

DETROIT  
ROOTS



## ROUTINES – PITCHING

Pitching is one of the most difficult skill sets for amateur players to master. It's a position that requires both physical repetition and mental fortitude on every pitch. A good pitcher will learn over time to minimize any distractions and focus on the task at hand.



Greg Soto

### Pre-Pitch Process

Before every pitch, the pitcher should develop an efficient pre-pitch routine prior to starting their delivery. This can be as simple as taking a deep breath once they receive the ball back from the catcher from the previous pitch. The goal here is to clear the result of the last pitch and focus back in on making the next one. Once the next pitch is selected the pitcher should visualize themselves executing that pitch as they have done in practice so many times before. It's important that the pre-pitch routine be adequate to prepare for the next delivery, but not so elaborate as to slow down the pace of the game and put your defense to sleep.

### Know the Game Situation

Being aware of the game situation and being affected by the game situation are two very different things. At all times, the pitcher must maintain composure, especially as the game seems to speed up in trouble spots. A variety of scenarios come into play when approaching the next hitter: what inning is it, what's the score, how many outs are there, are there runners on base? The game stops and starts on your cue – know where you're at, have a plan and execute.

DETROIT  
ROOTS



## ROUTINES – PITCHING



Jose Cisnero

### Know Your Hitter

Knowing a hitter's tendencies is also worthwhile. This can be difficult for younger players at the youth level who don't always experience this kind of repeated exposure. As the game progresses, many hitters will show certain patterns. For example, is he a pull-hitter? Does he only go the opposite way? Does he always take the first pitch? Figuring out the hitters' tendencies helps a pitcher determine pitch type and location. For more advanced pitchers, it also enables better development of a planned pitch sequence.

### Don't Be Afraid to Get Hit

One of the easiest ways to create trouble for your own team is for the pitcher to attempt to pitch away from contact. Nibbling at the edges of the plate from the first pitch of every at bat is a good way to run up pitch counts and lull your own defense into a less focused approach. The barrel of the bat isn't all that big in comparison with the size of the strike zone, so you're going to get your swings and misses – hitting is hard. The reality is that most balls that are put into play result in outs, especially if you can pitch to a hitter's weakness. Attack the bottom half of the strike zone and more often than not, good things will happen.