

Girls Softball Pitching Clinic



By Gary Campbell (with Camille & Eleanor Campbell)

Pitching motion in 5 steps:

1. Both feet touching rubber, ball in hand in glove with proper grip
2. Separate hands, weight on back foot, but don't step back
3. Both arms forward, step and turn body, glove hand stops when arms are parallel to the ground, ball hand continues in a circle until past head, glove hand still pointing at target, ball hand with ball pointing back (feed the Giraffe). This is the "Power Position".
4. Ball hand continues on, glove hand drops to slap glove on thigh, flip wrist at 6 O'clock to release ball
5. Rotate hips to finish with chest pointing at target

Grip – four seam grip, ball in fingers as much as possible, line up middle finger and thumb around the circumference of the ball



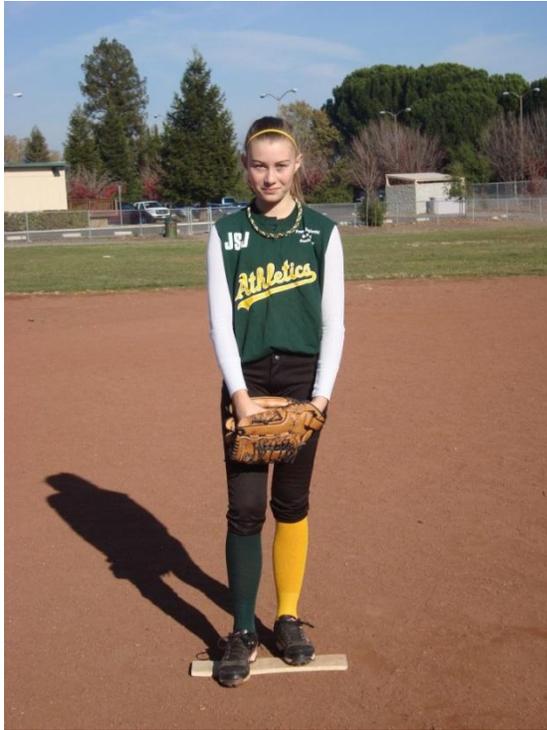
Four seam grip (recommended)



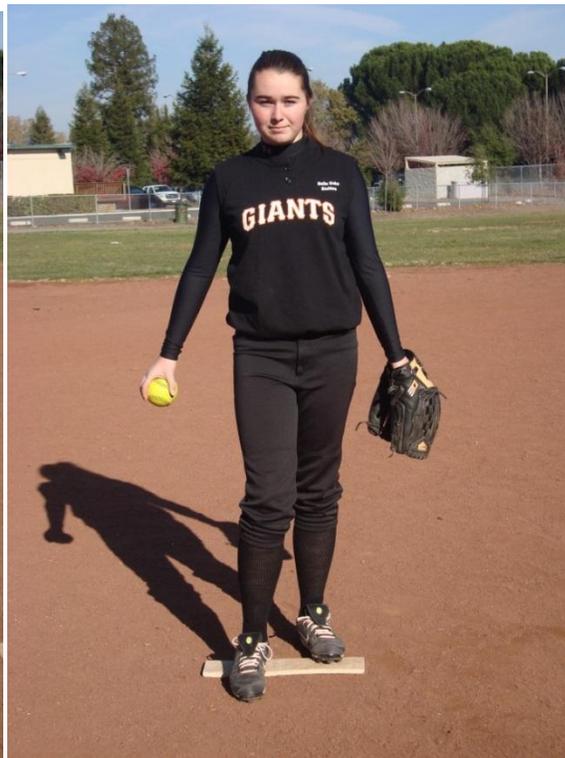
Two seam grip (not recommend for younger ages)



Two feet on rubber to start – for a right handed pitcher: right heel, left toe



1 - Ball in glove. Don't step back



2 - Separate hands, weight on back foot.



