

## **LEVEL-0 CERTIFICATE COURSE IN CRICKET COACHING**

**Prof. Abhijit Thander  
Sports (Cricket Specialisation)**

**IIT Kharagpur**

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### **Lecture 63: Methods and Approach of Batting**

Batting in cricket is a unique skill that requires both technical precision and mental resilience. Unlike other sports, no mistake in cricket is treated as harshly as getting out. Every player is required to bat and contribute to the team's total score, regardless of whether they are a specialist batter or a bowler. While not all players bowl, everyone must bat, which makes it important for each player to understand and adopt an effective approach to batting. The goal is not just survival at the crease, but to score runs consistently and contribute meaningfully to the team's performance.

One of the most fundamental principles for any batter is to "let the ball come to you." This means that a batter should wait for the ball to come closer to their body before playing a shot. Playing the ball late helps the batter maintain control, especially against fast bowlers, and reduces the risk of mistimed shots. A classic example of this technique is Inzamam-ul-Haq, who was known for making even the fastest deliveries appear slower by playing the ball late, showcasing remarkable timing and control. Batters need to play close to their body, particularly when defending or playing soft hands. This technique minimises the chances of edges carrying to the slips or other close fielders. Soft hands ensure that the ball drops in a favourable position, allowing batters to take easy singles or rotate the strike. Additionally, when in doubt, a batter should commit fully to either a front-foot or back-foot shot. Halfway decisions are risky and often lead to mistakes.

Batters should avoid playing strokes to deliveries outside the off-stump unless they are in a position to score. If the ball is bowled wide or there is space between the ball and the body, the batter should press the back foot on the line of the ball and play accordingly. This helps in maintaining proper balance and control. If the batter is uncomfortable with a particular delivery, it is better to defend than to attempt a risky shot. Similarly, aggressive strokes should be reserved for deliveries that the batter is confident about, particularly those bowled within their ideal scoring range. Loose deliveries should be punished, and when a batter chooses to go over the top, it is best to aim straight, targeting the area between mid-wicket and extra cover.

Running between the wickets is a vital aspect of batting. Batters should focus on running hard and converting singles into doubles and twos into triples. During the innings, batters should observe the gaps in the field rather than focusing on the fielders. This helps in identifying opportunities for runs and ensures that the batters remain in control of the game. In practice, batters need to replicate match conditions. The first few minutes in the nets should focus on getting settled, followed by building momentum, and in the final phase, taking risks and playing more freely.

When preparing to bat, the first 20 to 30 minutes are critical. A batter must focus on playing along the ground in a V shape, meaning shots should ideally be played in the region between mid-on and mid-off. Batters should leave deliveries outside the off-stump and aim to rotate the strike by running quick singles. After getting established, a batter should consolidate by looking for ones and twos, punishing loose balls and continuing to play shots along the ground. As the batter settles in, the pressure can be shifted onto the bowlers by increasing the intensity of the stroke play.

Tactically, while waiting for the turn to bat, a player must observe key elements like the behaviour of the pitch, the type and quality of bowling, and field placements. Being aware of the conditions of the outfield and the body language of opponents can help a batter make better decisions once at the crease. Confidence is key when walking into bat box, as a batter's presence can impact the mindset of the opposition. It is essential to take time to settle in, adapt to the pitch and bowlers, and avoid rushing the pre-shot routine. Early on, batters should focus on playing along the ground, looking to build an innings slowly and steadily. Being aware of the strengths and weaknesses of the bowlers is also crucial.

Effective communication with the batting partner is important for rotating the strike and maintaining momentum. While batting, always be aware of the field placements, as this will give clues about where scoring opportunities may arise. It's important to keep the pressure on the fielders by turning singles into doubles and avoiding unnecessary risks. Batters should be conscious of the match situation, understanding when to take calculated risks, such as going for an occasional over-the-top shot to disrupt the fielding positions.

As a batter, it is important to read the match situation, anticipate any bowling changes, and adapt accordingly. Understanding the cues provided by the bowler and fielding positions can help avoid falling into traps. Lastly, a batter should be mindful of their limitations, avoiding shots they have not practised and staying within their comfort zone. If the

situation demands taking risks, do so within areas of strength, always keeping a tactical approach to reading the game.