

# STANLEY BOYD



## YOUTH BASEBALL PITCHING DRILLS REFERENCE GUIDE 2026

8U • 10U • 12U • 14U

Station substitution drills for use in practice plans

8U	10U	12U	14U
<b>7 Drills</b>	<b>8 Drills</b>	<b>9 Drills</b>	<b>10 Drills</b>
Balance & basic arm action	Repeatability & hip separation	Arm path, changeup intro	Velocity, command, breaking ball

*Use these drills to substitute into any hitting or defensive station slot as needed.*



# 8U YOUTH BASEBALL PITCHING DRILLS

## Station Substitution Guide

Youth Baseball Practice Plans

Focus: Fun introductions to pitching mechanics — balance, grip, and simple arm action





### LEVEL-WIDE COACHING POINTS


- ✓ Never worry about velocity — focus entirely on repeatable, comfortable mechanics.
- ✓ Keep sessions short (5–7 minutes per pitcher). Young arms fatigue quickly and form breaks down fast.
- ✓ Use foam balls, tennis balls, or reduced-impact balls for all drills at this age.
- ✓ Praise every rep that shows the correct movement — not just strikes.
- ✓ The #1 enemy at 8U is rushing. Slow everything down and let kids feel each position.



### DRILLS (7 total) — Each drill fits within a single 9-minute station slot

#	Drill Name	Setup & Execution	Key Coaching Cues	Equipment Needed
1	<b>Balance Beam Hold</b>	Player stands on the pitching rubber or a flat line of tape. From the set position, they lift the lead knee to hip height and hold for 3 seconds — no step, no throw. Just balance. Repeat 10 times.	Knee up, toe down. Stand tall — don't lean. Eyes forward. If they wobble, slow down more. Balance before mechanics.	Baseballs
2	<b>Knee Drill (Wrist Flicks)</b>	Player kneels on their back knee facing a partner 10–15 ft away. Using only the wrist and forearm, they flip the ball to the partner. No elbow or shoulder movement — just the wrist snap at release.	4-seam grip. Fingers on top of the ball at release. Snap the wrist down and through. This teaches arm-side finish and basic release feel.	Baseballs
3	<b>Step-Behind Drill</b>	Player stands with feet together. They take a slow, exaggerated step back with the back foot (pivot step), lift the front knee to hip height, and pause. Coach checks position before each throw. Throw to a partner at 20 ft.	Step back, not sideways. Knee up to belt height. Don't rush into the stride — pause and feel the loaded position before going forward.	Baseballs
4	<b>Arm Circle Drill</b>	Player stands sideways. Without a ball, they practice the full arm swing: arm down by the hip, then a smooth, full circle up to shoulder height and forward. Repeat 10 times to ingrain the arm path before adding a ball.	Smooth, full circle — no short-arming. Elbow leads the circle upward. This is not a windmill — stay on the side of the body, not in front.	Baseballs
5	<b>Target Toss (Towel Drill)</b>	Player holds a folded towel instead of a ball. Coaches set up a strike zone target (a hula hoop, a marked wall, or a folded tarp) at 20 ft. Player goes through their full delivery and 'throws' the towel at the target. Checks arm extension and finish.	Full arm extension toward the target. Finish with the throwing hand coming down to the opposite hip — 'reach and pull.' No stopping short of full extension.	Hand Towel,  Hula Hoop(s)

6	<b>One-Knee Drill (Full Arm Path)</b>	Player kneels on the back knee, throwing arm side. Partner stands 20 ft away. Player takes the ball from glove, extends it back to the power position (elbow at shoulder height, ball pointed back), and throws with a full arm path.	Elbow up before the throw — not below the shoulder. Ball points back briefly before the arm comes forward. Finish: throwing hand comes to opposite hip pocket.	 Baseballs
7	<b>Slow-Motion Walk-Through</b>	Coach calls out each step slowly: 'Set... knee up... stride... throw... finish.' Player executes each phase at 25% speed with full pauses between. Not a live throw — a movement practice. Repeat 5 times, then do 2 at full speed.	This drill exists purely to build muscle memory. Speed is the enemy here. If a player speeds up, slow it back down. Feeling each position is the only goal.	 Baseballs

 **Station Tip:** Substitute any of these drills into a hitting or defensive station slot. Rotate 3–4 players through the pitching station at a time while others continue at standard stations.



