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Hello, I'm Coach Emmitt Carney. This is a pitching video dealing with the fundamentals of pitching.

In this video we will cover the proper position of your body in the wind-up position, proper grips of the ball, proper body alignment, proper pitches, and also while dealing with the most common mistakes and how to correct them.

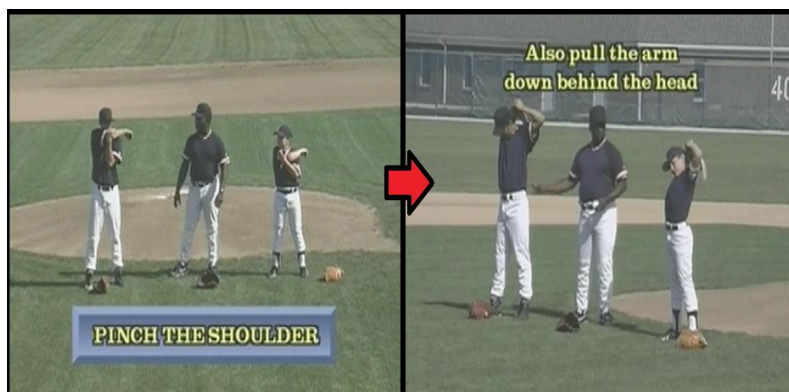
So I'm going to have my two assistants, Jeffrey Mercer and Timmy O'Neal, help demonstrate the proper pitching fundamentals that are used by major leaguers and Little Leaguers today in baseball.

Before we even pick up a baseball, guys, to even throw, the first thing we need to make sure we do is that we warm our bodies up properly to throw. Never, ever throw to warm up. And what I mean by that is don't show up, pick a ball up, and call yourself getting warm by throwing a baseball. What you need to do is warm your body in being prepared to throw the baseball. Whenever you go to practice, I can't stress this enough. You need to warm your body up to throw.

So what we're going to do is with J and Timmy's assistance, I'm going to show you a couple of exercises that's going to help you. One of the things I like to have them do first, which we won't do today, is run. And when we run, I like to have them run with a baseball in their hand. You may ask why do we do that.

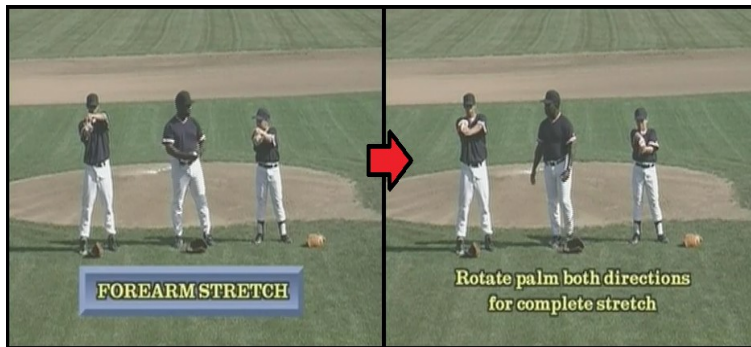
We run with the baseball in our hand to get a feel for it. We want you to be comfortable. Spend as much time as you can. So for running. Let's put a ball in our hand. Work on the four-seam grip, two-seam, across the two shorts seams, but get a feel for it.

Once they've ran, they've got a little sweat going, then we're going to come in and we're going to stretch. Okay, guys, just drop your glove. We're going to do what we call pinch to shoulder.



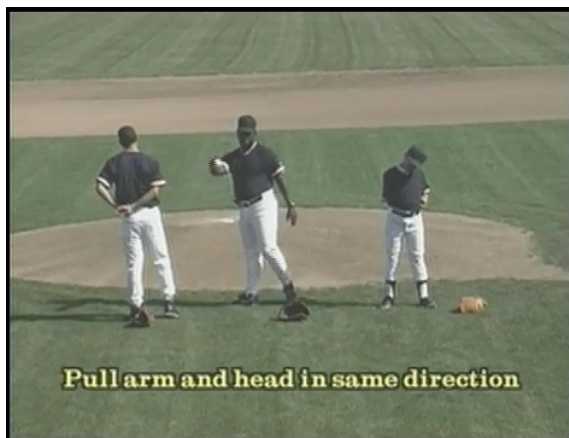
They're going to take their right arm across their chest and they're going to grab it. What we're going to work on here is concentrating on stretching the rotator back in here. We're getting that loose. Especially with the throwing arm, since we've got two right-handers.

