

Pitching Guidelines

Warm-ups Exercises

Wrist Snaps (15 to 20 reps)- Player should stand 5 ft from the catcher. Players should stand in an athletic position, with their feet shoulder width apart and knees slightly bent. They should be facing the 3rd baseline for righties or the 1st baseline for lefties. The player should hold the ball where the laces form a C with her 4 fingers on the laces and the thumb wrapped underneath the ball. The player should tuck her arm against her side & should flick the ball to the catcher. The player should only be using her wrist. No other part of her arm should be moving.

What you should be looking for-

- Make sure the player is not moving her arm
- Make sure ball has a backwards rotation
- Ball should be smooth while in air.

“T” Position (15-20 reps)- Player should stand 10-12 ft away from the plate, still facing the same way. Now they can have their feet at a 45degree angle but still in an athletic position. Now they raise their throwing hand straight over their head while their glove hand points towards the plate. Similar to a lower case t. The player should have the ball pointing towards second base while the back of their hand points towards the plate. As the hand swings down, the glove hand should swing backwards and behind the player. The ball should be released at the hip.

What you should be looking for-

- Make sure the players arm swings down, NOT out
- Make sure player stands tall & does not bend or lean.
- Make sure ball still has backwards rotation
- Ball should be released at hip.

Power “X” or Power “K” (15-20 reps)- The pitcher should move back from the plate approximately 20 to 22 ft away. She should be in the same stance with a “t” position. As the player’s arm starts to move down, her front leg should lift & step towards the plate while she delivers the ball. Her arms should act like 2 pendulums swinging in opposite directions. Pitching arm swings in front while glove hand goes behind player.

What you should be looking for-

- Make sure the players arm swings down, NOT out
- Player should not bend over or lean.
- Player should be showing you the sole of her foot.
- Ball should continue to have backwards rotation & be smooth.

“Figure 4” Position (15-20 reps)- Player is now 8 ft from the pitching rubber. Same basic stance with the step but now we add the dragging of the back foot forward. It should meet with the front leg & create a “Figure 4” shape.

What you should be looking for-

- Player should finish in a “figure 4”

It is impossible to look at all elements of her mechanics on each pitch. You should focus on one element at a time and make minor corrections as needed.

PLEASE NOTE: Every time you introduce a new step the player must find her release point again and her pitches may be inconsistent. This is normal but it can be frustrating for the player. Reassure your pitcher that this is normal and is only a function of her release point.

Full Pitch

Both feet must be on the pitching rubber. Push off foot, which is the same as the pitching hand, is on the front of the rubber. Other foot's toe is touching the back of the rubber. The pitcher's shoulders should be in line with 1st & 3rd base, closed position.

Step 1- Pitcher must step on the pitching rubber with the ball in glove or hand.

Step 2- Hands must come together to start pitch.

Step 3- Once in pitching motion, her "push off" foot can NOT break with the pitching rubber.

Step 4- Pitcher takes her step towards home and within width of pitching rubber.

Pitcher's arm should always be in a circular motion. Pitcher should never bend or lean in any direction. Pitcher's head should always be over her body.

Mechanics- The pitcher should hold the ball in her glove in front of her. Bring arms over head. Pitching hand should come around & complete circle while glove hand comes down & behind the pitcher. As the pitcher's arms come up the back leg begins to take a step toward the catcher. Pitcher should never leap or jump. The back foot never leaves the ground. The back foot should drag & create a figure 4. At release point, the hip, the pitcher should snap her wrist & follow through. When finished the palm of her hand should be facing her.

To become a good pitcher players need regular and frequent practice. They need more practice than you can provide in your normal team practices. The girls will need to work on their own as well.

These are very basic instructions to begin pitching. This will lay the ground work to see if girls really would like to pursue pitching full time.

PLEASE NOTE: If a girl is going to a private pitching instructor, never attempt to change anything she is taught. It's a good idea to speak to the instructor so you are on the same page. The instructor will sometimes give you things to look for to help in the pitchers development.