# 10U YOUTH BASEBALL PITCHING DRILLS

## Station Substitution Guide

Youth Baseball Practice Plans





Focus: Building a repeatable delivery — balance, hip-shoulder separation, and consistent release point


### LEVEL-WIDE COACHING POINTS

- ✓ Introduce the concept of repeatable mechanics — every pitch should look the same.
- ✓ Hip-shoulder separation begins here: hips open before the shoulders. Teach it slowly and reinforce it every drill.
- ✓ Keep throwing volumes moderate. Count pitches, not innings. 10U arms are still developing.
- ✓ Accuracy and consistency are the goals — not velocity. A pitcher who throws strikes will always have value.
- ✓ Introduce proper fielding position after the pitch: square up and be ready to field.

### DRILLS (8 total) — Each drill fits within a single 9-minute station slot

#	Drill Name	Setup & Execution	Key Coaching Cues	Equipment Needed
1	<b>Balance Point Drill</b>	Player goes through full delivery but freezes at the balance point (lead knee at peak height). Coach checks: straight back, knee to belt height, glove tucked in front, eyes on target. Hold 3 seconds, then complete the pitch. 8 reps each.	Tall and balanced at the top — no leaning forward or sideways. Weight stays over the back leg. Glove arm points at the target, not at the ground.	Baseballs
2	<b>Hip-Shoulder Separation Drill</b>	Player stands in the stride position (front foot down, weight transferring). Coach holds the player's shoulders still while they practice rotating the hips open first. Feel the separation. Then add the full throw. 8 reps.	Hips go first — always. The shoulders should lag behind the hips by a fraction of a second. Cue: 'Open the door with your hip, then throw.' If shoulders and hips rotate at the same time, there is no separation.	Baseballs
3	<b>Towel Drill — Extension Check</b>	Player holds a towel instead of a ball. A coach or partner holds a glove 12–18 inches in front of the pitcher at release-point height. Player goes through full delivery and tries to slap the glove with the towel at extension. If extension is correct, the towel reaches the glove.	Reach out and down toward the target. Elbow extends fully — don't pull up short. Finish: throwing hand comes down to the opposite hip. The towel hitting the glove = correct extension.	Hand Towel
4	<b>Stride Direction Drill</b>	Place a tape line or chalk line from the rubber toward home plate. Player pitches with the lead foot landing directly on the line — not to the arm side (opening up) or the glove side (crossing over). 10 throws checking foot placement.	Land on the line every time. Stepping to the glove side closes the hip — loses velocity. Stepping off the line to the arm side opens up too early — loses command. Straight to the target.	Sidewalk Chalk,  Athletic Tape,  Baseballs
5	<b>Mirror Drill</b>	Player goes through their full pitching delivery in slow motion in front of a mirror, fence reflection, or tablet video. No ball. Coach pauses them at 3 checkpoints: balance point, power position (arm back), and release/finish. Player self-evaluates.	Can you see yourself? Does your balance point look the same every time? Is your elbow at shoulder height at the power position? Does your arm finish across your body? Build self-awareness.	Tablet/Phone

6	<b>Power Position Throws</b>	Player starts already in the power position: front foot down, hips slightly open, throwing arm back with elbow at shoulder height, glove arm extended toward target. From this static start position, they complete only the arm action and follow-through. Throw to a partner at 40 ft. 10 reps.	Arm action starts from elbow height — no lower. Wrist behind the ball, fingers on top at release. Full extension toward the target, then arm comes down to opposite hip. Isolates the arm path.	 Baseballs
7	<b>Fielding Position Finish</b>	After each pitch in the bullpen or station, the player must land in a proper fielding stance: square to the plate, knees bent, hands ready. Coach rolls or hits a ball back to the pitcher immediately after release. Player must field it.	Every pitch ends in a fielding position. Feet square to the plate, knees slightly bent after the follow-through. Hands ready at waist height. A pitcher who cannot field their position is a defensive liability.	 Baseballs
8	<b>Flat Ground Command Drill</b>	Player pitches from flat ground (no mound) to a catcher or target zone at regulation distance. Goal: throw 7 of 10 pitches in the strike zone. No elevation — flat ground teaches balance and reduces the urge to 'aim' the ball.	Focus on the process, not the result. Consistent mechanics = consistent location. After each pitch, player self-evaluates: 'Did it feel the same as the last one?' If yes, trust it. If no, find what changed.	 Catcher's Gear,  Baseballs

 **Station Tip:** Substitute any of these drills into a hitting or defensive station slot. Rotate 3–4 players through the pitching station at a time while others continue at standard stations.



