

# PITCHING INFORMATION

## LEGAL DELIVERY

Every pitcher should know what constitutes a legal pitch. Just as important to know is what happens if they do not conform to these rules. This knowledge enables them to increase their chances of performing successfully.

A legal delivery starts with a ball that is pitched with an underhand motion.

In addition, the rules state that:

- The wrist of the pitching hand must be below the hip when the ball is released
- The wrist can be no further from the body than the elbow when the ball is released
- The pitch is initiated with a step toward the batter
- After release, the hand follows through past the straight line of the body
- One foot must remain in contact with the rubber or the ground until the pitch is released

## CONTACT WITH THE PITCHER'S PLATE

In minor softball, the rules require that one foot remain in contact with the pitcher's plate until the pitch is released

Interpretation of this rule permits the pivot foot to leave the pitcher's plate before release of the pitch, provided it remains in contact with the ground. Illustrated below are the acceptable limits of this interpretation.

## NOTES:



# PITCHING INFORMATION (CON'T)

## STANCE

There are two basic stances recommended for beginning pitchers. In either stance, the pitcher's feet should be staggered with the foot on the glove-side comfortably behind the front (or pivot) foot. When the pitcher sets up in the stance, more of their body weight should be over the glove-side foot.

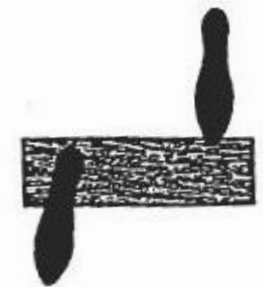
**Narrow Stance** allows the pitcher to rotate the shoulders and hips during the pitch more readily. This stance is more common to male pitchers.

**Wide Stance** using almost the entire length of the rubber, which provides a broader base of support for stability. It allows the pitcher to transfer the weight over a greater distance from the back foot to the front foot, and thus build up momentum for the pitch.

Young pitchers should experiment with these stances to determine which is most comfortable for them, and which allows for the generation of optimum power.



**NARROW STANCE**



**WIDE STANCE**

## GRIP

The grips suggested here are a starting point to achieve proper ball spin and control. Encourage your pitchers to experiment with other alternatives.

The diagram below illustrates the two-finger, three-finger, and four-finger grips. Either grip can be used depending on the size and strength of the pitcher's hand relative to the size of the ball being used. The ball is gripped with the fingers and thumb only. As a general rule, the two-finger grip is preferred because it provides the best combination of control, spin and speed of pitch.

Younger players may want to start with a four finger grip, then progress to the three-finger and two-finger options as their skill and confidence improve.

Here are some additional points to remember about the grip:

- The ball is held in the fingers and thumb, NOT in the palm.
- The grip must be comfortable (firm, but relaxed)
- Hold the ball firmly to prevent it slipping from the fingers.
- Place the fingers in contact with the seams whenever possible. This will increase friction.
- Hold the ball across the seams, as shown, and release is off the end of the fingers. This will get four seams spinning, and increase the effect of the pitch.



**2 FINGERS**



**3 FINGERS**



**4 FINGERS**

- ACROSS SEAMS
- FIRM BUT RELAXED

**BASIC GRIPS**