

How To Introduce Pitching To Players Who Want To Pitch



To make it easier for young and beginning ballplayers to understand pitching and how to pitch, they will first need to understand the basic throwing mechanics.

Since pitching is a more advanced way of throwing a baseball, the best way to teach pitching is by focusing on the basic throwing mechanics rather than jumping straight into pitching.

From my experience, the primary focus of teaching young players how to pitch is by helping them understand the importance of using the whole body to throw with emphasis on the lower half to generate power.

This can be done through a 'command' drill lead by a coach that walks the players through the process step-by-step:

1. All players begin in the 'Stretch' position with their feet just beyond shoulder width apart and relaxed (bent) in the knees.

2. COMMAND players to come 'set' and define what 'set' means. *(Feet closer together with both hands in the glove)*

3. When ready to throw, transfer 100% of the weight to the back leg and foot (while still bent). COMMAND players to push off their back foot/leg and stride/step towards the catcher to get into a strong throwing position, then have the players freeze in that position.

A) Front Foot (stride foot) is not fully opened when landing. (Ideally around 45 degrees)

B) Glove or front elbow is pointed at the target.

C) Throwing arm elbow is above back shoulder with forearm, wrist, and fingers facing in the direction of what would be 11 on a clock. (4-seam grip)

4. COMMAND players to throw the ball to their target.

A) Tuck glove into armpit.

B) As they are tucking the glove, the arm and back leg are coming around in a circular motion. You can use the 6, 9, and 11 o'clock terms as a way to help players understand the circular motion of the arm.

C) Emphasize releasing the ball out in front of their body rather than above.

D) Teach players how to get their back leg 'around' by using an object such as a bucket or have them pretend there is a rope they have to get their leg over.

5. COMMAND players to hold their finish.

A) Both feet on the ground with a bent back and head up.

B) Emphasize finishing in a ready position to field a ground ball.

BONUS

Turn learning into a game!

Players can earn up to 5 points for having the correct throwing mechanics plus additional points for hitting a target.

A) Players earn a point for doing each mechanic correctly.

- *1 point = Coming Set*

- *1 point = Getting into a good strong throwing position (glove or elbow pointed to target, arm in the right position, 4-Seam grip)*
- *1 point = Tucking the glove*
- *1 point = Swing the back leg around*
- *1 point = Strong Finish*

B) *Setup a target with numbers to hit as well.*

C) *Winner get to choose a fun game to play at the end of practice.*

The biggest hurdle for beginners to jump is understanding that throwing the baseball starts from the ground then works its way up rather than just an arm action. This will help simplify the learning process while setting the players on the right path.