Another drill, we can take the arm behind the back, pull the elbow down, and try to stretch as far down as you can. Really getting a good stretch. And now we can switch over to the left side. Doing the same thing. Reach down your back. Don't hurt yourself. Nice and controlled.



Let's put our hand out and with fingers up. What we're going to do is pull our fingers back. You're going to get a little pull right here in the forearm. We're getting our whole body ready to go because the wrist is going to play a big factor along with the forearm. Now you can rotate that down, palm out, then you

get another pull and you get that flexibility going there. Now let's go to the left arm. Fingers up. Down. I cannot stress the importance of making this a daily portion of your routine.



Now what we're going to do is we're going to take our right arm, put it behind our back, and I'll turn around, and what we're going to do is pull our right arm to our left and pull our head to the left and get a stretch. There you go. Now we can switch to the other side. Again, getting the neck loose while also getting the torso upper loose.



Now we can spread our feet a little bit wider and shoulder width. What we'll do is we'll rotate to the right and we're going to take our right elbow and put it outside our left knee. Rotate. Come on forward. And get a good bend down there. What this will help you do is simulate the finish in your mechanical motion. Now we

can rotate also to the left. This is also stretching the lower hamstring, getting a good stretch in the rear leg. Come on straight up.



Another thing you can do is if I'm with J, I can pull his arm up, I can put an L in here and I can ask him to gently pull forward. Pull forward. A little bit of isometrics. I can also pull the arm down... nope, relax. Now pull forward. And get a little bit of strengthening. I can take both hands, ask him to extend his arm, and what I'll do is when he gets a

little tight, he will let me know. But we're trying to gain some flexibility here.



Now I'll ask him to sit down. Put your right leg over your left. And now you're going to hook this outside, what I call the pretzel, and he's going to pull his leg going to the right and he's going to pull the opposite way with his left and he's going

to look behind him. Get a pretty good twist right here. Now we can switch to the other side. Also concentrate on your breathing when you're doing this exercises, okay?



One of my big ones is now I want you to pull your feet up under you. Pull your feet together. Pull them up under you. We're going to work on the inside of the groin. Grab your ankles. Now we're going to kind of push down on the inside part of the thigh. This is a big preseason injury.

A lot of guys will hurt their groin because they do not properly stretch. You've got to understand, guys, when you're in high school and your season's limited to 20 games a year, if you blow something here, now you've ruined your chances of having a successful year because you're going to miss probably about half your season. That's another good one.

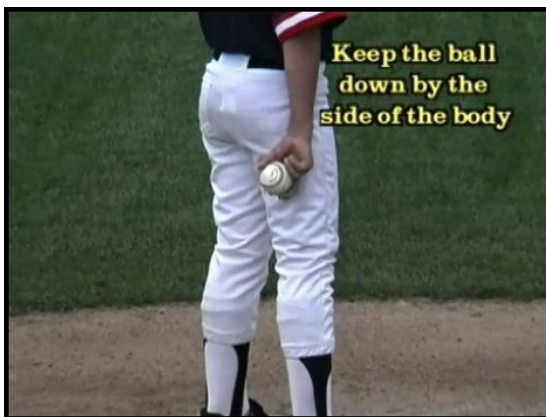


Now let's stand up a little bit. Spread your feet wide. Now what we'll do, we'll just kind of get a little groin action here to make sure, because we're going to really use our lower part of our body. Feel your body. It ought to be sending messages to your brain. See if you can see the muscle in here stretching. Know when it's too tight. Now let's go the other way. That's good.

These guys should be ready to go. It's a pretty warm day. Remember, different body types require longer. Me being old as I am, it's going to take me a lot longer than J, it's going to take me a lot longer than Timmy, but it's going to take Timmy a lot longer than J. So remember. You've got to take care of your body.

Warm your body up to throw. Never throw to warm up. If you go to practice, take it upon yourself to get there a little bit early. Develop your own routine of what's going to help you and what your problem spots are going to be so you can concentrate on that and not run the risk of hurting yourself.

The first thing we want to cover is his positioning on the mound. Timmy's a right-handed pitcher so therefore we want him to stand on the right-handed side of the mound. It gives him a better angle for the outside pitch and throwing to all of the plate. However, if he was left-handed we would move him to the left side. So always remember. If you're right-handed, stand to the right side of the plate.



Timmy stands here with his feet shoulder width, basically parallel.

What I prefer, to have the ball, is in his hand down by his side.