3 – Step and rotate plant foot (don't lift up or step with plant foot) – Power Position

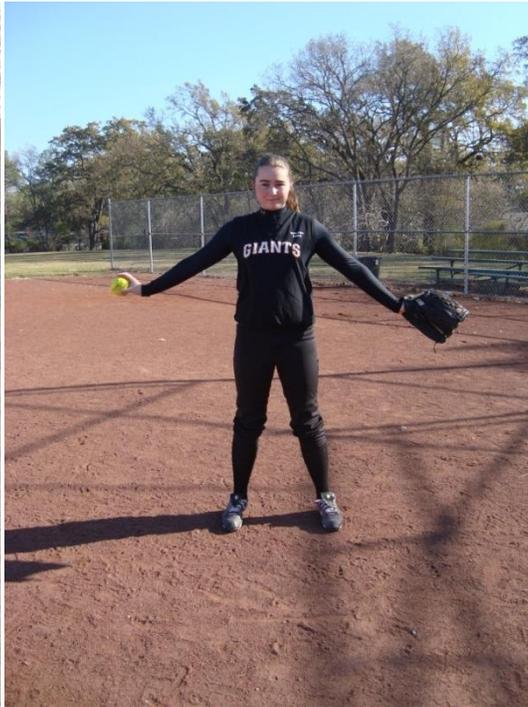


4 - Point front shoulder, hip, outer knee at target, when releasing ball



5 - Rotate hips after releasing for power

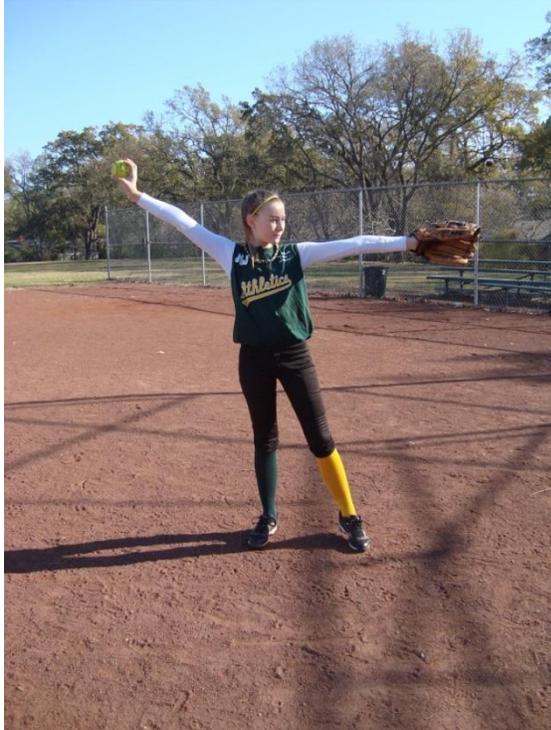
Warm-up drills



Pendulum – both arms even below waist, flip ball forward glove hand slaps thigh



Keep ball out front of body, straight back, straight forward, point thumb down when back



