

Throwing and Pitching Drills

One-Knee Drill

Age Appropriate

Grouping 1, all ages

Objective

To introduce players to proper throwing mechanics, particularly arm action (getting the ball down, out, and up)

Setup

Two players (or a player and a coach) and a baseball

Execution

This drill breaks down the player's arm action and works on keeping the elbow at the proper level. Players drop their throwing-side knee to the ground with the opposite knee up and play catch at a short distance using a four-seam grip to throw. Concentrate on taking the ball down, out, and up from the glove and keeping the elbow above the shoulder. The hand is on top of the ball as it's taken out of the glove, shifting to behind the ball as the arm comes forward. Players don't throw hard. Have them check their grip, hand, and elbow position after bringing the ball down out and up. Hand should be on top of the ball with fingers pointing away from the target just before the arm comes forward. From there, the player points the front shoulder toward the target, rotates the hips, brings the arm forward, and releases the ball, keeping the elbow above the shoulder. Younger players can use soft baseballs or do this drill with their coaches.



Coaching Keys

Many young players turn their hand so that it's under the ball before they bring the arm forward. Some people call this "pie throwing." Think of how you have to hold a pie to throw it at someone; the palm is facing up so that you don't drop the pie. This is the opposite of how you should throw a baseball. For players who do this, have them stop their motion just before they bring the arm forward and check to see that the hand is on top of the ball and that the ball is pointing straight back. Other players will let their elbows drop below shoulder level at the release point. To fix this problem, try the Tee Drill (next).

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One-Knee Drill *(continued)*

