



26 Fundamental Drills for Flawless Pitching Mechanics

**Step By
Step
Workouts**

- Designed For Ages 8-18
- Quickly Builds Key Pitching Fundamentals
- Perfect for Back Yard or Small Space Workouts
- Solo, Partner, or Team Training

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

DRY RUN SERIES 4

Push Off Drill	5
Stride Foot	6
Balance Hop Back Leg	7
Balance Hop front Leg	8
Balance Hop Both Legs	9
Stride Drill	10
Fence Drill	11
Leg Lift Drill	12
Arm Lift Drill	13
Front Arm Drill	14
The Chest Drill	15
The Chin Drill	16
The Eyes Drill	17
Heel Over Drill	18
Chair Drill	19
Trajectory Drill	20

LIVE BALL DRILLS 21

Rotation Drill	22
Right to Left Drill	23
Target Catch Drill	24
String Drill	25
Towel Drill	26
Pads for Stride Drill	27
Paper Cup Drill	28
Batting Tee Drill	29
Broom Stick Drill	30
Screen Drill	31



DRY RUN SERIES

1

PUSH OFF DRILL

SETUP:

Pitchers line up anywhere on the field. They have a glove and a ball.

PURPOSE:

Pitchers work on balancing on their push off foot.



Starting from the stretch position.



Balancing on the push off foot.

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Players start from the stretch.
2. They shift their weight onto their push off foot and balance on it as they raise their front leg.
3. They hold their position balancing on their push off foot with their front leg in the air until coach says down.

COACHING TIPS:

- To begin, pitchers should be turning push off foot "toe ahead of heel."
- They should be balancing off the inside of the foot.
- When picking up the front leg the toe leaves the ground last.
- Back knee should be pointed toward the target; back knee is unlocked.

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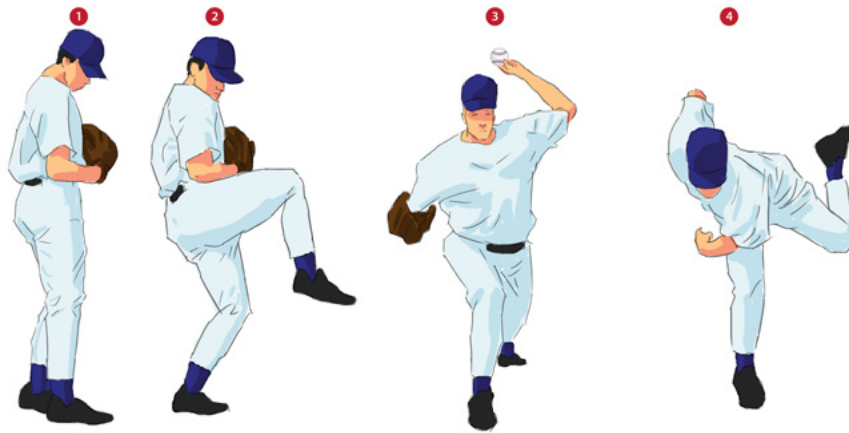
STRIDE FOOT

SETUP:

Pitchers line up anywhere on the field. They have a glove and a ball.

PURPOSE:

Pitchers work on taking a proper stride step.



Starting from the stretch position

Raising the leg.

Taking the stride step.

Maintaining balance on the follow-through.

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Players start from the stretch.
2. They shift their weight onto their push off foot and balance on it as they raise their opposite leg.
3. They then take a stride step forward and simulate a throw.
4. They hold the throw follow-through. Then go back and repeat the drill.
5. Drill continues until coach says "stop."
6. Drill should also then be run from the wind-up.

COACHING TIPS:

- On the stride, pitchers should land on the inside ball of their front foot and maintain good balance.
- The goal is for the pitcher to be able to hang in the follow-through position for three seconds.

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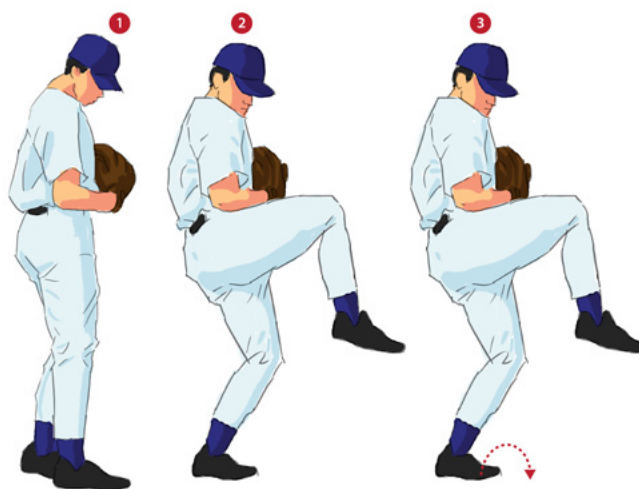
BALANCE HOP BACK LEG

SETUP:

Pitchers line up anywhere on the field. They have a glove and a ball.

