

# Pitching Drills: Separating the Good From the Bad

For the inexperienced pitcher, parent or coach, selecting decent pitching drills can be overwhelming. With such a wide variety available, it's hard to determine what's effective and what's potentially dangerous.

A quality pitching drill can help program a pitcher's arm for pitching delivery and follow-through while reducing injury risk. A wrong drill can teach a pitcher bad habits that affect his performance on the mound and potentially set him up for a career-ending injury.

The downside risk makes some experts advise pitchers to avoid drills altogether. But I've seen them produce tremendous results in too many of my pitchers to discredit them. What athletes, parents and their coaches need is a way to navigate the landscape of pitching drills. The following will help you know what to look for so you can separate the good from the bad.

## Good Pitching Drills

No two pitchers ever throw exactly the same, but their deliveries share three components: balance, timing and power. (See how to work on some of these: [The Keys to Improving Pitching Speed and Power](#).) Every good pitching drill must address at least two of these components. It also must be tailored to your individual style. For example, say you specialize in sidearm pitching. A drill that teaches throwing downhill and forward trunk tilt would be a waste of your time.

## When sifting through the alternatives, ask yourself the following questions:

1. What do you want the drill to accomplish?
2. What are your individual needs and mechanical tendencies?
3. Will the drill translate easily to your pitching delivery?

## My Three Favorite Pitching Drills

### Torque & Turns

<https://youtu.be/pY1-qXpADSY>

The emphasis here is on getting the arms in sync while working on good trunk rotation. It also lets you focus on controlling your glove arm (For more on that concept, click [here](#)).

## Power Catapults

<https://youtu.be/LxHBI-rwxr0>

This drill is great for teaching good weight shift from back to front, while developing good rhythm and timing. Emphasize good forward trunk tilt, finishing over a firm front leg.

## Toes-In Hip-Loaders

<https://youtu.be/VMKFBcl3B-I>

This is one of my favorite drills for giving pitchers the feel for loading their hips. When you open your hips too early, you lose power. Start off with your toes pointed in. Feel some tension in your hips. Then load up while you move out and drive with your back leg.

## Bad Pitching Drills

First, a pitching drill should not be counterproductive. Second, it should not negatively impact any of the three components. For instance, if a drill is great for balance but hurts your natural timing, it's ineffective. Make sure the drill does not kill your momentum or train bad habits. This is often caused when a drill overly requires you to pause throughout the movements. The end result of training with these types of drills can be a slow, robotic release.

## 3 problematic pitching drills

1. **The One Knee Drill:** Often taught in steps. Start with one knee on the ground and the other knee up facing the target. Go through your pitching motion, pausing once you get your arm up. *I really don't like this one. This is an example of a drill that kills momentum by pausing. It also trains the bad habit of a collapsing front knee.*
2. **The Balance Drill:** Designed to get you to a consistent "balance point." You pause in the process of the pitch at the high point of your leg lift. *This completely stops momentum and inhibits you from putting your entire body into the delivery.*
3. **The Power-T Drill:** Focuses on getting to a position (the "Power-T" or "Power Position"). *This drill often leads to pitchers becoming mechanical and stiff rather than fluid and explosive.*

(In season? You should be doing this workout: [The In-Season Workout for Baseball Pitchers.](#))