We want the back of the glove to the batter and the catcher. The reason why we do this, if Timmy exposes the ball to the right, the third base coach can pick up the pitch he's going to throw. So always remember. One, turn the back of the glove to the batter and the catcher.

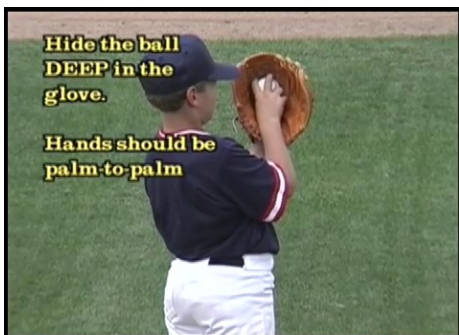
It also helps Timmy look a little bit more intimidating.

PART 2

Let's talk about the various grips. He's got the ball behind his legs. What Timmy can do is he can grip the ball either four seams or he can grip it going with the two short seams, across the two short, in that fashion. Remember with the younger ball players, there may be some players that require gripping the ball with three fingers and they may have to even grip it with four.



What you've got to do is, depending on the age, is bear with them. But what we like to teach is to grip with the two fingers and a thumb underneath. We want about a pencil-width of space between the fingers. We want to pretend we're holding it just like that and I don't want it too deep in the back of the hand, I want it right out there. The thumb is placed here for balance. It's going to help the position out.



When Timmy hides the ball, he gets the signal from his catcher, he's got the ball deep into his glove. If I ask him to turn this way just a little bit, you're going to see it's basically palm to palm. He's got the back of the glove to the catcher, the hitter. The coach can't still the pitch he's going to throw.

He acknowledged by shaking his head that he's ready for the pitch for the catcher. Let's say we're going to throw a fastball right here. Once he's ready to go, he's going to take a deep breath, kind of exhale, and then he's going to transfer step. Remember, transfer step and he'll stop right there. We want the hips, everything aligned.

And now he's going to pivot. Pick the foot up, put it in the hole. And now as he comes to the gather position, he's not going to kick the leg, he's going to lift it nice, slow and controlled. He's here, ready to go, and from the drills he's going to separate, T-tuck, throw, finish, and follow through.



Here we go. Ready? He's got his ready position. Back of the glove to the catcher. Transfer step. When he transfer steps, he steps directly behind just a little bit off center. We don't want to go too far to the left or too far here. We want to keep his body as one. He's going to pivot, pick it up, put it in the hole, comes around to the gather position. And I'll say finish, he's going to separate and he's going to throw.

Now I'll let him do it on his own. Again, while he's doing this he needs to focus on the target he's throwing at, maintain visual contact. He's nice relaxed and fluid. Finishing, burying the shoulder.

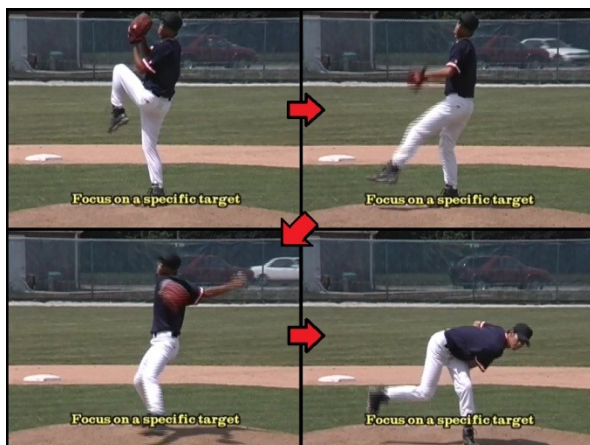
On your own. He pivots, separates, T-tuck, throw, follows through. He comes up in a fielding position. Again, J's a right-handed pitcher, he starts from the right side of the rubber. In this case, if he's a little bit younger and has trouble pitching from the right, we may put him in the center.



What we want to ask Jeffrey to do now is turn sideways. He's already done his transfer step pivot, now he's in the gather position. This is where he gathers all his energy. And what I'd like to do is point out a couple of checkpoints.

I want to make sure that his hands and center of his body. Minimum height we want is the front leg at least waist-high, foot relaxed under the knee. He's going to concentrate his balance on the inside part of his back leg, the right leg here, or maybe over the inside part

of his back foot. What I don't want to see is this, where he starts leaning back here. I want him tall.



Okay, leg up. And as we mentioned in our fundamental mechanical drill, from this point on he's going to separate, T-tuck, throw, follow through. Go. Now stay right there. You notice where his stride foot went. We're going to measure that in a minute and see if he's got the proper stride.

