

MBB PITCHING (FOR BEGINNERS) 101



Demonstrations
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TEACHING (BEGINNERS) TO PITCH: STATEMENT/PHILOSOPHY

It is natural to throw: "Throw an object", "throw things away" or "throw things at other things or each other." So with that said it is natural to "throw."



Even babies in cribs can throw!!

Most young kid's (6-10) first exposure to **baseball** pitching (and throwing) either comes from their dad/mom/brother/sister playing catch with them in the back yard, watching at their older brother's and sister's games, or from watching TV (MLB).

A dad once told me "my kid is a natural baseball player." No such thing! Your son may have been born with excellent physical skills (a natural athlete), but in my opinion there is no such thing as a "natural baseball player." Every physical action in the game of baseball (hitting, throwing, fielding, pitching, cutoffs, etc.) requires changing/tweaking what is done naturally by teaching & preaching the "basic proper fundamentals".*

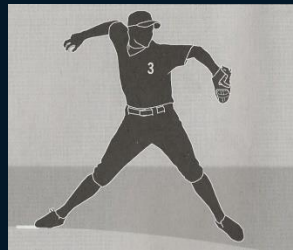
(see MBB BB fundamentals 2018 pdf, at: midwaybaseball.org)*.

A common mistake by many youth coaches and parents is: When a player is 6-10 (or even older) and he/she is successful doing it his/her own way, (even if fundamentally incorrect) the tendency is to leave them alone! Might seem like it makes sense at the time. However, it is easier to learn "good" habits early and much harder to break "bad" habits later.

STATEMENT/PHILOSOPHY (continued)

The intent of this PDF is to simplify pitching for the beginner. (Beginner is not classified by age, but by their first exposure to competitive pitching). Control is a key word. If you control the body, and have no more movement than is necessary, you will ultimately control the pitch. Nothing worse in baseball at any level, but especially in youth, is a pitcher who can not pitch the ball “close” to the strike zone.

NOTE: This PDF (slides 4, 5, 6 & 7) shows the beginning steps to teach in pitching. It is how we should “initially” teach every age group to learn the first steps to pitching/control. For ages 11 and over all slides should be taught together. For 10 and under since there is “NO” leading off or stealing at this age, it is recommended to concentrate on slides 4&5 (“Positions and Pitching steps”) initially. Adding “Taking the sign” & “Disengaging the Pitcher’s Plate” (slides 6&7) might be too overwhelming at first and can be added/taught when they are ready.



THANKS FOR COACHING

2 POSITIONS

**WIND UP
NO ONE ON
BASES LOADED
3RD ONLY**



SIGN



**START OF
THE PITCH**



LEG KICK*



LOWER LEG



STEP FORWARD



SIGN



**BRING HANDS
TOGETHER**



**STOP TOGETHER
MIN 1 SECOND**



**START OF
THE PITCH
LEG KICK***



STEP FORWARD



**SEE
NEXT
SLIDE
FOR:**

STRIDE

RELEASE

THROW

**SET
RUNNER ON
RUNNER(S) ON**

For younger ages ,10U, where there is no leading off or stealing, would recommend starting in the Set position. Either works, but there is less body and arm motion from the set. Tendency in the wind up is to swing the arms and bring both arms up above the head and have a bigger* leg kick, both of which are unnecessary. The emphasis for the beginner is not to throw hard, but to throw with body control and ultimately pitch-control. Notice the difference in the leg kick between x and y. This is really important for 11 and over for holding runners on base.

KISS method. Keep It Short Simple.

STRIDE



RELEASE



FOLLOW THRU



F. WHEN THE PITCHER PUSHES OFF THE PITCHER'S PLATE WITH THE PIVOT FOOT IT IS THE FIRST TIME THE BODY MOVES IN A DIRECTION NOT DIRECTLY OVER THE PIVOT FOOT. AT THE SAME TIME THE LEAD FOOT STRIDES FORWARD AND THE HANDS SEPARATE.

G. THE LEAD FOOT HITS THE GROUND AND ALMOST SIMULTANEOUSLY THE BALL IS RELEASED AND THE PIVOT FOOT COMES OFF THE PLATE. MOMENTUM OF THE PUSH AND RELEASE DRIVES THE PIVOT FOOT (KICK THE BUTT) UP IN THE AIR.

H. IN THE NATURAL FOLLOW THRU THE PIVOT FOOT RETURNS TO THE GROUND APPROXIMATELY PARALLEL TO THE LEAD FOOT. GLOVE ENDS ON THE HIP, THUMB POINTED UP (SEE ARROW).

PRIOR TO PITCHING: TAKING THE SIGN



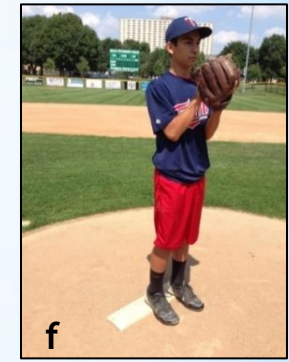
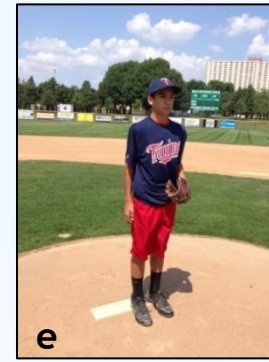
When a pitcher has several pitches, he will look at the catcher for signals (which pitch to throw). His pivot foot must be in contact the pitcher's plate when looking for the sign. (a) Windup (b) Set In (a) hands must be separate and ball may be in either the hand or the glove. In (b) hands must be separate and at the side or back and the ball may be in the glove or hand.

At the beginning level, 10U and below) most pitchers only have one pitch (and hopefully that one pitch comes close to the strike zone) so “taking the sign” is probably not necessary. But another probably, it is wise and probably better to teach the “right fundamentals” early since it is the proper way for the future. Teach good fundamentals/habits early then you/we/coaches don't have to break poor fundamentals/bad habits In the future.

In (c) kids will see and copy what a lot of pitchers do when looking for the signs. There is nothing wrong or illegal in (c) bending forward to look for signs, but totally unnecessary. Look at both (b) and (c). Can you see better in (c) than (b)? NO. But there are some important benefits to (b) than (c). That is another topic (Pick offs and holding runners on) for another time and more advanced levels of play. If you can't wait and are curious go to:

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DISENGAGING (STEPPING OFF) THE PITCHING PLATE (RUBBER)



Any time the PIVOT FOOT (right foot right-handed, left foot left-handed) is in contact with the pitcher's plate (a, b, c, d, e, f) you must step backward (g & i) off the plate (h & j) with the pivot foot. Once you step off backwards you are considered an infielder for any plays or throws that follow. If your hands are together, as in c and f, your step back must happen before you separate your hands.



Any movement of hands, feet, body other than the step back constitutes the start of either the pitching motion or a throw to a base or in some legal cases a fake throw to a base. w