PURPOSE:

Pitchers work on improving their balance.



Start.

Balance on push off foot.

Hop forward.

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Players start from the stretch.
2. They shift their weight onto their push off foot and balance on it as they raise their opposite leg.
3. They then hop forward on their back leg three times or each time the coach says "hop."
4. Drill should also be run from the wind-up.

COACHING TIPS:

- Hops should be short, balanced and controlled.
- Hop on inside of foot.
- Toe should precede the heel as pitcher hops forward – pitchers with poor balance may point the toes backward and bring the heel forward first..

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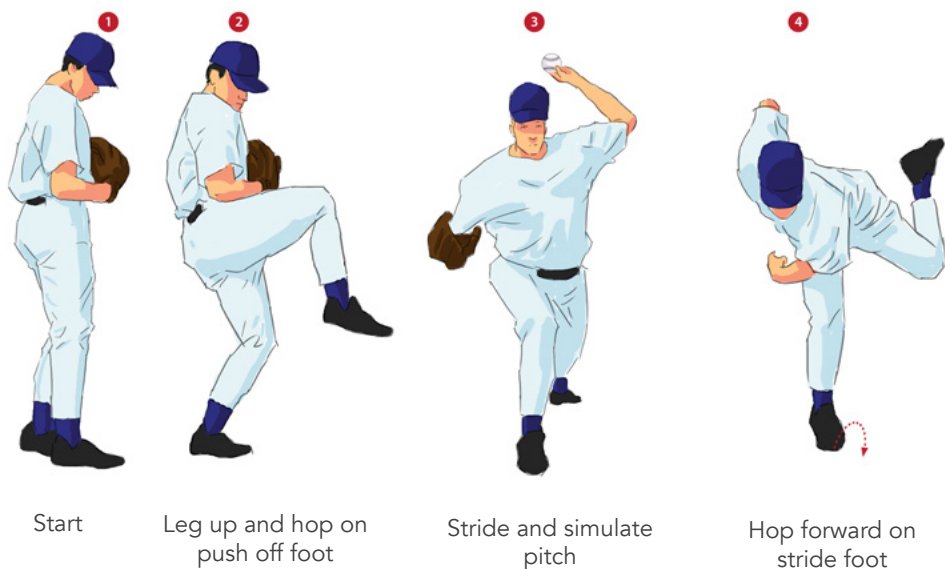
BALANCE HOP FRONT LEG

SETUP:

Pitchers line up anywhere on the field. They have a glove and a ball.

PURPOSE:

Pitchers work on improving their balance.



INSTRUCTIONS:

1. layers start from the stretch.
2. They shift their weight onto their push off foot and balance on it as they raise their opposite leg.
3. They then take a stride step and make a simulated throw, holding the follow-through.
4. They then hop forward on their front leg three times or each time the coach says "hop."

COACHING TIPS:

- Toe stays ahead of heel on each hop.
- Weight should be on the inside of the foot. Knee is also positioned inside.

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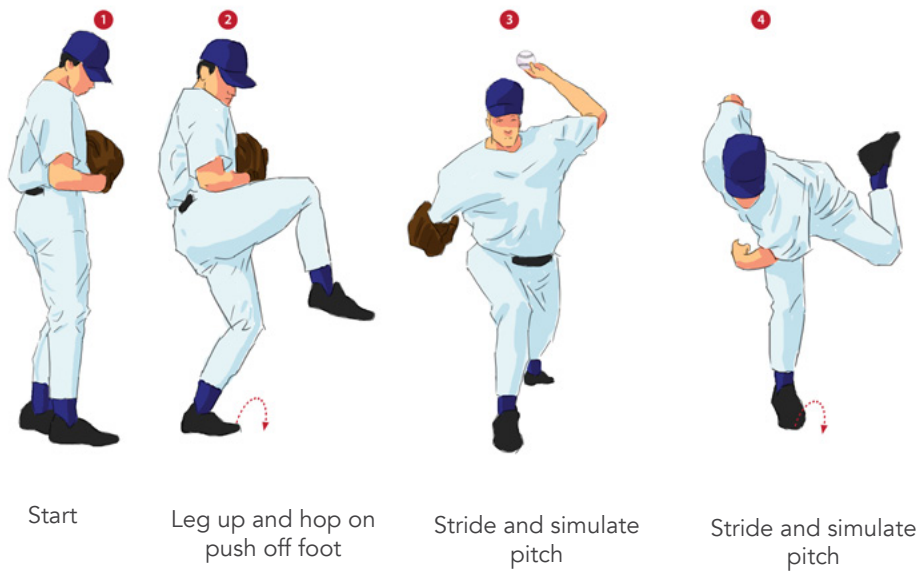
BALANCE HOP BOTH LEGS

