

## Pitching Drills

| DRILL                   | DESCRIPTION  |
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| <b>1 Knee</b>           | Pitcher has throwing knee on ground; other foot/leg out front at 90 degrees. Rotate shoulders, throw, follow through bringing hand outside lead leg to ground, chest to thigh.   |
| <b>10 Toes</b>          | Pitcher stands with feet wide, belly button facing target. Make throw, keeping head and throwing hand directly at target.  |
| <b>Cocking Position</b> | Cocking Position (or Power Position) occurs when lead foot hits ground. Throwing hand holds ball back and at least head high. Bicep/forearm at 90 degrees. Glove arm up and extended. Feet wide; no step. Rotate and throw.  |
| <b>Boxer</b>            | Pitcher stands with feet apart, lead shoulder at target. Shifts weight from front foot to back foot repeatedly, like a boxer's footwork. For rhythm and using legs to throw.   |
| <b>Box Squat</b>        | Pitcher stands with feet apart, lead shoulder/feet/hip pointing at 45 degrees to glove side. Pitcher rocks back and loads up on back leg, drives forward to throw.   |
| <b>Hop Back</b>         | Pitcher stands with feet apart, lead shoulder at target. Pitcher hops backward onto back leg, balances and "loads up" on back leg, then pushes forward to throw.   |
| <b>3 Step Drop</b>      | Pitcher stands with belly button facing partner like a QB in shotgun. "Drops back 3 steps" (R-L-R for righty), then drives forward (R-L-throw). This drill is to make pitchers have very active feet and legs.   |
| <b>Long Toss</b>        | Increase throwing distance from 45 to 60 to 90 feet (or more). Crow hop and emphasize using legs and following through. Throw ball on line, even if need to throw on a hop.  |
| <b>Walking Torque</b>   | Pitcher holds ball and hands at midline of body, belly button facing target. Walks several steps directly toward target, lifts non-throwing leg knee (with knee pointing directly at target; do not rotate), step and throw. This is for alignment – to keep pitcher's head and body directly at target.   |
| <b>Balance Position</b> | Pitcher stands with lead shoulder at target. Lifts front leg to balance position. Front thigh should be parallel to the ground, lower leg hangs straight down, toes pointing downward. Hands are together at midline of body with back of glove facing target. Sequence is lift, hold for a second, throw.   |
| <b>Hop, Hop, Throw</b>  | Pitcher gets into balance position, then hops forward (on back leg) twice, then throws. Drill helps pitchers learn to use back leg.  |
| <b>Release Position</b> | Pitcher stands as if at release point – feet wide, 10 toes point at target, belly button at target. Hands in front of body. Break hands and throw, focusing on keeping head directly at target with chin over front foot.  |
| <b>Towel Drill</b>      | Pitcher has hand towel (rolled up lengthwise and taped) and stands with feet wide, lead shoulder at target. Coach gets on one knee and holds glove out at knee height. Pitcher "throws" towel, hitting the glove. If pitcher hits glove easily, move back until s/he has to really bend at waist and get head over front foot. This drill promotes good alignment (if head stays directly at target, |