Come back, J. One more time. Here we go. Ready? Leg up. What we want to do is maybe show the batter just a little roundness of our shoulder. We don't want to be open. We want our shoulders level. A

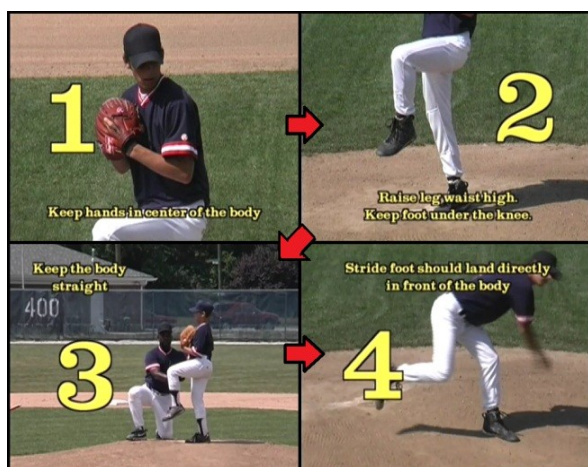
little roundness here, show him that and part of the hip pocket. Again, we're going to stay close. When he separates, finish. Go.

What we're going to do now is I'm going to smooth this out and I'm going to determine which way or direction Jeffrey's striding. First I'll ask him to get his ready position. Give me a transfer step. Pivot. Gather position. And I'm going to ask him to hold it. What I'm going to do is mark a line from the inside part of his arch, straight out.

Or as straight as I can. What I want him to do with his stride leg is to land either somewhere in this vicinity here or maybe a little bit on it. We don't want it too open nor do we want it too closed because then he's throwing against his body.

Okay, let's start over. Let's go. Full wind-up. Here we go. Ready? Transfer. Go ahead. As you see, Jeffrey landed a little bit closed. So what we'd ask him to do is try to get his hips open and get to the left of the line. Here we go, J, one more time. Much better. A little wide that time. One more time.

Make sure you line up in the same spot.



Okay, there we go. Excellent. You notice he finished this time with his body here to the left of the line, which assures me he's getting his hips through the ball and he's not pinching his self off.

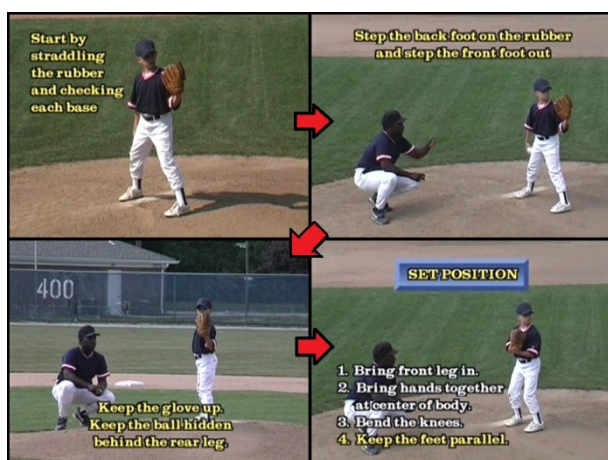
You can see that if he's ready to throw... give me a good tuck. Tuck. His hips are binding him up. He cannot do that. Now step away to the left. Step way up. Now he's striding too far. His front side is going to fly open. It's going to create some arm drag. The best place is to be right here to the left or almost on the line.

When we look at a stride, he's here to the side, what I want to see maybe is the knee... bring the foot back. Bring it back more. And then the nose right here where it's almost right here.

The knee is below the nose and the foot is below the knee. Not bad. One more time. Okay. Here we go. Let's try it with a pitch. Excellent. Finish it off. Good.

Again, in the gather position, check the hand, the front leg, the position of the foot. See if he's got his balance here. Is he leaning back? He needs to work on his posture and get the leg up. Then also check his stride once he finishes out. We don't want him closed off nor do we want him too far over. That's working on the gather position.

Believe it or not, what Darrell is doing is Darrell is working on his stretch. You've got to understand this, ladies and gentlemen, that regardless of what the age is, eventually he's going to get to the age where he's got to work on his stretch. So my philosophy is, that's a very important transition he's going to make going from Little League to Babe Ruth. So let's introduce it to him now, get him comfortable with the stretch position. Then he's going to make that transition a lot easier.