SETUP:

Pitchers line up anywhere on the field. They have a glove and a ball.

PURPOSE:

Pitchers work on improving their balance.



INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Players start from the stretch.
2. They shift their weight onto their push off foot and balance on it as they raise their opposite leg.
3. They then take three hops forward off their back leg.
4. They then take a stride step and make a simulated throw, holding the follow-through.
5. They then hop forward on their front leg three times.
6. Drill should also be run from the wind-up.

COACHING TIPS:

- Hops are short, balanced and controlled.
- Toe stays ahead of heel on each hop.

6.

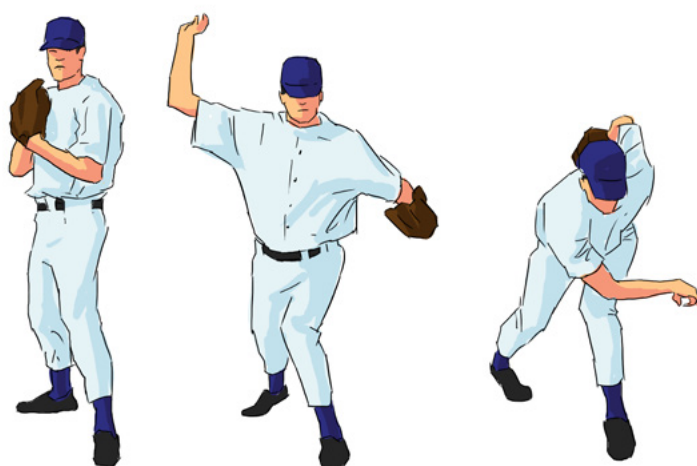
STRIDE DRILL

SETUP:

Pitchers line up anywhere on the field. They have a glove and a ball.

PURPOSE:

Pitchers work on improving their balance on their front leg.



Starting position.

Simulated throw.

Finishing position.

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Players start from the stride position.
2. First, they simply shift their weight from the inside of the back foot to the inside of the front leg. They do this repeatedly to get a feel for proper weight shifting.
3. Next, they simulate a throw and hold the follow-through.

COACHING TIPS:

- The weight shifts at the beginning of this drill are important because they teach the pitcher to load up and then take the weight forward – when a player is doing this part of the drill stress “inside to inside.”
- On the simulated throw, pitcher should keep weight on inside of front foot. Front knee should finish inside the throwing elbow. Toes should be down flat against the ground.

7.

FENCE DRILL

SETUP:

Pitchers line up next to a fence.

PURPOSE:

Pitchers work on opening their front foot properly on their stride step.



Lift foot slightly



Slowly rotate toes to point to home plate

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Player puts one hand on the fence for balance.
2. He puts his weight on the inside of his back foot and lifts his front foot, with the foot closed and toes pointed to the side
3. He traces a semi-circle in the dirt using the toes of his front foot, ending with the toes pointed forward (toward home plate)

COACHING TIPS:

- On stride step, pitcher should be staying “closed, closed, closed” and then open foot at last second. Rest of body stays closed.
- Jerking the stride foot open too soon will throw off the pitcher’s angle to the plate.

8.

LEG LIFT DRILL

SETUP:

Pitchers line up anywhere on the field. A coach or another player gets on one knee to the pitcher's front side.

PURPOSE:

Pitchers practice lifting their foot (and leg) properly.



Coach sets up the chute.



Pitcher brings foot up into the chute

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Pitcher does his normal leg lift.
2. Kneeling coach, or player, holds his hands out to form a chute for the player's front foot to make sure he is lifting it properly and does not have it too far forward or too far back.
3. Repeat until coach says, "Stop."
4. Next, player brings his foot into the chute and then takes his stride step forward and simulates a throw.
5. Repeat until coach says, "Stop."

