

Baseball Basics

Handout for Parents & Players with instructional video links

Grip



The best way to grip the ball is across the seams as pictured to the right. The fingers are placed over the top of the seams to provide a good grip on the ball. In the first picture you'll notice that you can see 2 seams running horizontally. The back of the ball not visible will also have 2 seams running horizontally. By gripping the ball in this fashion, those 4 seams will help to keep the ball in the air longer and keep the ball traveling straighter.

Wrist



Many young players don't use their wrist much when throwing the ball. When the ball is brought back in the throwing motion, the wrist should be cocked back. This way the wrist can be used as part of the throwing motion.

Watch young players throw and you will see most will throw with a stiff wrist. It is very difficult to throw the ball accurately with a stiff throwing wrist. This is a skill that young players should work on from the start.

You can practice this skill by holding your throwing arm just above the wrist with your glove hand (see image). Bend your throwing arm at the elbow with your forearm vertical. Keeping your arm in this position, practice throwing the ball with just your wrist and fingers. It may feel strange at first, but keep working on this skill. The wrist and fingers play a major role in the accuracy and strength of your throw.

Arm Motion

You can think of the motion your arm makes when throwing the ball as a circular motion. If you're throwing a short distance, the circular motion will be smaller than when you are throwing farther, but it's still a circular motion. The circular motion will aid your throw by providing more natural momentum than simply bringing your arm straight back and then forward. The circular motion should begin when you're pulling the ball from your glove.

If you are playing outfield you will almost always be making a longer throw, so when you remove the ball from your glove, your arm and hand should drop down and by your back knee. This will provide you with the longest circular motion possible.

If you are making a shorter throw in the infield for example, you may take the ball out of your glove and move it back and down slightly. This will give you a circular motion appropriate for the distance.



Instructional videos – parents please supervise kids: (each are only about 3-5 minutes long)

Throwing: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I9XCX3_MNyg

Catching the seams of a baseball: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2dFUES1pd98>

Hitting: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xj5PvJJUjT8>

For pitchers: You can start from the stretch position – <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kj7YIR6bY1M>

These basics are a good to start. If you are really adventurous, these are easy drills you can do with your kids that do not require a baseball field! They don't need to throw the ball, they can just hand it back to you. It works on their footwork. You can also use tennis balls if you feel more comfortable.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=euNsDrc9NCw>

Please practice with your player – the key to getting better is to practice, Practicing at home goes a very long way