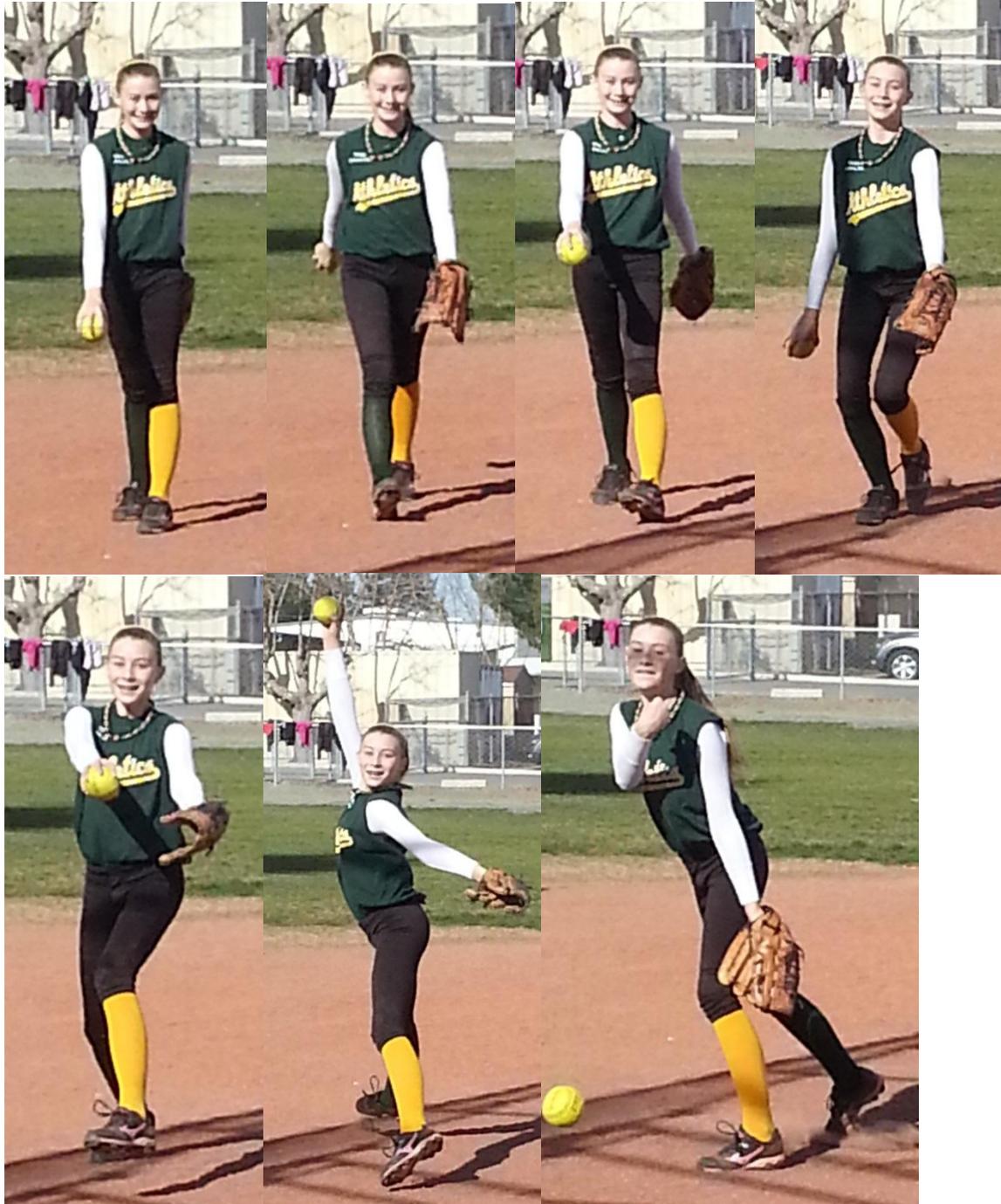
Same drill further away, arms go higher



Keep ball out front of body, straight back, straight forward



Down on one knee, front foot sideways (arm only motion)



Walk through drills – three big steps then throw from **beyond** the mound distance



Sock on the wall practice, muscle memory for the arm circle, make big circles and keep the sock touching the wall at all times. Helpful when player is pulling arm behind head during circle motion.

Other exercises:

Start a pitching motion by standing side ways and do one revolution and pitch.

Stand sideways with feet wide, do three arm circles and pitch the ball. This drill helps with left/right direction and getting the circle on a consistent plane.

Things to watch for:

At the beginning of the pitching motion, does the ball start straight at the target?

Stand tall the entire time (chin up or chin high/reach high, do not bend at the waist).

Fixing pitches out of the strike zone

- Pitch is too high – release too late
- Pitch is too low – release too early
- Inside/outside – not starting arm circle in proper direction

Maintain good body language regardless of her performance, show confidence.

Tips during a game:

Do not give coaching direction after every pitch, if they throw three balls in the dirt, then you could say “try to release the ball a little later”. Look for something that happens more than once before trying to correct it.

Do not say “throw strikes” (not helpful)

You may find it more effective to give coaching direction between innings, during a trip to the mound or away from the game at practice. Look for the right “coaching opportunity”. All kids are different.

Warm-up before a game or practice:

1. Regular throwing
2. Short flips
3. Longer flips
4. Walk throughs – for power and throwing harder by getting entire body into the motion. (Younger players may not be able to do this one).
5. Standing sideways circles, just in front of mound
6. Actual pitches
7. Older kids: Change up flips from short distance
8. Then mix in change ups and fast balls

Pitching motion guidelines:

Ball cannot go in and out of the glove while on the mound

Do not step back at the start of the motion

Do not step forward with the plant foot when starting forward

At least one foot must be in contact with the ground at all times, Cannot jump up or out towards home plate with both feet off the ground

“Crow Hop”: is when the plant foot leaves the ground and replants closer to home when starting the pitching motion – not legal

“Leaping”: is when both feet are airborne any time during the pitching motion - not legal