

Sideways, Shift, Swing, Step, & Throw

Sideways (not just a cool movie about travelling through California Wine Country)

If we could teach one thing to all t-Ball Players it would be to start throwing by standing Sideways. The description below is likely more detailed than we need but the first step in player development is to get the players sideways. Warm-up time before a game would best be used on throwing and catching where everyone is active rather than batting practice.

1. The first, and most important, element of proper throwing mechanics is to **start out standing sideways to the target** like a pitcher in the Set (aka Stretch) position such that lines drawn through your heels, your hips, and your shoulders would point directly at the target. **Getting sideways to the target is critically important because it enables you**



to throw with your entire body and not just your arm. Thus the throwing arm is back away from the intended target. This is **not** optional, as you do not want players to be throwing the ball starting from a position where their chest is facing the target. Starting sideways will eliminate many faults.

2. The thrower **must** be stepping directly towards the target (catcher) on every throw. One can suggest a half step with the back foot (throwing arm side loading up) followed by a full stride with the lead foot. The back foot should come off the ground with the follow through momentum.

3. Throwing is mostly a circular or rotational motion or **not** a back and forward or linear motion. Starting from a position with the ball and glove above the waist and in front of the body the ball-hand goes down below the waist and past the upper thigh. The glove hand generally points toward the target without completely straightening. The ball-hand circles back and up behind the shoulder, it continues up over the shoulder and toward the target. In this path the throwing elbow should get above the back shoulder (never be below). If a player looks back at this point they will see the back of their throwing hand with the ball facing away from the intended path. This path keeps the ball/hand away from the shoulder

or head. The arm is never straight in this process. Less stress--more power.

4. The combination of foot stride, sideways set-up (allowing the back shoulder to naturally drive toward the front which is the source of power to an arm whip) and circular motion will generate plenty of velocity.

5. Simply put. Body Sideways; Stride forward, Circular motion on every throw.

Some Resources:

Also a good newsletter from LL Canada- The 7th Inning Stretch. Sample at <http://www.littleleague.ca/forms/2007/newsletter/Volume%203%20Number%201.pdf> and you can register by e-mailing: thestretch@littleleague.ca <thestretch@littleleague.ca>

And here is the Baseball Canada site with many useful links.

http://www.baseball.ca/eng_cat.cfm?CatID=25