BATTING PRACTICE AID

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Provided is a way for a hitter to practice hitting a baseball or softball to improve hitting skills as well as improving eye-hand coordination while increasing strength in the forearms and arms. Disclosed is a square tubular metal frame that can be easily broken down and fit into a small bag for transporting. This tubular frame can be setup in minutes, sliding the metal tubular frame together, utilizing locking safety pins and can either be equipped with a baseball or softball to practice one’s hitting skills. This hitting device is fully adjustable to the hitter’s height and strength level.
BATTING PRACTICE AID

[0001] This application claims the benefit of U.S. Provisional Patent Application Ser. No. 60/714,983, filed Sep. 7, 2005.

TECHNICAL FIELD & BACKGROUND

[0002] The present invention generally relates to the field of baseball or softball. More specifically, the present invention relates to baseball or softball and batting practice.

[0003] There is a constant search in the baseball or softball industry to find new ways to help increase the performance of batters. The present invention delivers higher batting averages by providing a way to practice repetitive batting without retrieving balls after they are hit.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0004] The present invention will be described by way of exemplary embodiments, but not limitations, illustrated in the accompanying drawings in which like references denote similar elements, and in which:

[0005] FIG. 1 illustrates a drawing of a perspective view of a batting practice aid, in accordance with one embodiment of the present invention;

[0006] FIG. 2 illustrates a drawing of a baseball or softball attached to a main vertical support, in accordance with one embodiment of the present invention; and

[0007] FIG. 3 illustrates a drawing of a side view of the batting practice aid, in accordance with one embodiment of the present invention.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF ILLUSTRATIVE EMBODIMENTS

[0008] Various aspects of the illustrative embodiments will be described using terms commonly employed by those skilled in the art to convey the substance of their work to others skilled in the art. However, it will be apparent to those skilled in the art that the present invention may be practiced with only some of the described aspects. For purposes of explanation, specific numbers, materials and configurations are set forth in order to provide a thorough understanding of the illustrative embodiments. However, it will be apparent to one skilled in the art that the present invention may be practiced without the specific details in other instances, well-known features are omitted or simplified in order not to obscure the illustrative embodiments.

[0009] Various operations will be described as multiple discrete operations, in turn, in a manner that is most helpful in understanding the present invention, however, the order of description should not be construed as to imply that these operations are necessarily order dependent. In particular, these operations need not be performed in the order of presentation.

[0010] The phrase “in one embodiment” is used repeatedly. The phrase generally does not refer to the same embodiment, however, it may. The terms “comprising”, “having” and “including” are synonymous, unless the context dictates otherwise.

[0011] Referring now to FIG. 1 as in one embodiment shown is a batting practice aid 10 having a plurality of legs. The plurality of legs have a plurality of front support legs 12 and a plurality of outrigger legs 14 to maintain stability while the batting practice aid device 10 is in use. Both the plurality of front support legs 12 and the plurality of outrigger legs 14 are attached to a fully moveable vertical support 16 via a frame base 18. The fully moveable vertical support 16 is attached to the fully moveable vertical main support 15 which is then movably attached to the frame base 18. The frame base 18 will have a cut out 22 so that the fully moveable vertical main support 15 can move from a substantially vertical position 24 to a forward position 26 that may be in a range of motion making and angle 1 to 45 degrees from the vertical position 24. The fully moveable vertical main support 15 moves forward to the forward position 26 and then back to the substantially vertical position 24 as the batter makes his swing. This angle may be any appropriate angle to meet a batter’s needs. The fully moveable vertical main support 15 will stop at a return mechanism stop support 28. Shown is forward support 30. Both the plurality of front support legs 12 and the plurality of outrigger legs 14 and frame base 18 are attached to each other by interlocking themselves together that may be one sliding inside the other and may be pinned together by removable locking safety pins. It is understood that the plurality of front support legs 12 and the plurality of outrigger legs 14 may be attached together and to frame base 18 by any appropriate means including bolts, screws, pins, adhesive, VELCRO or the like. Any other connection of parts in the batting practice aid 10 may be done by any appropriate means including bolts, screws, pins, adhesive, VELCRO or the like.