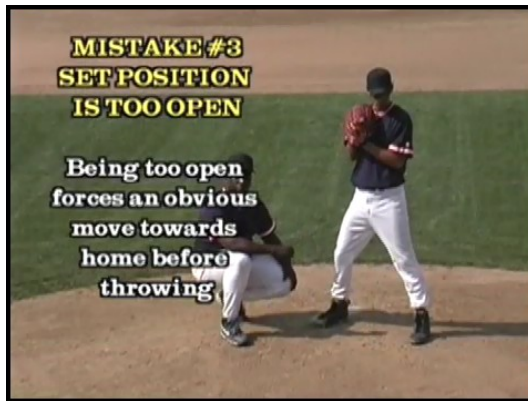
What I'll do is talk Darrell through some things that we check on. Here we go. He's going to straddle the rubber. And this position right here, he's got the ball in his hand, he can look around, do anything he'd like to do. Now he can check first base. He can check second. He can check third. Once everybody's set, position, defense is set by the coach, now he's going to step onto the rubber. He's going to step on, then he's going to step out just a little bit.



Notice how he's got the glove up. He's peering over the top, trying to look intimidating. He's got the ball hid beside him. Now when the catcher gives him the signal for the fastball, he's going to acknowledge yes.



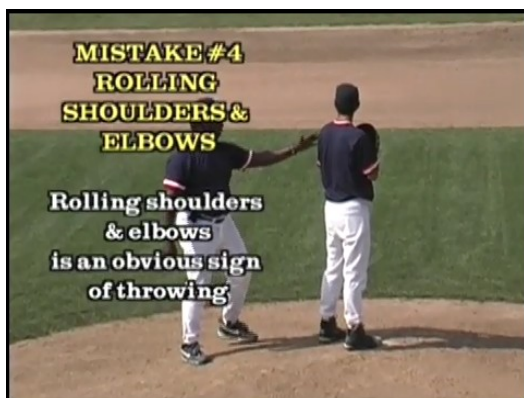
Now what he's going to do when he comes set, he's going to come set and notice how when he comes set he brings his left leg in, his hands come together, and they come to the center of his body. Notice there's a slight bend in both of Darrell's knees and both of his feet are parallel.



That enables him to not give the runner the advantage. If he's too far open... put your left foot over to the left, Darrell. Now, he has the advantage, bend your knee, that he can see the runner better at first, but the disadvantage is now he's got to lift that leg, lift it, when he gets ready to go home. Okay?

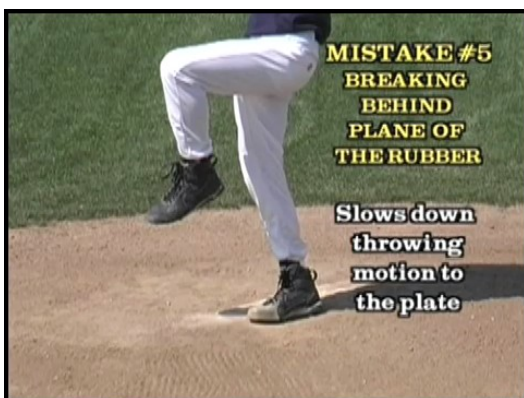
Now let's move the foot over to the right. The disadvantage here is that if there's a runner at third, he can see that runner; however, he can't

see the runner at first. So what we prefer to do is have him come set with the feet parallel, slight bend in the knees, and he's in a set position. When he's in a set position, what he's going to say to his self, at least to himself and not moving his lips, is 1001.



Because he's got to come set for at least a full second and hold it. He can give different looks. He can hold it longer if he likes. Just whatever Darrell feels comfortable for that situation. If he's going to step off, if the runner starts to leave early, the teammates are going to yell break or step off. He's going to step off with his back foot. Once he steps off, now he's free to go to any position or any bag. He can throw to even an unoccupied base.

So, okay, let's try to go through it again, Darrell. Here we go. Ready? He straddles the rubber. He's got his glove up. He steps on. Steps out with his front foot, just a little wider than shoulder width. He acknowledged he wants a signal. He comes set. He's going to say 1001.



Now, and it's very important in this position that when he gets ready to throw, he's got to get his front leg at least waist-high and he's going to go. He's already in his balanced position. We talked about this earlier. What we don't want to do is come up and hold it. He's got to get that leg up and then go.

Okay. I'll say go. Ready? Go. He gets a leg up and there he finishes. Now I'll let him...