# 12U YOUTH BASEBALL PITCHING DRILLS

Focus: Mechanical refinement, arm path efficiency, and introduction of the changeup

## Station Substitution Guide









Youth Baseball Practice Plans


### LEVEL-WIDE COACHING POINTS

- ✓ This is the age where mechanics become deeply ingrained — good or bad. Correct major flaws now before they become habits.
- ✓ Introduce the changeup as the only off-speed pitch at this level. Grip and arm speed consistency are everything.
- ✓ Arm path efficiency matters more than raw velocity. A short, efficient arm path is faster and healthier than a long, loopy one.
- ✓ Begin tracking pitch counts seriously. 12U pitchers should not exceed 85 pitches in a game. Rest requirements must be followed.
- ✓ Mental approach starts here: teach pitchers to have a plan on every pitch — not just 'throw a strike.'

### DRILLS (9 total) — Each drill fits within a single 9-minute station slot

#	Drill Name	Setup & Execution	Key Coaching Cues	Equipment Needed
1	<b>Lunge Drill</b>	Player strides into a lunge position (front knee at 90°, back knee close to the ground) and holds. Coach checks: glove-side hip over front knee, throwing arm in power position, eyes level. From this position, complete the throw to a partner at 45 ft. 8 reps.	Front knee stays over the front foot — don't let it collapse inward. This drill exaggerates hip drive and forces the player to use their legs. If they are all arm, the lunge position will expose it immediately.	Baseballs
2	<b>Rocker Drill</b>	Player rocks forward and back twice (like a pendulum) before going into full delivery. The rocking motion builds rhythm and momentum before the actual pitch. Throw to a target at full distance. 10 reps.	Let the rocking motion create natural momentum — don't force it. The arm swing should start as the weight rocks back, so the arm is already moving when the body goes forward. Rhythm = repeatability.	Baseballs
3	<b>Arm Path — Short Arm Drill</b>	Player pitches from the set position with an intentionally shortened arm path — ball goes directly from the glove to the power position with no wasted loop. Compare feel and results to their normal delivery. 10 reps each.	Ball comes out of the glove and goes straight back to shoulder height — no long swing, no drop below the hip. Shorter arm path = faster arm speed. Watch for the common 'long arm' flaw where the ball drops below the hip before rising.	Baseballs
4	<b>Changeup Grip &amp; Arm Speed Drill</b>	Introduce the circle changeup or 3-finger changeup grip. Player throws the changeup from 30 ft at soft effort — not trying to throw it past anyone, just grooving the arm speed. Key: arm speed must match the fastball. Throw 10 reps at soft effort, then 5 reps at full arm speed.	Same arm speed as the fastball — every single time. The grip creates the speed difference, not the arm. If the arm slows down, batters can see the change coming. Cue: 'Throw it hard with a soft grip.'	Baseballs

5	<b>Release Point Consistency Drill</b>	Hang a hula hoop or mark a spot on a fence at release-point height and location (slightly in front of the head, arm-side of the body). Player throws 15 pitches. Every throw should feel like the arm passes through the same point in space. Video one round and review with the pitcher.	Consistent release point = consistent command. If a pitch goes high, the release point was late (too far back). If low, the release was early (too far in front). Teach players to diagnose their own misses by release point.	 Tablet/Phone,  Hula Hoop(s),  Baseballs
6	<b>Eyes On Target — Focal Point Drill</b>	Place a small sticker or coin on the center of the catcher's mitt. Before each pitch, the pitcher must find that specific target, lock on, and not break eye contact through the delivery. 10 pitches focusing only on this one cue.	Pick a small target and focus on it — not the whole strike zone, not the batter. Smaller target = better command. A common mistake is 'aiming' the ball instead of trusting the mechanics and focusing on where you want it to go.	 Catcher's Gear,  Baseballs
7	<b>Windup vs. Stretch Comparison</b>	Player throws 5 pitches from the full windup, then 5 from the stretch. Coach compares: does the mechanics break down in one vs. the other? Does velocity or command change? Identify which is the weaker position and spend extra reps there.	Most pitchers are worse from the stretch because they have less rhythm and momentum. If the stretch delivery looks different from the windup, identify which specific checkpoint differs: balance point, stride length, arm path, or finish.	 Baseballs
8	<b>PFP (Pitcher Fielding Practice) — Comebacker</b>	Coach hits or rolls a ball back to the pitcher immediately after release. Pitcher must field the comebacker, set feet, and throw to first. Then: bunt to the right, pitcher charges and throws across body. Then: bunt to the left, pitcher fires to first. Rep all three.	Fielding position after every pitch — it is not optional. On a comebacker: glove in front of face, absorb the ball. On a bunt: read the spin immediately off the bat, charge hard, field with momentum, throw with conviction.	 Baseballs
9	<b>Bullpen With Purpose</b>	Instead of just 'throwing a bullpen,' assign a purpose to every pitch. Examples: 'This pitch, I am focusing on hip separation. This pitch, consistent release point. This pitch, same arm speed on the changeup.' Player calls their focus before each pitch.	A purposeless bullpen is wasted reps. Every pitch should have one specific mechanical focus. After the bullpen, player tells the coach what they felt, not just what the results were. The feel matters more than the outcome in practice.	 Baseballs