COACHING TIPS:

- On leg lift, knee should be coming up straight toward opposite side cheek. Height is whatever is comfortable for the pitcher.
- Knee and ankle should be relaxed with toes pointed down.
- Pitcher should be able to look down leg and have knee, ankle and toes in alignment. If foot is tucked in too much or extended too far out that can tighten muscles and interfere with pitcher's delivery. Pitcher should always be relaxed in their delivery.
- When pitcher takes stride there should be hardly any force against front hand by the foot. Pitcher's hip moves, not the foot. If foot pulls the hands forward the pitcher is too tight.

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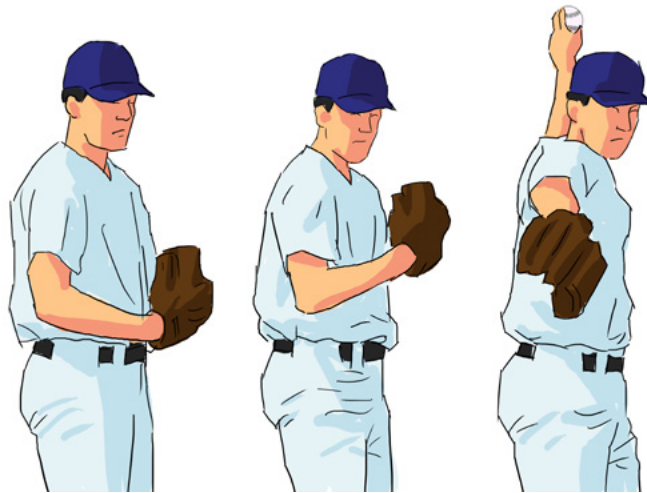
ARM LIFT DRILL

SETUP:

Pitchers line up anywhere on the field. They each have a ball and a glove.

PURPOSE:

Pitchers work on breaking their hands at their midline.



Starting position.

Lifting the hands.

Dropping the hands, breaking them and lifting them again.

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Pitcher stands normally.
2. He holds the ball in his glove along the midline of this body.
3. He brings the glove and ball up together and then drops them and separates his hands – bringing the ball back and the glove forward.
4. He repeats this motion until coach says, "Stop."

COACHING TIPS:

- Pitchers' breaking points for their hands can vary by height, many break their hands at their waistline but it can be higher or lower – the key with this drill is maintaining consistency to build comfort.

10.

FRONT ARM DRILL

SETUP:

Pitchers line up anywhere on the field. They each have a ball and a glove.

PURPOSE:

Pitchers focus on bringing their front arm up.



Starting position.



Lifting the hands.



Dropping the hands, breaking them and lifting them again.



Raising the front arm and turning over the thumb.

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Pitcher stands normally.
2. He holds the ball in his glove along the midline of this body.
3. He brings the glove and ball up together and then drops them and separates his hands – bringing the ball back and the glove arm forward.
4. In this drill, he particularly focuses on the front arm coming up slow and gently while the back arm goes up quickly.
5. He repeats this motion until coach says, "Stop."

COACHING TIPS:

- Front arm should come up and then back in. The pitcher should also "turn the thumb over" on the movement so that he finishes with the glove opening on top.

11.

THE CHEST DRILL

SETUP:

Pitchers line up anywhere on the field. They each have a ball and a glove.

PURPOSE:

Pitchers work on getting chest level and pointed toward home plate after the break.



Starting position.



Breaking the hands and bringing the throwing arm back.



Leveling the chest and squaring to home plate.



Following through.

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Pitcher stands normally.
2. He holds the ball in his glove along the midline of this body.
3. He brings the glove and ball up together and then drops them and separates his hands – bringing the ball back and the glove arm forward.
4. As the pitching arm moves forward, he “barrels” his chest and squares it to home plate.
5. He repeats this process until coach says, “Stop.”

COACHING TIPS:

- Once pitchers get a feel for the drill they should go through it at full speed to simulate game action.

12.