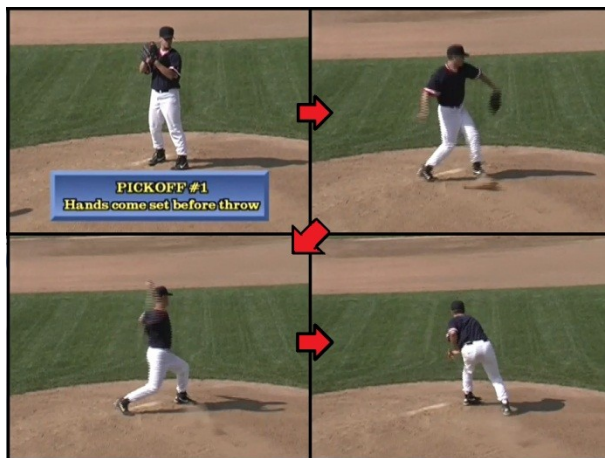
PART 3

The thing that I like to stress more than anything is that let's help these young guys be ready for their transition as they get older. If he learns how to do this now, then when he turns 13, he will be one of the leaders that can go out and do this the way it should be done and he won't worry about it. We lose too many guys because they become intimidated from pitching from a stretch.

Throw one more. Good job.

You must understand. You've got to work from the stretch. No matter how many times you go to a ball game, inevitably you're going to have to throw from the stretch position. So every pitch you throw from a wind-up, throw from the stretch.

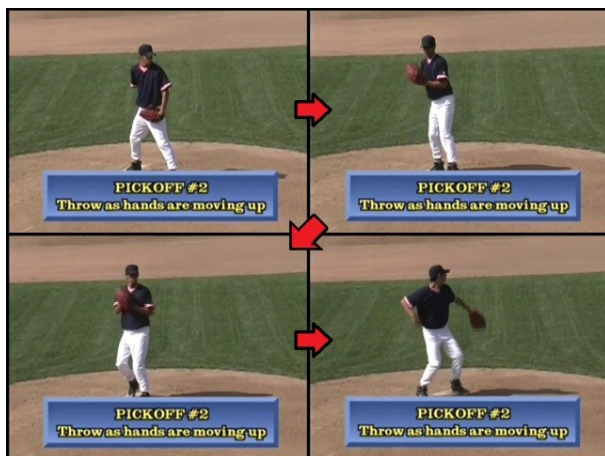
And it also reminds me that when Timmy's in a stretch position, he comes set come set. What we need to do is we need to have a variance of time. He comes set. What he's going to say to his self is 1001, then he's going to throw home. Go.



Okay, the next time, to keep the runner in check, how about he goes for two seconds this time. Ready? Come set. 1001, 1002. Now he throws. He's messing up the runner's timing over there. We don't want to get in and become a creature of habit. Where we come set, throw. Come set, throw.

Because as soon as I come set in a crucial point in a game, as soon as I'm set, he's going on first movement and then we can't do anything about it and we're basically

giving him a bag. So we've got to interrupt his timing as well as the hitter's.



Okay, another thing we can do. Sometimes a good movement to keep him in check is just to step off. He comes set and then he just steps off for the heck of it. He just steps off. Once he steps off, we don't want to make a throw over because he knows we're not going anywhere.

If he comes set step way over here. Now, and he cannot see the runner at first base. Another advantage is even if he comes parallel and he's set, and say both legs are locked out. Now what's going to happen, is

with his legs locked out, as soon as he gets ready to go home, he's got to break this

back leg down. He's got to break that to get this leg up. Lift. To be able to go. To be able to get it up and go home.

So what we want to do is guard against, one, having your legs locked out. Have a slight bend in them. Don't have your feet. If he starts out with an open stance... slide your foot around, Timmy. Now and he's open. He's got a better look at the runner, but as soon as he gets ready to deliver the pitch to home, he's got to come towards me. Go. And there it is.



Another thing that can give the runner an advantage... I'll turn him around here and pretend he's going to throw this way. Come set. Is the positioning of his elbows. If his elbows are here and he reads, and the runner reads his shoulders, when he tucks in, he knows that he's lifting the legs to go towards home plate.

So again, be aware that if you roll in too much as you lift your leg, he's going to get you. If he lifts his leg and he breaks too far behind the plane or the rubber, he goes too far, now and he knows. Because now and

he's traveled all this distance, he gives the runner advantage. Again, he's too slow to the plate.

So again, guard against too much inward turn. Don't have your knees locked out. Don't be a creature of set and go. Break down the time. Different variations of time and occasionally just step off. If the runner's going, the teammates are going to yell break, step off, runner. Disengage with your back foot, step of, get the ball up, and you're ready to go. Good job.

