

# PITCHING: THE WINDUP DELIVERY

Once the fundamentals of the pitching delivery are understood and a player is comfortable with the stretch delivery, feel free to teach the Windup Delivery as well.

The Windup delivery can provide more rhythm than the Stretch and help get the pitcher gain momentum when moving toward home plate. Most pitchers can throw faster because of this momentum in coordination with a higher leg lift, allows them to lead with the front hip to a greater extent.

The problem with this is that there are more moving parts in getting started so it can also throw the pitcher off balance or out of alignment when compared to the Stretch.

## The Windup:

- Again, start with the feet first. How they are aligned will affect the Windup. There are two schools of thought here with the first movement.

With both feet on top of the rubber:

A) a pitcher will step straight back with their non throwing side foot.

- The step is back towards second base while the throwing side foot remains in contact with the rubber.
- The next move with the feet will be to rotate the throwing side foot inward and place in front of rubber.
- The non throwing foot and leg are then raised into the next position (Leg Lift).
- The concern here is that the movement backwards toward second base tends to mess with balance and alignment in the delivery.
- The common cause is striding too far back with this initial step, if chosen, make it a small step backward.
- If taking a step backward to start motion, emphasize that the Pitcher's chest should stay over the rubber. This will limit the depth of the backward step and keep the Pitcher centered over the rubber.

B) a pitcher will step to the side with their non throwing side foot (I prefer to teach this method).

- I like to have the player slightly turn his body and feet so his toes point more toward the Third Base side of Home Plate (for a RH Pitcher).
- The pitcher will then make a small (half step or less) jab step to the First Base side of the rubber with their non throwing side foot.
- The throwing side foot then easily slides from the top of the rubber to in front of the rubber with the ball of the foot being the main contact point.
- I have found this method to be more comfortable for pitchers and easier to remain balanced and in alignment with Home Plate.

- The concern as with stepping straight back is that the step sideways becomes too wide and down the side of some mounds.
  - In some cases, this step has just become more of an adjustment or turn of the non throwing foot, just enough to easily allows the throwing side foot to turn into position in front of the rubber.
  - If taking the side step, emphasize that the Pitcher's chest should stay over the rubber. This will limit the width of the side step and keep the Pitcher centered over the rubber.
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- As a pitcher steps with their non throwing side foot, a pitcher will either leave his hands together in approximately the same position in the middle of their chest, raise the hands or even lower the hands. This is another individual component to pitching - basically, whatever is most comfortable for the player as long as it does not cause balance or alignment problems. The key is to make sure the ball and hands stay in the middle of our body (with the spine) regardless of movement up or down.
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- I prefer to just keep the hands in the relatively same position (slight movement upward) as they started and limit the extra movement. This is an individual preference for a player but I believe that the extra movement is just that, extra movement that has little to do with the actual throwing of the baseball.

More than anything, it is a comfort thing for the pitcher, which ever feels better - as long as it does not detract from the delivery.

From here, you are ready to move on to the next steps (Leg Lift, Stride and Hand Separation).