



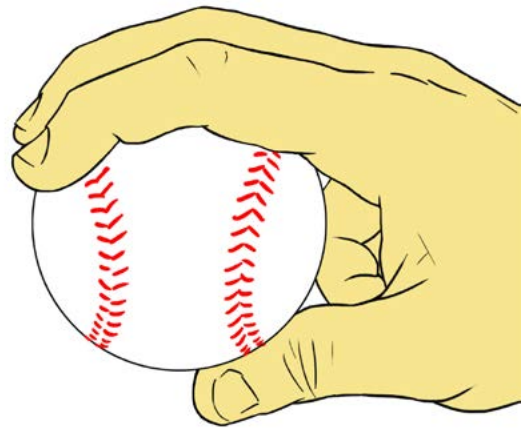
PITCHING GRIPS

PITCH #1 - FOUR SEAM FASTBALL

The four seam fastball is a pitcher's bread and butter pitch. It is the pitch you can throw the hardest and with the best control.

Place your index and middle fingertips directly on the perpendicular seam of the baseball. The "horseshoe seam" should face into your ring finger of your throwing hand. Next, place your thumb directly beneath the baseball, resting on the smooth leather.

Grip this pitch softly, like an egg, in your fingertips. A loose grip minimizes friction between your hand and the baseball. Less friction = more velocity.



PITCH #2 - CHANGE-UP

This pitch is important because: "hitting is timing and pitching is interrupting that timing." Pitchers must throw a change-up to keep hitters honest, otherwise they will tee off on the fastball.

Hold the ball deep in the palm. Circle around the ball with the hand. Use same mechanics as the fastball - except lengthen the stride and drag the back foot.



PITCH #3 - CUT FASTBALL

While the four seam fastball is more or less a straight pitch, the cut fastball has late break toward the glove side of the pitcher. Start with a four-seam fastball grip, and move your top two fingers slightly off center.

The arm motion and arm speed for the cutter are just like for a fastball.

At the point of release, with the grip slightly off center and pressure from the middle finger, turn your wrist ever so lightly. This off center grip and slight turn of the wrist will result into a pitch with lots of velocity and a late downward break.



PITCH #4 - CURVEBALL

Place the index finger on the inside of the seam, and the middle finger on the outside of the seam. This causes the thumb to land on the underneath seam. You should be squeezing the baseball with your middle finger and thumb.

When you bring your arm down, pretend you are chopping a board in front of you. This should create a spinning motion on the ball and cause to break shortly before reaching home plate. The key is to get enough spin on the baseball without twisting your elbow.



PITCH #5 - SINKER

This is a good pitch to throw with a runner in scoring position to get a ground ball out or when you need a double play. Grip the ball like a two-seam fastball, with the thumb resting directly below the ball. Use the same arm motion and arm speed as a fastball. Stay on top of the ball, which will allow you to put more pressure straight down on the ball with your fingers.