What we want to try to do is confuse the runner at first base and make sure that we dictate that he is in our control. That he does not know when we're coming over. We want to keep him off balance. So what we're going to do is we're going to work on going up, hands coming down, and hands coming set so we can work with the runner over there.

Another thing we want to do is when we decide we're going to go for our total pick-off move, we'll set him up with the long arm action. We'll take a longer arm, it takes just a little bit longer. We're going to try to bait him. See if we can get the runner to get off. And then once we get ready for the kill, we're just going to pivot, get the arm up, make a snap throw, and if it's nice and accurate we're going to get him.

Also... hop up here. Come on in, you guys. When Phillip and Timmy goes for the pick-off, what we're going to do is ask him to throw at the first baseman's right knee. By throwing at the first baseman's right knee, when they turn to throw, hopefully the runner's coming right back into it. We get tired of having throws all over the general

area. If we focus and pick up the right knee, he comes right back into the tag. What we'll do is have him simulate some more then we'll work on the actual pick-off with me playing the first baseman.

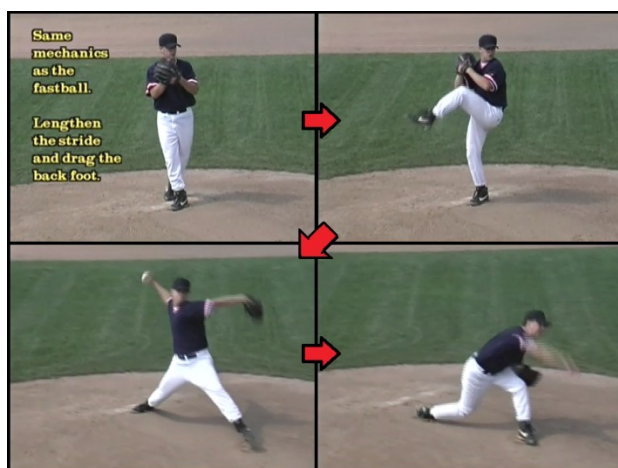
Here we go. Let's rotate. Okay, Phillip, let's do it.

Okay, Timmy, I want to see you work on the hands going up.

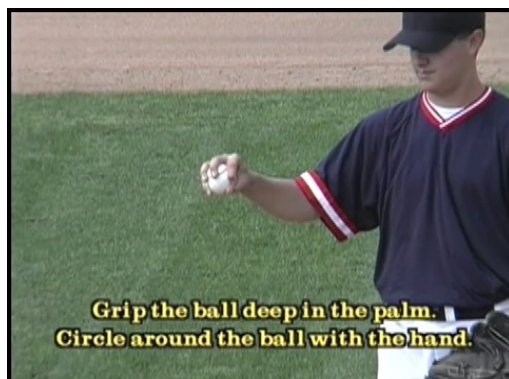
Good. Hands coming down, Phillip.

Right knee. Follow through, finish it off. Turn your head around, see the target.

Excellent.



Phillip's here working on his fastball. And what we want to work on now is a change-up. You've got to understand that hitting is timing, pitching is interrupting timing. To keep a hitter honest, what we've got to do is work on our off-speed pitch. The best pitch in baseball is still the fastball; however, we've got to throw the change-up. We've got to make them stay back and wait on us. If we don't, they'll lock and load on us every time.



So what Phillip's going to do, he's going to throw the circle change-up. He's going to get the grip a little bit deeper in the palm. He's got the circle here. When he throws this change-up, basically the mechanics are the same. He's going to take just a tad longer stride. He's going to drag the back foot a little bit. That's going to enable him to slow the arm down and make the pitch die at the plate. This is a good pitch right here.



Other than the circle change, Phillip can also throw what we call a two-finger choke where we take the ball, we push it back deeper in our palm.

PART 4

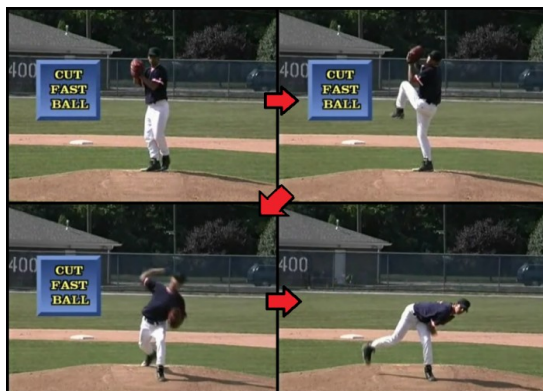


He could throw a three-finger change-up. It all depends on what the players want to try to do. Don't try to lock them in to one specific change-up. Let's throw a couple more.

