



## Pitching Mechanics Steps for Coaches

### Stretch Position

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#### STEP #1 – Taking sign

- Feet a little wider than shoulder width, toes pointed straight forward (righties should be facing third base, lefties should be facing first base)
- Back foot brushed up against the rubber
- Hands are apart, glove hand is resting by front leg, and the throwing hand is holding the ball and resting by the back leg
- Eyes are on the target

#### STEP #2 – Coming Set

- Rhythm is important for pitching, and starts from coming set.
- As the front leg comes in, the ball and glove come together so now the pitcher is holding the baseball inside his/her glove. This is where the pitcher can change and set their grip (4-seam, 2-seam, change up)
- Note that from this position the pitcher may no longer move or it will be a balk. Any movement must be in direct motion to be pitching the baseball. If the pitcher is not ready to pitch they must step off the rubber by disengaging the back foot from the rubber. Other than the front foot and head, no other body parts can move. If the pitcher starts to move the front foot, they can no longer step off the rubber and must pitch the baseball.
- Head and Eyes are on the target

#### STEP #3 – Leg Kick

- Rhythm once again is very important! The front leg now comes up to belly button height, while the leg comes up, the glove and ball should also slightly move up, from the waist to the chest. The less movement the better! (Balance is also key! Pitchers can and should work on their balance with different drills and challenging themselves to hold their leg up)
- While the leg comes up, glove slightly moves up
- Head and eyes are on the target

#### STEP #4 - Break

- Now leg comes back down, **but does NOT touch the ground!** As the leg starts to come down, the glove and ball (both hands together) starts to come down and break at the same time. (Break means that the ball leaves the glove)
- When breaking, finger tips for both the glove and the throwing hand should be facing down. At this point the ball and glove are not together, both hand finger tips are pointed down, and leg is out straight on an angle almost touching the ground
- Head and eyes are on the target

## STEP #5 - Stride

- Now we want to stride out with our front foot (back foot is still on the rubber!). The stride is really important, it should be:
  - Straight in line to the catcher (not opening up, or cutting off)
  - It should be a long stride, ideally the size of the person's body! If they were to lie down feet touching the rubber, out to the catcher, their stride should go to their "head" (you may want to have the player lie down, and then mark where their head is with a pylon, this can and should be their goal to get out this far when they stride. It is challenging and needs to be emphasized and addressed. The longer the stride, the harder we throw, the more accurate we throw and the less stress we are taking off our throwing arms!
  - As we stride out, both our feet should be on the ground before the back leg comes up
  - As well, as we stride out we are still facing third base as righties and first base as lefties
  - While we are striding out our arms should be fully separated! The glove elbow needs to be pointed straight at the catcher, with the glove staying out in front, and the throwing arm should be behind the player's head with the ball facing second base
  - It is very important to emphasize glove positioning. The glove should ALWAYS be in front of the player's body. At this point in the pitching process the glove is NOT touching our body as we want our arm to be stretched out, so the glove is in front of us
  - Head and eyes are on the target

## STEP #6 – Turn and throw

- Now when we turn our body to throw, our hips are facing forward – belly button now facing the catcher, before it was facing either third or first base
- Glove needs to be out in front of our chest. It should be open and if we look down at this point we should see the inside of our glove.
- Our throwing arm is now at its highest point over our head, ready to snap and release!
- Head and eyes are on the target

## STEP #7 – Follow Through

- After we throw and release we want to keep our arm loose and down. Ensure that our arm does not bounce back up
- Our back leg should be off the ground, almost like we are kicking our butt, or bringing it up and around a chair
- To properly decelerate arm to avoid injury and to maximize velocity and accuracy, our back leg should swing around in front of our front leg.
- We should now be facing the opposite way that we started (lefties should be facing THIRD base, and righties should be facing FIRST base)**
- Quickly be ready for a ball to be hit back at us, or to have to move to first base to cover on a ball hit to the first baseman!