hitters** and strategically placing them in your line up. Let's start with the premise that there are 12 players on your fastpitch softball team and that 6 are good hitters and 6 are weak hitters. Of course, by the end of the year they will all be great hitters, but for now we'll assume you haven't had enough time to fully develop them. Let's also assume that these games typically only last about 3 innings.

The goal is to **conservatively maximize your run production** without creating too much downside risk. Essentially, you want to load up the top of your batting order **while sprinkling in a weak hitter** from time to time. The theory is that you will score big in the 1st and 3rd innings and sacrifice the 2nd inning. Here is how my line up looks:

1. Good Hitter (and fast on the bases)
2. Good Hitter (also needs to be fast)
3. Weak Hitter
4. Good Hitter (Strongest Hitter)
5. Good Hitter
6. Weak Hitter
7. Good Hitter
8. Good Hitter
9. Weak Hitter
10. Weak Hitter
11. Weak Hitter
12. Weakest Hitter

If all goes as planned, this batting order should produce the maximum number of runs in the 1st inning, while mixing in a couple of outs along the way to push you through your line up a little farther. This 8U batting order strategy also allows for one of your good hitters to make an out without killing the inning.

The most common mistake **is bunching all of your good hitters** to the top of the batting order and leaving the weakest hitters at the bottom. Again, with the premise there are 6 good hitters and 6 weak hitters, it certainly puts your team in a great position to score in the 1st inning, but it could weaken your chances in the 3rd inning. If one or two of those good hitters get out in the 1st inning, you may not get to the top of your line up with less than a couple of outs in the 3rd inning.

Good things happen when runners are on base. In the Winning 8U Batting Order Strategy, at least three of your weak hitters should come to bat with runners on base. As any coach knows, there is a certain amount of confusion and pressure on the defense when runners are on base. This **extra sense of pressure on the defense** could be **the little edge** your weaker hitter needs to beat out a ground ball.