



FleetForge
Sports & Development

FREE GUIDE · YOUTH PITCHING

3 Drills Every Pitcher Needs

Three drills you can run on any field, in any backyard, with any glove. No fancy equipment. Just the work.

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INTRODUCTION

Three drills. That's it.

There are thousands of pitching drills out there. Most of them are noise. If your kid only has fifteen minutes before practice, or you're trying to fix something in the backyard between innings, you don't need thousands. You need three.

These are the three I come back to over and over. They fix the things that break down first: balance, direction, and the throwing arm slot. If a pitcher does these three drills three times a week, every week, they'll throw harder, hit their spots more, and keep their arm a lot healthier than the kid grinding through a 40-drill program.

Less is more. Pick three. Do them right.

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

Each drill has three parts: what it fixes, how to do it, and what to watch for.

Start with 5–8 reps per drill. Quality first. Speed comes later.

Do all three drills 3×/week, ideally before throwing — not after fatigue sets in.

DRILL 1

The Towel Drill

Why this drill matters

Most young pitchers cut their delivery off too early. They open up, the front side flies, and the arm drags behind. The towel drill teaches a pitcher to finish out front — to extend through the release point instead of yanking the ball.

It also gives instant feedback. Either you slap the target with the towel, or you don't. Kids love it because it's a game. Coaches love it because it doesn't lie.

How to do it

What you need: A small hand towel and a partner (or a chair) standing about a stride-length away.

The setup: Hold the towel by one corner in your throwing hand. Your partner crouches and holds their glove at chest height, one full stride in front of where your stride foot would land.

Step	What you do	What to feel
1	Get into your normal pitching stance	Loose, athletic, eyes on target
2	Slow leg lift, normal balance point	Stacked over the rubber
3	Stride out, deliver the towel like a pitch	Front side firms up, glove tucks
4	Let the towel slap the partner's glove	Full extension, hand finishes out front
5	Reset. Repeat 8 times.	Each rep should look the same

What to watch for

- Towel doesn't reach the glove? The pitcher is leaving energy behind. Front side flying open, or arm not catching up. Cue: "Chest over front knee at release."
- Towel slaps too high? Arm slot is dropping early. Cue: "Reach for the catcher's forehead."
- Inconsistent location? Stride direction is drifting. Put a chalk line straight from the rubber to the target and have the pitcher land on it every rep.

COACH'S NOTE

Don't let kids do this drill fast. The whole point is to feel the finish. If they're rushing, slow them down. Five good reps beats twenty sloppy ones.

DRILL 2

The Knee Drill

Why this drill matters

If a pitcher's arm is the problem, you don't fix it by throwing more. You fix it by isolating the arm from the lower body and letting the upper half do its job alone. That's the knee drill.

It exposes two common issues at once: a short, choppy arm path, and a glove side that pulls instead of stays. Both of these cost velocity and accuracy. Both are fixable in ten minutes a week.

How to do it

What you need: A baseball, a partner with a glove (or a fence/net), and 30 feet of space.

The setup: Pitcher kneels on the throwing-side knee (right-handed pitcher = right knee down). Front leg planted, foot flat, knee bent at 90 degrees, pointing at the target.

Step	What you do	What to feel
1	Kneel, ball in throwing hand at the belt	Square shoulders to target
2	Glove arm extends toward the target	Glove side tall and stable
3	Throwing arm goes back, then up to L-shape	Elbow at shoulder height, forearm vertical
4	Rotate torso, deliver to the partner	Glove tucks to chest as you throw
5	Hold finish for one second	Throwing hand outside the front knee

What to watch for

- Ball sailing high? Hand is too low at release. Cue: "Show me the ball, thumbs down to the ground."
- Glove flying out to the side? Tell the pitcher their glove is a steering wheel — it stays in front and tucks in, it doesn't open up like a door.
- Ball lacking life? Watch the throwing arm path. If it's short and pushy, have the pitcher exaggerate the back swing for a few reps until the path lengthens out.

REPS GUIDE

Ages 8–10: 6 reps, then rest 30 sec, then 6 more. Stop at 12 total.

Ages 11–13: Two sets of 8.

Ages 14+: Two sets of 10–12, focus on intent without max effort.

Never throw the knee drill at 100%. The whole point is precision, not heat.

DRILL 3

The Walk-Through

Why this drill matters

The first two drills work the upper half. This one ties the lower half back in. The walk-through teaches a pitcher to use the legs to drive momentum toward the target — which is the single biggest untapped source of velocity for kids under 14.

It also smooths out timing. Pitchers who rush their delivery feel jerky. Pitchers who use the walk-through feel like they're flowing. That flow is what scouts call "easy gas." It's not magic. It's the legs.

How to do it

What you need: A baseball, a target, and about 50 feet of clear space.

The setup: Pitcher stands behind an imaginary rubber, 5–6 feet behind where they'd normally start. Glove and ball at the chest, like a normal stretch position.

Step	What you do	What to feel
1	Take two relaxed walking steps forward	Easy momentum, no rush
2	On the third step, plant the back foot	This becomes the "rubber"
3	Lift the front leg into normal balance	Stacked, eyes on target
4	Stride and deliver — normal mechanics	Same finish as a regular pitch
5	Walk through the release toward target	Energy keeps flowing forward

What to watch for

- Spinning off to the glove side after release? That means the back leg isn't finishing. Cue: "Kick the catcher in the face." (Kids remember it.)
- Falling backward? Momentum is stalling. The walking start should make this almost impossible — if it's still happening, slow the whole drill way down.
- Velocity not changing? Most kids gain 2–4 mph in the first month with this drill. If you're not seeing it, video the delivery and look for the lower half firming up too early.

WRAP-UP

Your weekly plan

Day	Drill	Reps	Notes
Monday	Towel Drill	2 sets of 8	Focus on finish
Wednesday	Knee Drill	2 sets of 10	Watch arm slot
Friday	Walk-Through	2 sets of 6	Build to game speed
Saturday	All three (light)	5 reps each	Game-day primer

A word about effort

None of these drills should be done at 100%. The point of drill work is to groove the pattern — not test how hard you can throw. If a kid is grunting, sweating, or grimacing through a drill, they're burning energy that should be saved for actual pitching. Drills are practice. Pitching is practice. Don't confuse the two.

If you only remember three things

1. Three drills, three times a week. Consistency beats variety every time.
2. Slow is smooth, smooth is fast. Quality reps, not quantity.
3. Watch the arm. If anything hurts, stop. Period.

WANT MORE?

This guide covers the three drills every pitcher needs. If your kid is ready for the next level — specific mechanical fixes, velocity development, in-season management, and a real long-toss program — the full PitchForge ebook library is at fleetforgegroup.com.

And the Arm Care Blueprint is free. Always. Every kid deserves to know how to take care of their arm.