[0012] Referring to FIG. 2 as in one embodiment shown is a baseball or softball 40 mounted to an L bracket 42 via a bolt 44, the bolt 44 may be secured to the L bracket 42 by a locking washer 41 and a nut 43. Attached to the L bracket 42 is a ball spring 46. The baseball or softball 40 and the L bracket 42 may be slid through a protective sleeve 48 which is attached to the fully adjustable vertical main support 16 via a hose clamp 50. The protective sleeve 48 may be made out of rubber, clear plastic or any suitable material to protect the inside parts, provide rigidity and possibly allow a clear view of the internal parts. The baseball or softball 40 is attached to the fully adjustable vertical support 16 via removable locking safety pin 52. The removable locking pin 52 moves to different holes 59 along moveable vertical support 16 to increase or decrease the tension in ball spring 46.

[0013] Referring to FIG. 3 as in one embodiment attached to the fully moveable vertical main support 15 are two horizontal support brackets 54 including holes. At least one return spring 56 can be attached to the horizontal support brackets 54 and then attached to the frame base 18, they may be attached using a bolt, locking washer and nut or a removable safety pin. These return springs 56 can be adjusted forward and back via different holes in the frame base 18 using a safety pin. These allow for adjustability of spring tension to accommodate different batter’s strength or a player’s desired tension to build strength. The moveable vertical support 16 may slide inside of the moveable vertical main support 15 securing both together by a vertical locking safety pin 13. The adjustable connection of the moveable vertical support 16 inside of the moveable main support 15 allows for adjustability to height differences of players. Fully moveable vertical main support 15 is pivotally
attached to frame base 18 and will stop at the return mechanism stop support 28. Main vertical main support 15 may have an adaptor to connect vertical main support 15 to frame base 18 or main vertical support 15 may be tapered to fit inside frame base 18. Any one or all parts in batting practice aid 10 may be made out of steel, plastic or any appropriate material also the individual parts may be round, angle iron, tubular or any appropriate shape. Any one or all parts can be broken down and stored in a carry bag to allow for convenient mobility to various competitions or practices.

While the present invention has been related in terms of the foregoing embodiments, those skilled in the art will recognize that the invention is not limited to the embodiments described. The present invention can be practiced with modification and alteration within the spirit and scope of the appended claims. Thus, the description is to be regarded as illustrative instead of restrictive on the present invention.

What is claimed is:

1. A device for batting practice comprising:
   a returnable ball;
   a vertical frame supporting the returnable ball, and
   a main frame supporting the vertical frame at least one adjustable tension spring between the main frame and the vertical frame.
2. The device of claim 1 wherein the vertical frame and main frame can be broken down for storage.
3. The device of claim 1 wherein the vertical and main frame are made out of square tube.
4. The device of claim 1 wherein the vertical and main frame are made out of round tube.
5. The device of claim 1 wherein the vertical and main frames are made out of a selected one of plastic, metal and wood.
6. The device of claim 1 wherein the vertical frame is connected to the main frame by an adaptor.
7. The device of claim 6 wherein the adaptor has a first and second end the first end is hingely connected to the main frame and the second end is fixed to the vertical frame.
8. The device of claim 1 wherein the ball is connected to the vertical frame by an L bracket with a spring surrounded by a protective sleeve.
9. A device to practice batting comprising:
   a returnable ball connected to an L bracket and ball spring the L bracket and ball spring surrounded by a protective sleeve;
   a vertical frame supporting the returnable ball the vertical frame has a first end and a second end the first end is connected to the ball spring, and
   a main frame supporting the vertical frame at least one adjustable tension spring between the main frame and the vertical frame the second end of the vertical frame hingely connected to the main frame.
10. The device of claim 9 wherein the vertical frame and main frame can be broken down for storage.
11. The device of claim 9 wherein the vertical and main frame are made out of square tube.
12. The device of claim 9 wherein the vertical and main frame are made out of round tube.
13. The device of claim 9 wherein the vertical and main frames are made out of a selected one of plastic, metal and wood.
14. The device of claim 9 wherein the vertical frame is connected to the main frame by an adaptor.
15. The device of claim 14 wherein the adaptor has a first and second end the first end is hingely connected to the main frame and the second end is fixed to the vertical frame.
16. A method for batting practice comprising:
   securing a ball to a vertical support the ball in a vertical position;
   swinging a bat at the ball; and
   returning the ball to the vertical position by at least one tension spring.
17. The method of claim 16 wherein the vertical support is maintained in the vertical position by being connected to a main frame with a stop.
18. The method of claim 16 wherein the ball is connected to the vertical support the tension spring connects to the vertical support and a main frame.
19. The method of claim 16 wherein the at least one tension spring is adjustable to accommodate players of different heights.
20. The method of claim 16 wherein the vertical support hingely attaches to a main support by an adaptor.

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