



PITCHING MECHANICS

5 STEP PROGRESSION

STEP 1 - Step back or to the side slightly with the left foot for right handed pitchers (right foot if they are left handed). Do not rock the weight backwards.

- The pitcher should have the glove about chest high or lower, whatever is most comfortable. The glove should not be in front of the pitcher's eyes. The pitcher can choose to have the hand in the glove or not prior to the initial step as long as they are comfortable and not awkward.

STEP 2 - Turn the right foot against the rubber

- The pitcher will then turn their right foot against the rubber and get it in a strong position to be able to turn and use their legs to eventually deliver the pitch.



STEP 3 - Lift the left-knee (right handed pitchers), and get into a power position

- The pitcher will then lift their left knee (right handed pitchers). **The knee absolutely must be as high as the waist line or higher. The back knee/ leg that is against the rubber must be bent for power.**
- The two biggest flaws in young pitchers is that they can't get their knee as high as their waist line and their back knee is straight. This must be drilled into each young pitcher to get them in a power position.
- The front butt cheek of the pitcher (left butt cheek for right handed pitchers) must be turned towards home plate. This will engage the hips for power. So the three power position checkpoints are :
 1. Knee as high or higher than the waistline
 2. Back knee bent
 3. Hips set with front butt cheek towards home
- Additionally, at this Step 3, the throwing hand should still be in the glove gripping the ball and somewhere in the chest high region. It should not be down at the waist or as high as the head. Some young pitchers will leave their hands in the glove at their waist line when they lift their leg. This makes it hard for the pitcher to get into a rhythm, so one tip that can help with this is to get the pitcher to lift their hands slightly when they lift their knee at STEP 3.

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STEP 4 - Start the drive towards home by getting the landing foot on the ground and the throwing hand above the elbow and point towards SS or 3B for a right handed pitcher. Hold this position for checkpoints

- This step takes lots of repetitions for the young pitcher to do it correctly. As the pitcher starts their move towards home to deliver the pitch, they are going to break their hands and start their drive towards home. When the pitcher breaks their hands, their throwing hand is going to come out with the palm DOWN.
- At the same time the pitcher breaks their hands, they are going to start the drive of their left leg towards home. The left leg will generally start with a movement of downward in order to drive to home. The movement of the left leg down and the hands breaking should be synchronized. They will naturally want to do this movement at the same time. It is important to practice this synchronization and to make sure that the throwing hand breaks with the palm down.
- As the hands break, the throwing hand will make a backwards “C” movement to get to the top position where the hand is above the elbow. The left leg will start down and move towards home. When the landing foot hits the ground, it should be pointed in the direction of home plate.

STEP 4 Continued

- At the point the landing foot lands is when the throwing hand should be up and above the elbow with the hand facing SS or 3b (NOT pointed at 2b). **The glove hand should be UP and is a power position.** The pitcher can either point their glove side elbow at home or pretend like they are wrapping their glove side arm around a pole to hold them up. But the glove side arm/hand must be in a strong position because when they deliver the baseball, **they are going to PULL their glove towards their body for leverage and strength.**
- So at this point, the landing foot is down and pointed towards home, the throwing hand is up (elbow is approximately as high as the shoulder) and ready to deliver the pitch, the glove hand and arm are approximately chest high and in a strong position, the back knee is bent against the rubber and ready to drive towards home and the hips are set and also ready to drive.

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STEP 5 - From the STEP 4 position, mimic delivering the pitch to home by first exploding with the back hip. All pitches should be delivered with the BACK HIP, not the throwing arm

- One of the most important things a young pitcher can learn is that they **actually throw with their hips, NOT their arm**. Teaching and emphasizing this over and over is critical for their success and health of their arm.
- During Step 5, we simply want them to get the feeling of starting the delivery of the pitch with their **back hip pushing towards home** and the throwing hand/arm following.
- Two other helpful tips is to drive the nose and front shoulder towards home. And when they mimic the throwing of the pitch, we want them to come all the way thru and bring the back foot/leg forward so they then get into a good fielding position in case the ball is hit back towards them.
- As they are making the motion of throwing the baseball, they **should pull with their glove hand back into their body** so they are creating strength and also getting their glove into a good fielding position along with the rest of their body.

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Summary

- At the point the runners start leading off, it is important for the pitchers to practice pitching from the stretch and spend more time on this than from the windup. This would essentially be STEPS 3-5.
- Steps 1-5 should be practiced over and over and can even be a separate station at practices. Once the pitcher gets close to the correct positions in each of these steps, they should begin to put them all together in a free flowing, full pitching motion sequence.
- **We want each of these steps to eventually be free flowing and connected easily to each other.** We want them to flow together seamlessly. They should become a habit to the point where each pitcher is not thinking about them.
- **We only want the pitcher to think about one thing, throwing a strike to their intended target.** And the only way to think of one thing only while pitching is to make the rest of the movements a **habit**.