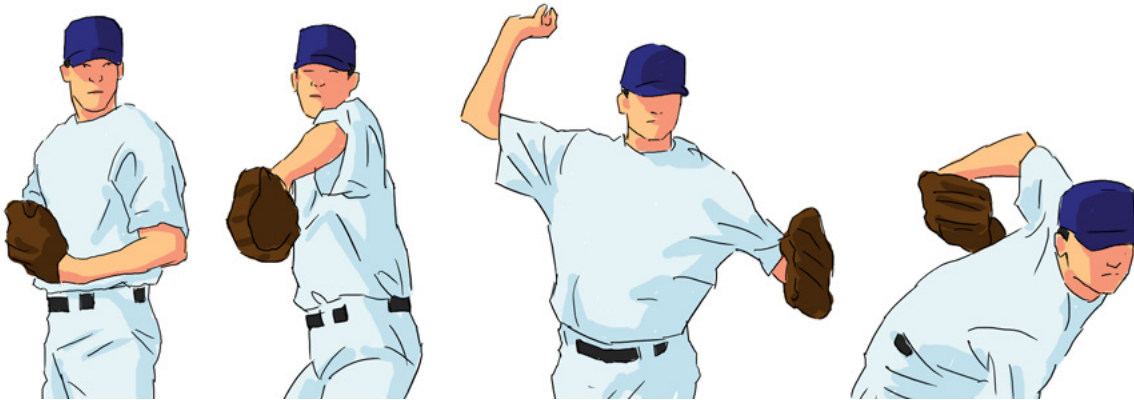
THE CHIN DRILL

SETUP:

Pitchers line up anywhere on the field. They each have a ball and a glove.

PURPOSE:

Pitchers practice keeping their chin parallel to the ground when throwing.



Starting position.

Breaking the hands and bringing the throwing arm back.

Leveling the chest and squaring to home plate.

Following through with chin parallel to ground.

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Pitcher stands normally.
2. He holds the ball in his glove along the midline of this body.
3. He brings the glove and ball up together and then drops them and separates his hands – bringing the ball back and the glove arm forward.
4. As the pitching arm moves forward, he “barrels” his chest and squares it to home plate.
5. In this drill he focuses on keeping his chin parallel to the ground all the way through follow-through.
6. He repeats this process until coach says, “Stop.”

COACHING TIPS:

- Drill is run the same as the chest drill only now the pitcher focuses on keeping his chin up and parallel to the ground.
- Keeping chin up can help improve balance throughout the motion and especially upon landing on the front foot.

13.

THE EYES DRILL

SETUP:

Pitchers line up anywhere on the field. They each have a ball and a glove.

PURPOSE:

Pitchers practice keeping eyes level and on the target when throwing.



Starting position.



Breaking the hands and bringing the throwing arm back.



Leveling the chest and squaring to home plate.



Finishing with eyes on the target.

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Pitcher stands normally.
2. He holds the ball in his glove along the midline of this body.
3. He brings the glove and ball up together and then drops them and separates his hands – bringing the ball back and the glove arm forward.
4. As the pitching arm moves forward, he “barrels” his chest and squares it to home plate.

COACHING TIPS:

- Pitcher should be putting his eyes “right in the catcher’s mitt” in this drill.

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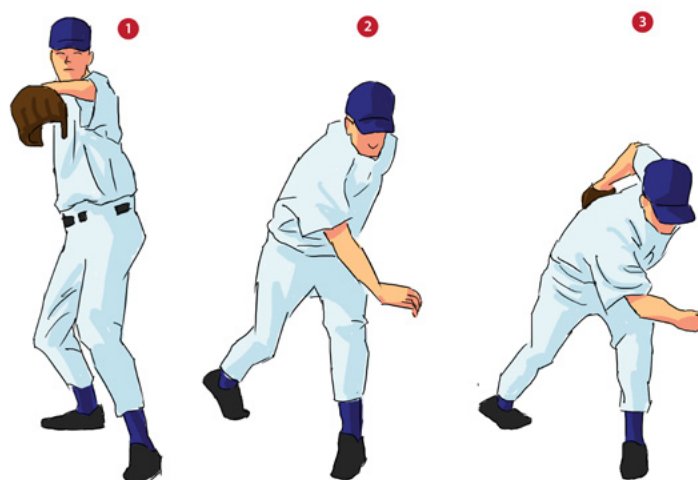
HEEL OVER DRILL

SETUP:

Pitchers line up anywhere on the field. They each have a ball and a glove.

PURPOSE:

Pitchers work on turning the heel over on their back foot when they throw.



Start

Simulate the pitch

Turning the back heel over.

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Pitcher starts in stride position.
2. He simulates a throw and at the end of the throw he turns his back heel over.
3. He repeats this process until coach says, "Stop."

COACHING TIPS:

- Make sure pitchers aren't turning their heels over too soon or too late on the throw. It should be done naturally as part of the follow-through.
- Pitcher should be pushing off his back foot on the throw and bending his front knee as he comes forward.