What Timmy is doing now is he's working on his cut fastball. It's been proven that if you can get inches of movement on the velocity of the ball also, the inch is going to add to that velocity. If you can make the ball move and run, you're better off as a pitcher because anything that goes straight in, in my opinion, goes straight out. So we want as much movement on the ball as we can possibly get.

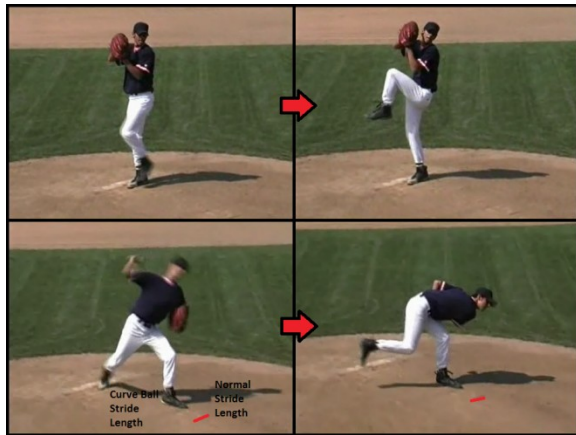


What Timmy does, he rotates his hand a little bit more further up on the ball. He's got his thumb tucked on the back side or the bottom of it. He's going to throw through the ball and just let it kind of run out and he gets a little sink or run action on it. So he's going to continue to work on the cut fastball. Remember, movement is very important. The more the ball moves, the better off you're going to be as a pitcher. Here we go.



What Timmy has just done, he's worked on his fastball. Now we're going to work on the curve ball a little bit with a full mechanical wind-up from the mound. And what I'm going to ask him to do is, on his fastball he's got his normal stride as you can see, which is way out here. What I ask him to do is shorten up just a little bit on the curve ball.

By shortening up on the curve ball, when he gets here and he goes fastball, fastball, curve, he shortens his stride. Now he can get more leverage on top of the ball, thus being able to get over and finish it.



If Timmy would stride out, way out. Stride way out for me, Timmy. If he strides out with his normal fastball stride and tries to throw a curve, now he can't really get a good finish. So he's going to hang it up here. But if he brings his stride foot back a little bit, now he is able to throw the ball and finish and get on top of it.

So let's try it, Timmy. He's going to concentrate on just a little shorter stride, saying fastball, fastball, curve, and getting on top of it. Not bad.

Two more. Good. Remember, when you throw the curve ball you want to say to yourself fastball, fastball, curve. Get the hand in the proper position. Do your mechanical drills for this. And also we want the curve for the right-hander to break low and away for the right-handed batter, and low and into the left-hander. Remember that. Low and away right-hander, low and in... so it's basically going to be outside the lower right knee of your catcher. Work on the curve ball. Use the mechanical drills and get on top of it.

Two more.



What Phillip is working on now is what we call a sinker. This is a pitch you want to use when it's definitely a situation where there's a runner in a scoring position, a tying run, a go-ahead run, maybe when you want that double-play ball.

What he does basically is grip it like his fastball; however, what he's going to do is move the thumb up a little bit on the side. But you must be aware. The more you move the thumb up, the more bite and sink you're going to get, but however, it's going to slow it down a little bit.

So you need to experiment with just what is enough for you so that when you get on the mound, you can control and get the determination of the amount of sink you want. So he's going to continue to work on it.

Again, it's just like the fastball except we slide the thumb on the inside of the ball. Same wrist action. Now we get a little sink. Mainly we want the ground ball or the double-play ball.

Here we go.

Better.



The most important thing you need to remember is, one, develop arm strength. Throw strikes and change speed. We've got to change speed because as the athletes get bigger and better and stronger, everybody likes to hit the fastball. We've got to keep them honest. We keep them honest with the change-up. Throw your fastball. Work on the change-up and then add the curve ball. And then cut the fastball a little bit. And then get the sinker.

Basically what I've done is given you probably four pitches that work off of one grip of the fastball. You can throw your fastball. You've got a little cut action. You can get a little sink action. And then you can do the change-up. Those are four pitches right there that are going to keep you similar in your mechanics and keep you steady.

Remember, you've got to be consistent and you've got to throw strikes. The best pitch in baseball is a strike. If you can't control the ball, you're not going to have success out here. So take care of your arm, do the mechanical drills, throw strikes, and go right at these guys and challenge them.