

Throwing and Pitching Drills

Power Position Drill

Age Appropriate

Grouping 1, all ages

Objective

To develop a proper grip and arm action

Setup

Two players (or a player and a coach), baseballs, a pitching mound (optional).

Execution

Variations of this drill can be done at all levels. The drill can be simplified for the youngest age groups to stress which direction to face when throwing; the proper four-seam grip; getting the ball down, out, and up; keeping the hand above the ball prior to rotation; keeping the elbow above the shoulder; pointing the front shoulder toward the target; stepping toward the target; and following through. For older and more advanced players, the drill can help troubleshoot mechanical problems often experienced by pitchers. Players create a wide base with their feet and hold the ball with a four-seam grip. Weight shifts to the backside before moving forward. Hands break, and the weight goes back. Power position is assumed (check as necessary): hand above the ball with fingers pointed away from the target. Weight is back; elbow is above the shoulder. Front shoulder points toward the target. Hand shifts from above the ball to behind the ball as the arm moves forward through rotation. Ball is released (does not have to be thrown hard). Follow-through takes place with the trail foot staying in contact with the rubber. Players rotate on the back foot so the hips turn. Front toe points forward.



Coaching Keys

The Power Position Drill can be used to troubleshoot the following mechanical flaws:

Short-arming. Start in the finish position with the throwing arm extended forward as if following through. Take weight all the way back through the power position before finishing to stretch out the throwing motion.

Getting pitches up. Have the catcher shorten up with the pitcher throwing from a mound. To throw downhill from the power position, the pitcher must get the elbow up and stay on top of the ball.

Long-striders. Again, have the catcher shorten up with the pitcher throwing from a mound. If the stride is too long the pitcher won't be able to compensate to get downhill in time to throw a strike.

Breaking balls or off-speed pitches. Between starts, pitchers struggling with their grips, mechanics, or control can practice their breaking balls and off-speed pitches from the power position on or off a mound from a shortened distance to get a better feel and make corrections.