15.

CHAIR DRILL

SETUP:

Pitchers line up anywhere on the field with a chair behind them.

PURPOSE:

Pitchers practice the heel over move as well as getting into a good load position.



Back leg on chair.



Turning the back heel over to finish.

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Pitcher gets in stationary stride position with his back foot resting on the chair.
2. Player simulates a throw, finishing by following-through and doing a heel over while keeping his foot on the chair.
3. He repeats this process until coach says, "Stop."

COACHING TIPS:

- This drill is great for teaching heel over as well as for helping pitchers get a feel for pitching down hill, which is essential to being an effective pitcher.
- Pitchers should finish with knee inside elbow and eyes on the target.

16.

TRAJECTORY DRILL

SETUP:

Pitchers line up anywhere on the field. They each have a ball and a glove.

PURPOSE:

Pitchers work on extension, right to left action and getting a good release point.



Starting position.



Pitchers go "downhill" as they simulate a throw.

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Pitcher gets into load position with throwing arm raised and front glove hand approximately shoulder height.
2. Pitcher then goes downhill and simulates a throw to the target.
3. He repeats this process until coach says, "Stop."
4. Next, have pitcher break his hands before going into the load position and then simulating the throw.
5. To work on balance even more, have the pitcher follow-through on the simulated throw and lift his back leg. He should then hang in that position (with back leg up in the air) for a three-second count.
6. You could also have the pitcher work on the heel over after the throw. You could also have them take a stride step at the beginning of the drill. Then you could add a leg lift so that they leg lift, stride and heel over all together.

COACHING TIPS:

- The goal of this drill is for the pitcher to get a feel for having the ball back in a good load position and then extending and coming forward. Look for good balance on the feet and for proper weight shift backward and forward .
- Pitcher must keep knee inside on the stride and follow-through.
- Also, make sure pitcher is getting a good push off with back foot during the throwing motion.



LIVE BALL DRILLS

17.

ROTATION DRILL

SETUP:

Pitchers pair up and play catch.



PURPOSE:

In this particular drill, pitchers start out working on throwing across the seams and getting good backspin on the ball.



Pitchers throw back and forth to each other in this drill.

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Pitchers throw from either the wind-up or the stretch.
2. They go through their motion and throw the ball to their partner, who catches it and throws it back.
3. Pitchers should be throwing the ball across the seams to start.
4. Next, have the pitchers put pressure on the inside of the ball with their index fingers to

COACHING TIPS:

- The goal of this drill is for the pitcher to learn how to get good spin on the ball.
- In the first part of the drill, look for tight backspin on the ball and for the pitcher to be throwing over the top.
- In the second and third stages of the drill, encourage players to do a lot of talking to each other so that each thrower knows what his ball is doing so that he can repeat the motion or avoid it in a game situation.

18.

RIGHT TO LEFT DRILL

SETUP:

Pitcher lines up anywhere on the field. He has a glove and ball. This is a live throwing drill.

PURPOSE:

Pitchers perfect their motion and aim to get good right to left action (or left to right for left-handers).



Pitchers go through their motion in this simulation drill.

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Pitcher works on throwing motion.
2. He gets into set position and then goes through pitching motion – breaking his hands, loading and then simulating a throw.
3. He finishes by following-through, ending with his knee inside his elbow.

COACHING TIPS:

- This is a good drill for pitchers who have recently pitched a game but have a pitching motion flaw they need to work on.
- Pitchers do NOT throw the ball in this drill.
- Look for proper pitching fundamentals with good right to left action (or left to right for left-handers).
- Pitchers should practice this motion drill until they can “feel it in their sleep” ... until their motion becomes habit.
- If pitchers have flaws in their deliveries exaggerate the proper form in this drill. For example, if a pitcher is not pushing off and getting low have them actually touch their knee to the ground on the simulated throw.

19.

TARGET CATCH DRILL

SETUP:

Pitchers pair up and throw to each other.

PURPOSE:

Pitchers practice hitting a target.



Player catches the ball thrown to the right shoulder target.

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Players throw the ball back and forth to each other.
2. They have six targets – the right shoulder, right side of waist, right knee, left shoulder, left side of waist and left knee.
3. They throw to each target five times before moving on to the next one.

COACHING TIPS:

- Players should keep track of how many times they hit the target and then try to improve in subsequent practice sessions.

20.

