



Jump from T-Ball 2 Softball

U11/U13 Rookie Sox Pitcher Training

Choose from the variety of drills and options below to set up a practice session.

Not all of the pitchers training needs to be with a ball and a catcher and variety is very important to ensure the child's interest.

Warm up is important especially in colder weather so make sure the player has got to a sweat by firstly jogging and then a few dynamic stretches. This is followed by throwing overhand and taking some ground balls. They are now ready to start pitching.

Always start pitching with toss into the air and toss to self drills. Then move onto pitching to a wall/fence; if there is no wall available do some of the stay tall shadow/ranchslider drills without the ball.

Then pitch to a catcher and emphasise fast spin and build up to fast arm. After 15x pitches to the catcher introduce other drills like powerline 2 o'clock drill, up & close drill, breathing drill or leaping drill.

There is no need to do all these drills in one session. Use the drills to add interest over a 20-30 minute pitching session.

A child who enjoys pitching will be self motivated and will want to pitch 4 days out of 7 days.

Ball Toss in air

Toss ball up in the air and get it spinning fast – how high can you toss the ball? Higher than the back stop?

Do 6-10x to strengthen wrist and fingers.

Self Toss ball into glove

Hold glove low near pitching side of leg and toss ball into the glove x 15. Work on creating a fast spin.

Bring pitching arm back and stride leg up so in Letter K position. Pitch ball into glove from this position. Make sure the glove arm comes up with the pitching arm to form the Letter K Do 10x Pitch the ball windmill into own glove x 10.

Make sure the pitcher is not going to hit anyone with these self toss drills as the ball can easily miss the glove.

Shadow stay tall check

This is a chance for the pitcher to check that they stay tall.

Pitcher pitches without the ball and looks to see if they are staying tall by looking at their shadow.

Ranchslider stay tall check

Pitch without the ball with the pitching arm side on to a glass ranchslider. Look at yourself pitching an imaginary ball. Make sure you stay tall on the pitch.

Roll up some socks into a ball and face the ranchslider and pitch the socks into the glass.

Wall drill

Set up the pitcher 10 metres away from a concrete block wall. Pitcher pitches for 10 minutes continuously to the wall, fielding the ball each time as it comes back to them. The bigger the wall the better and it is not necessary to draw a strike zone on the wall. The bigger the target the better.

Leaping Drill

On a dirt diamond draw a mark on the dirt as a starting point and another in front of this line. Start from the first mark and jump over the second mark with the pivot foot and pitch. Try this without the ball x 10 and then try it with the ball x 10. Player is to ensure that their pivot foot is turned when they land.

Breathing drill

Pitcher takes position on the mound with hands apart holding the ball in one hand.

Pitcher takes a deep breath in and as they breathe out they simultaneously put their hands together. Make sure the hands are resting on the body and be sure to blow the air out for a longer time. Then pitch the ball to the catcher. Do 10x.

Up & close check

Pitcher turns their cap on its side so that the peak is pointing out to the pitching arm side.

Pitcher pitches the ball to catcher and the pitching arm should be up & close so that the cap gets knocked off. Do 6 x.

Powerline 2 o'clock check

On a dirt diamond the pitcher marks a starting line in the dirt and always pitches from this mark.

Then mark a line from the starting line toward the catcher. This is the powerline.

Pitcher straddles line toward catcher at starting mark. Pitch the ball to the catcher and try to step on the powerline with the stride foot at 45 degree angle (2 o'clock). Do 8 pitches. How many pitches was your foot on the powerline at 2 o'clock?

Wheelie Bin testing drill

Set up the young pitcher 10 metres away from a wheelie bin.

Pitcher pitches 4 x pitches to the bin and tries to hit the bin with the ball but also tries to make sure the sound of the ball hitting the bin is loud.

How many out of 4 hit the bin and are loud?

Then try to throw overhand x 4 to hit the bin loudly. Then do another 4 x pitch and again another 4 x throws. Do as many sets of either 3 or 4 x as the player feels like doing. Do this drill once weekly as a test of both speed and accuracy.

Happy training