

11 Little League Pitching Drills For Baseball Pitchers Age 10 To 12

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It's always best to learn proper pitching mechanics early -- and then continue to refine those mechanics as a player gets older and advanced in the game of baseball. This starts in little league. These little league pitching drills can be used as a teaching and training tool to promote and develop proper pitching mechanics. Each little league pitching drill focuses on a specific aspect of the pitching delivery, allowing the pitcher to develop a feel for good mechanics that directly translates into better consistency in games, more strikes and increased pitching velocity.

1. Pitcher Line Drill - The line drill is a release point drill designed to work on a pitcher's release point.

Have players pair off, with one partner getting down like a catcher on flat ground about 45 feet away

The pitcher throws all of his or her pitches (fastball, curve ball, slider, change-up) 15 pitches at a time from the windup and the stretch.

It is particularly good neuromuscular work to throw all pitches at less distance, alternating 15-pitch intervals. It helps pitchers groove the feel of their release points. Using a hat, towel or glove for home plate gives a perspective on location.

Distance magnifies mistakes, and the mound worsens both mistakes and mechanical inefficiencies. Timing and feeling the delivery on short ground, at a shorter distance, builds physical and mental confidence.

2. Pitcher Control Drill - To help pitchers develop awareness of the strike zone

Pitchers and catchers stand at regulation distance from each other. The catcher stands behind home plate, and a batter stands in the batter's box. The batter should alternate between a left-and right-handed batting stance after five pitches, but not take any swings. The catcher calls balls and strikes. Have the batter wear a helmet in this practice session.

This game-like drill will help your pitchers develop a consistent pitching motion, get a good feel for the strike zone, and get used to pitching with a player in the batter's box.

3. Balance Point Drill - Develop good balance while pitching.

The pitcher goes through his wind up and delivery but stops himself at the balance point, and holds it for at least two seconds before continuing. The coach checks the position to make sure that the front leg is at the waist or higher. This allows the pitcher to prevent him from rushing once he takes the mound in a game.

If the pitcher opens up too soon, their arm will never get to the proper height and the ball will tend to sail. Require that before games, your pitchers performed the balance drill at least 20 times at the beginning of their warm-up in the bullpen. This will help them get into the proper tempo.

4. Snap Wrist Drill - Develop snap of wrist, delivery of ball out front of body. This drill is for pitchers to help develop snap of wrist, delivery of ball out front of body, follow through and defensive position once the pitch is delivered.

Cut an old bed sheet (or similar material) into pieces 18" by 5". Fold the long side a few times until the cloth is 1" by 18". Form 2 lines, with one line of pitchers down on one knee, resting "glove side" elbow on other knee. Hold arm out (the one resting on knee) parallel to ground (with glove on) no higher than 18" above the ground. Players standing, hold out throwing hand (palm up), draping the folded cloth over their middle finger, and letting it hang down evenly on each side of their middle finger. Loosely holding the cloth in their fist, have pitchers go through normal windups, with the delivery being, slapping their partner's glove with cloth. Check for proper motion, balance and defensive position.

5. Sit & Hit the Bulls Eye Drill- To develop good throwing techniques.

Two pitchers sit, with legs crossed, about 20-30 feet from each other. The receiver puts his glove in front of his face as the target. The thrower must hit the target without the ball bouncing, and with minimal rocking motion. This will require the elbow to be above the shoulder, and a good rotation of the shoulders to just get it there, thus teaching good technique.

6. Shoulder Drill - To develop better snap on the ball & reduce side-arming.

Have the player stand the normal pitching distance from a catcher, with his non-throwing shoulder to the catcher. A person should stand behind the pitcher so that his shoulder brushes the back of the pitcher's shoulder.

The pitcher must kick straight up and stay there for a count of 2 and then he has to reach back, while in the middle of his kick, and take a ball out of the hand of the person behind him. This will keep the pitcher from 'slinging' the ball and hurting his elbow, improves his balance point during his windup, and it keeps his hand on top of the ball during his windup.

7. Parallel Feet Drill - Works on upper body mechanics. This drill isolates the upper body. The pitchers face each other chest to chest with the feet at shoulder width. The lower body remains stationary. The ball is held in the glove in the "check-your-pulse" position. The torso twists at a 90 degree angle as the ball is pulled down out of the glove, and in a sweeping arc brought to the power position with the hand always on top, and the elbow at least at shoulder level. The delivery is then made and the proper follow through is checked. The glove elbow finishes pointed toward the sky. The drill emphasizes that the pitcher throws with a "proud chest" that remains closed as long as possible.

Pitchers learn the concept of shoulder displacement and are reminded that the batter should be unable to read the letters on their shirt during the delivery.

8. No Rush Drill - To alleviate rushing the lower body & develop good rhythm & pace.

From the wind-up position have the pitcher rock, turn and raise his leg to the balance position. However, instead of either stopping, or going on to pitch, he now lowers that leg to the ground next to and immediately behind the pivot foot. He should now be standing facing either 3b (rh) or 1b (LH), in good balance before beginning. Now he simply re-raises the non-pivot foot and pitches.

This simple drill keeps the weight back while in the wind-up. Once the pitcher gets used to it, he can develop a nice natural flow, rock, turn, raise, drop, raise and pitch. Then alternate the drill every other pitch. Pitchers who are comfortable with it, can even do it between innings for a pitch or two just to reinforce their proper piece and keep from rushing.

9. Goalpost Drill - Teaches pitching with the lower body.

The pitcher stands in front of the mound, with his feet spread wider than his shoulders, and weight on the back foot. Before he throws, he raises both arms up, looking like a goalpost from the side. As he throws, he pushes off with the back leg. This teaches pitching with the lower body, and keeping the elbows up.

10. "Japanese" Pitching Drill - Great for developing control.

The drill is used to develop great pitcher control by having the pitcher throw strikes at varying distances. The drill has a catcher set at a stationary plate. The plate never moves. The pitcher should begin throwing at a distance 1/2 of his normal pitching distance. You should have 6-8 distance markers with the first being at his starting point and the longest being twice his normal pitching distance. The markers should be at 10 foot intervals and in a straight line with the plate. The object of the drill is to develop control by gradually moving toward and away from the targeted strike zone. The pitcher is required to throw 1-3 strikes from each marker before moving

to the next. The catcher serves as the umpire. Variations of this drill may be to have 1-3 pitchers working and competing against each other. The drill teaches them to work fast, concentrate, and execute a perfect pitch. Make sure your pitchers are in condition for this drill. They will find that throwing strikes from longer distance requires great mechanics and builds arm strength. Make sure your players stretch and warm-up first.

11. The 20 & 4 Pitching Drill - Teaches control & Concentration

This drill is a pitching drill in which the young pitcher works at a smooth, rather fast pace, but only throw 50-60%. He should not be allowed to throw full speed. The objective of the drill is to teach concentration and develop great control. The pitcher has to throw 20 strikes before he throws 4 balls. He should be allowed to perform the drill at a shorter distance at first but he should be able to move to his regular pitching distance within a couple of weeks. If he throws 4 balls, he must start over. Be careful to not overwork him. However, keeping the distance short, emphasizing accuracy not speed, and making sure he proper stretches and warms up should prevent any chance of arm injury. With younger players you may want to make the drill a 10-3 drill. He must throw 10 strikes before he throw 3 balls or he must start over.