STRING DRILL

SETUP:

Pitcher stands at the pitching mound. He places a string on the ground stretching from "toe to toe" – straight forward from the toes on his back foot to the toes on his front.

PURPOSE:

Prevents pitchers from throwing across their body.



Right-hand pitcher aims to land on the right side of the string.

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. With string on the ground, pitcher goes through his entire pitching motion and takes care to land on the right side of the string (if a right-hand pitcher).
2. He simulates the throw.
3. He continues going through his motion until coach says, "Stop."

COACHING TIPS:

- Use the string until the pitcher is confident he doesn't need it anymore.
- A shoe string is good to use for this drill.
- The string can also be set up to go from toes to arch and from toes to heel depending on how much you want the pitcher to open up on the throw.

21.

TOWEL DRILL

SETUP:

Put chair at a distance that is four feet greater than the height of the pitcher (if pitcher is 5 foot tall, chair would be 9 feet away).

PURPOSE:

Keeps pitchers in proper alignment.



Pitcher hits chair with towel.

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Pitcher gets into normal setup position.
2. He holds a towel in his pitching hand.
3. He goes through pitching motion and at end reaches out and slaps the towel against the chair.
4. He continues until coach says, "Stop."

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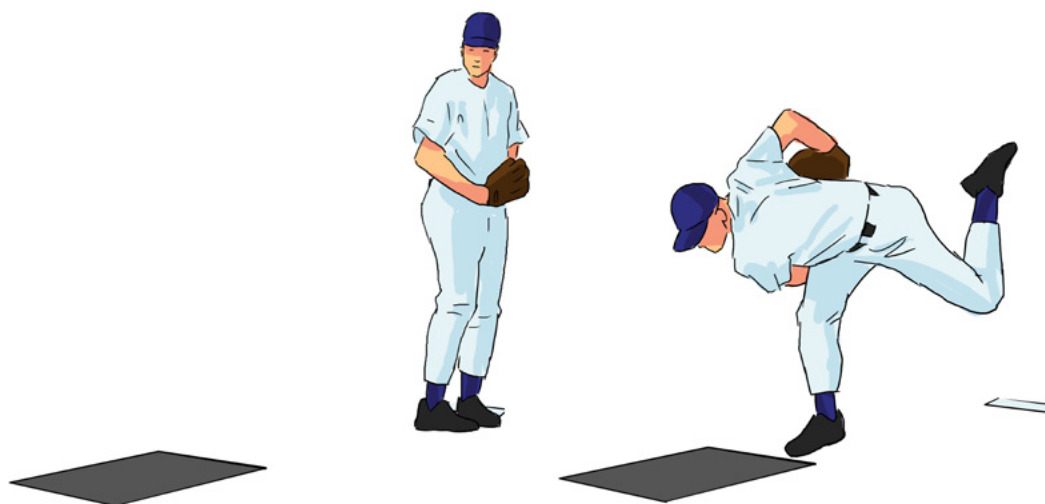
PADS FOR STRIDE DRILL

SETUP:

Place a pad in front of the mound, roughly 90% of the pitcher's height away from the rubber. (this is the ideal stride length – though some pitchers may stride up to 100% of their height)

PURPOSE:

Stops pitchers from overstriding.



Pitcher avoids hitting the pad on his stride.

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Coach tells pitcher "Do not touch the pad."
2. Pitcher stands on rubber and goes through normal pitching motion, keeping his stride foot off the pad.
3. He continues until coach says, "Stop."

COACHING TIPS:

- Another way to get a pitcher to shorten his stride is to have him point the toes on his front foot toward the ground.
- The pad can also be used to prevent a pitcher from opening up too much.

23.

PAPER CUP DRILL

SETUP:

Place a cup behind the push off foot along the edge of the rubber.

PURPOSE:

Prevents pitchers from reverse spinning their back foot on the throw.



Correct Motion – pitcher steps up and over the cup

Replacing the cup with a cone

Incorrect motion – back foot drags and knocks over the cup

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Coach tells pitcher "Do not knock the cup over."
2. Pitcher stands on rubber and goes through normal pitching motion, keeping his back foot from whiplashing backward and hitting the cup.
3. He simulates the throw.
4. He continues until coach says, "Stop."

COACHING TIPS:

- Another issue some pitchers have is dragging their back foot, to correct this problem place a cone or bucket on the ground and have the pitcher circle his back leg over it as he follows-through on his simulated pitch.

24.