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|                             | will hit target; if head moves to glove side, towel will miss to glove side) and getting head out over front foot to release ball closer to home plate.  |
| <b>Arm Path Drill</b>       | To learn proper arm path. Pitcher stands with feet wide, lead shoulder pointing at target. Ball in glove at midline of body. Break hands, with hand going down then up into power position. Think "thumb to thigh, knuckles to sky".   |
| <b>Follow Through Drill</b> | Pitcher stands with feet wide, lead shoulder to target. Throw to partner, following through with hand outside lead leg, below the knee, back gets flat like "table top", back foot rotates (back foot can release with heel to sky, but back leg should NOT "step forward").   |
| <b>Chair Drill</b>          | Pitcher places back foot on chair, with inner half of foot (left side, for righty) contacting the chair. Lead leg is forward to maintain comfortable balance. Pitcher throws, bringing throwing hand outside lead leg to ankle height while rotating back knee and foot. This drill is to simulate proper follow through.  |
| <b>In and Out Drill</b>     | This is for pitchers to learn necessary adjustments to get the ball to either side of the plate. Throw to a coach (who sets target 6 inches inside/outside of strike zone) while learning what head/body/arm needs to do to locate pitch in and out.   |
| <b>1-2-3</b>                | This is for pitchers who use full windup. Stand with throwing foot on rubber (front half of foot extends in front of rubber), other foot can be on rubber or further away from target. Belly button faces target, hands together at midline of body. Step 1) Take a very short step, almost directly backward (not to the side – want north-south, not east-west), transferring weight to back foot. At same time, create hand movement – hands come upward with back of glove facing target and elbows in. Step 2) Pivot throwing foot so is now against, and parallel to, front edge of rubber. Step 3) Move into balance position. This is a dry drill where pitcher repeatedly does 1-2-3. |
| <b>1-2-3-4-5-6-7-8</b>      | Dry Drill: Pitcher does steps 1-2-3 as in above drill, but then continues: Step 4) Hands separate; Step 5) Drift forward to power position; Step 6) Rotate to release position; Step 7) Throw; Step 8) Follow Through.   |
| <b>Bullpen Shadow Work</b>  | This is a dry drill where pitcher specifically simulates and visualizes game pitching, complete with windup and pitch; pretend to catch return pitch from catcher; pretend to field a bunt, etc. Incorporate full pre-pitch routine and yellow light releases.   |
| <b>Form Pitching</b>        | Dry Drill. This is different from Shadow Work because pitcher is now working on a specific element of pitching motion, e.g., balance position or follow through position.  |
| <b>Change Up</b>            | Players ages 11-12 can safely learn to throw change ups, which can be an effective pitch. Just a matter of learning proper grip (lots of videos online) and practice throwing it. Key is to use fastball arm speed and use fastball motion. A good drill is to alternate fastballs and change ups to learn to use same arm speed and arm angle for both.   |
| <b>Short Bullpen</b>        | Bullpen at shorter distance (35 feet). Allows pitcher to work location and command with less strain on arm. Also builds confidence as players can more easily hit target at this distance.   |
| <b>Bullpen</b>              | Bullpen is not for working on mechanics (use all the above drills for that). Bullpen is for working on location, pitching in sequence (FB, FB, Change, for   |

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|       | example), and simulating game experience. Players should do full pre-pitch routines and releases during bullpens to make it feel game-like. |

### Pitcher's Fielding Practice (PFP)

The pitcher handles more batted balls than any other position, so PFP is essential to having a strong defense.

### Bunt Drills

Pitchers on mound. Coach rolls bunt and calls "1". Pitcher fields ball properly, crow hops, and makes firm throw to first. Practice bunts to 3rd base side (pitcher needs to get to ball quickly, crow hop and throw), directly at pitcher, and to 1st base side (pitcher fields ball and may underhand toss to 1b).

Do same with bunts to 2, 3, and home.

To get more reps, can have two lines of pitchers, shoulder to shoulder, on the mound. Roll bunt to 1st base side and pitcher on that side makes play to 1; roll bunt on 3rd base side and pitcher on that side makes play to 3.

Can have pitchers and catchers work drill together, to work on communication.

### Comebackers Drills

Comebackers are different than bunts in that they are result of hitter swinging away and may be hit harder than a bunt. Do drill similar to Bunt Drills, but coach throws or hits ball more firmly. Key is for pitcher to get in good position to catch ball properly and then (realizing he has plenty of time on these harder-hit balls) take a good crow hop and throws firmly (not lob) to designated base.

### Pitcher Cover Home

This is when runner on 3rd tries to score on ball past catcher. Catcher locates ball and gets to it quickly. From low position (possibly from knees) throws a firm flip to pitcher covering plate. Pitcher breaks to plate as soon as ball alludes catcher, gets in position to catch throw and make tag. Best for pitcher to not have back to oncoming runner, for safety purposes.

**Drill: Pitchers on mound, catchers take turn in position. Coach rolls ball past catcher while P and C execute play as described above.**