The two-handed sidearm strike is commonly used in ball games such as rounders, tee-ball, softball and baseball. Young children delight in the experience of batting a ball and sending it away with force.

This is a challenging hand-eye and foot coordination task for your young child, especially if the ball is travelling towards him. Start by allowing your child to strike a stationary ball, or one that is hung at waist level. Also have your child try striking with the hand or fist first, before progressing to the use of bats or racquets (e.g. rolled-up newspapers, foam bats, short-shaft badminton racquets).
Developmental Phases
Two-handed Sidearm Striking

**Initial**
- Feet are stationary.
- Elbows are bent and arms swing bat from back to front.
- Body faces direction of oncoming object.
- Force is produced by straightening the elbows and swinging the bat downward.

**Transition**
- Hands hold bat close to the body.
- Prior to the strike, trunk turns to side, away from the oncoming object.
- Body turns towards the object, with minimal body weight transfer from the back foot to the front foot.
- Force is produced when elbows straighten and the bat is brought to strike downward at the object.

**Mature**
- Hands hold bat near shoulder level with elbows bent at about 90°.
- To generate force, trunk rotates to the side as the body weight transfers to the back foot prior to the strike.
- As trunk rotates, bat is swung parallel to ground and body weight shifts from the back foot to the front foot.
- Bat strikes at the object as the body continues to rotate.
- Body weight on front foot at contact. Arms follow through, swinging bat over opposite shoulder.

**Approximate Age of Development (in years)**

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<th>4</th>
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<td>Transition</td>
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<td>Mature</td>
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Teaching Strategies
Two-handed Sidearm Striking

What to do if your child...

... needs to learn the pre-strike position?
- Place footprint markers as visual cues.

... is unable to strike an oncoming object?
- Create a simple tee. Cut top off plastic bottle or roll a vanguard sheet and place over a cone.
- Put a medium-sized beach ball on it.
- Get your child to strike with the palm/fist first before using a shorter, wider bat or a newspaper roll.

... is learning to strike an oncoming ball?
- Hang a beach ball at your child’s chest level. Child to bat the stationary ball.
- If your child is able, progress to gently swinging the ball towards him, and using big to medium-sized balls.

... tends to keep arms close to the body during the strike?
- Pre-strike, get your child to hold the bat with his arms flapped outward or ‘chicken wing arms’.
- To strike, get your child to stretch arms out. A useful cue could be: “Lock your elbows and throw the key. Keep your elbows straight throughout the strike!”
**Variations in**

“Can your child do a two-handed sidearm strike...?”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How the body moves</th>
<th>Force/Effort</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Flow</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• and send the ball far away</td>
<td>• only when he hear the whistle</td>
<td>• with his arms straightened out like a robot</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• at a ball gently</td>
<td>• slowly</td>
<td>• without moving his feet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• at a hanging empty milk carton (waist level) with a racquet</td>
<td>• in fast-forward motion</td>
<td>• while taking a step forward as he strikes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• with feet on the footprint markers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• at a ball on the tee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• a ball towards the wall</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Direction/Pathways</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• to hit the smiley face poster</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• downward</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• to land the object on the line</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Levels/Extensions</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• at objects placed at slightly below waist level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• with his hands swinging from the waist</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>With whom/What the body moves</th>
<th>Self (body parts)/People</th>
<th>Objects</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• with both hands</td>
<td>• at the hanging plastic bottles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• with left/right hand</td>
<td>• with an implement (newspaper roll)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• and send an object over your head</td>
<td>• to send an object over the net</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**COMBINATIONS**

- At an empty milk carton on a tee lightly with the newspaper roll
- At a ball on a tee with great force to land it across a line marked by two cones at a distance, without moving his feet
Activity 1
Two-handed Sidearm Striking

WHAT YOU NEED

• Empty plastic bottles
• Newspaper, rolled up to make a rod

HOW TO PLAY

• Hang a few empty plastic bottles at your child's waist level.
• Have your child bat at the bottles with his hands. He must put his hands together, with arms interlocked and outstretched.
• Repeat the activity, using a newspaper rod.

• Challenge your child to complete batting at all the bottles within a specific time frame.

BE AWARE

• Get your child to stand sideways to the empty bottles.
• He should keep his feet shoulder-width apart to maintain balance.
Activity 2  
Two-handed Sidearm Striking

WHAT YOU NEED
- Newspaper rolled up to make a rod
- Paper rolled up to make a cone
- A ball

HOW TO PLAY
- Place a ball on top of a paper cone. Position the cone at your child’s waist level.
- Get your child to use a newspaper rod to hit the ball towards you, the catcher.
- Have him count the number of successful strikes within a specific time frame.

• For an older child, increase the distance between you and your child.

BE AWARE
- Your child should first lift his arms and bend his elbows like chicken wings. As he bats, he should allow his arms to straighten and rotate. Arm rotation will generate force for effective batting.
- Prompt your child to always keep his arms and bat straight, and below his head.