BATTING TEE DRILL

SETUP:

Place a batting tee behind the pitcher.

PURPOSE:

Pitchers work on keeping fingertips down all the way while throwing.



Picking the ball up off the tee and throwing.

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Coach says "Go."
2. Pitcher picks the ball up off the top of the tee and raises it straight into throwing position.
3. He then comes forward and throws using proper fundamentals.
4. He simulates the throw and places the ball back on the tee.
5. He then repeats until coach says, "Stop."

COACHING TIPS:

- Pitcher should be bringing their weight back on the inside of their push off foot as they go through their motion.
- Pitcher should start to pick up the ball before he starts his regular pitching motion.

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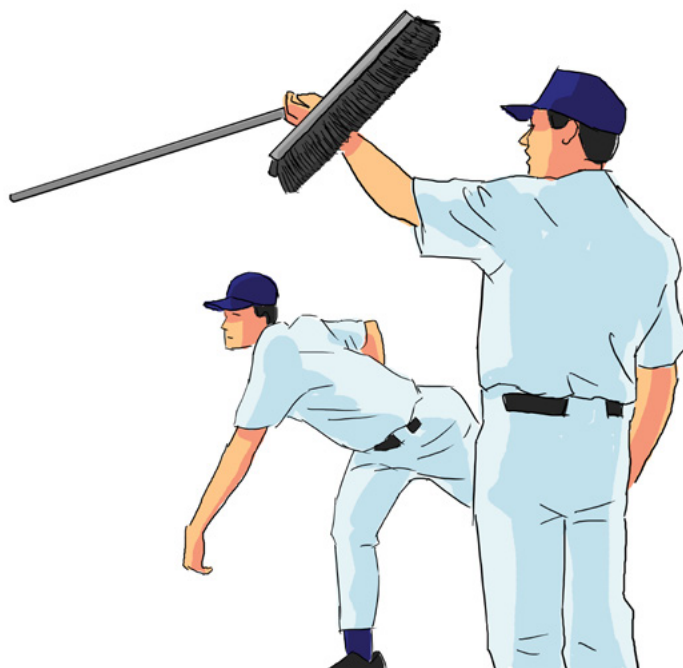
BROOM STICK DRILL

SETUP:

Pitchers stands on mound. Coach stands nearby with a broom handle.

PURPOSE:

Pitchers work on getting their arm up and staying on top of the ball.



Coach holds the broom stock in the air to set the height for the pitcher's hand .

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Coach holds broom stick at height he wants pitcher's hand to stay above.
2. Pitcher goes through motion and throws keeping his hand above the broom stick.
3. Pitcher can simulate the throw or coach can drop the broom stick or stand off to the side so pitcher can actually throw.
4. Drill repeats until coach says, "Stop."

COACHING TIPS:

- This can be a good drill to use when a pitcher is learning to throw a curveball though it can also be effective for the fastball.
- If a pitcher is "pushing" the ball this drill can help break them of that habit.

26.

SCREEN DRILL

SETUP:

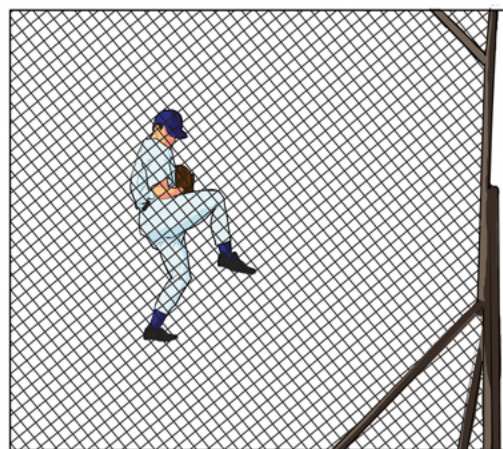
Pitcher throws to a screen or fence.
Coach stands behind the screen or fence.



Coach behind the screen.

PURPOSE:

Pitchers work on their fundamentals as they throw the ball.



Pitcher in front of the screen.

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Pitcher goes through normal motion and throws the ball directly at the screen or fence.
2. Coach stands behind the screen or fence and critiques the pitcher's fundamentals.
3. Pitcher continues throwing until coach says, "Stop."

COACHING TIPS:

- Coach should look at all the following: head alignment; hip elevation; leg lift; arm lift, chest; back foot, front foot, front knee, etc.
- This drill can also be run against the side of a building with the coach standing off to the side.
- You could also have multiple coaches or coaches and other players each watch a specific area as the pitcher throws.