 **Station Tip:** Substitute any of these drills into a hitting or defensive station slot. Rotate 3–4 players through the pitching station at a time while others continue at standard stations.



# 14U YOUTH BASEBALL PITCHING DRILLS

## Station Substitution Guide

Youth Baseball Practice Plans

Focus: Velocity, command, breaking ball introduction, and competitive pitching strategy





### LEVEL-WIDE COACHING POINTS


- ✓ Arm care is non-negotiable. Mandatory band exercises and proper warm-up before any throwing. No exceptions.
- ✓ Introduce the curveball or slider with caution — only for players with mature mechanics and arm strength. Grip and spin are taught before velocity is added.
- ✓ Command is the most valuable skill at this age. A pitcher who can locate 2 pitches to both sides of the plate is more valuable than one who throws hard with no control.
- ✓ Pitch sequencing becomes a priority: teach pitchers to set up hitters — not just throw their best pitch every time.
- ✓ Mental game is critical: short memory after walks or errors, trusting your stuff, and competing with what you have that day.



### DRILLS (10 total) — Each drill fits within a single 9-minute station slot

#	Drill Name	Setup & Execution	Key Coaching Cues	Equipment Needed
1	<b>Band Arm Care Routine</b>	Before any throwing drill: 3 sets of external rotation, 3 sets of scarecrows, 3 sets of diagonal raises, wrist flexor/ extensor stretches. This is a mandatory pre-throwing routine — not optional warm-up. 8–10 reps per exercise.	Arm care is not a suggestion at 14U. The exercises protect the rotator cuff and labrum. Any player who skips this gets no pitching reps. Build the habit now — it protects their arm for years.	Resistance Bands,  Baseballs
2	<b>High Knee Drive Drill</b>	Player goes through full delivery with exaggerated knee lift and hip drive. Front knee lifts to chest height, then drives aggressively toward home plate — hips firing hard. 10 reps at 75% arm effort, focus entirely on leg and hip drive.	Velocity comes from the legs and hips — not the arm. If a pitcher uses only their arm, they are leaving 15–20% of their velocity on the rubber. Cue: 'Drive through the wall with your hip.' Hip drive generates hip-shoulder separation which is the engine of arm speed.	Baseballs
3	<b>Two-Seam vs. Four-Seam Comparison</b>	Player throws 5 four-seam fastballs to establish baseline, then 5 two-seam fastballs. Compare: does the two-seamer have movement? Where does it move — arm-side run, or downward? Player identifies which pitch is sharper and which has more natural movement.	Four-seam = ride and carry, typically straighter. Two-seam = arm-side run and sink, more ground balls. A pitcher who can locate both has two weapons off one pitch type. Grip pressure and finger placement make the difference.	Baseballs
4	<b>Curveball Spin Drill (No Velocity)</b>	Player learns the curveball grip (12-to-6 or 11-to-5) and practices the spin from 20 ft at zero effort — just flipping the ball with the correct spin. Goal: sharp downward break, not a slurve or loopy curve. Progress to 30 ft only when spin is clean.	Spin is everything. A poorly spun curve has no break and hangs. Cue: 'Tug the bill of the cap — pull down at release.' Elbow stays at shoulder height. Do not drop the elbow to 'put something on it' — that is how elbow injuries happen.	Baseballs

5	<b>Command Quadrant Drill</b>	Divide the strike zone into 4 quadrants (in/up, in/down, out/up, out/down). Coach calls a quadrant before each pitch. Pitcher must locate the fastball in that specific quadrant. 12 pitches — 3 per quadrant. Track accuracy. Repeat with the changeup.	Command means throwing where you intend to throw — not just in the strike zone. Repeat the same quadrant 3 times first, then go random. A pitcher who can execute all 4 quadrants has elite command for this age. If one quadrant is consistently missed, that is the flaw to target.	 Baseballs
6	<b>Pitch Sequencing Simulation</b>	Coach calls a batter type before each pitch sequence (e.g., 'pull hitter, 0-0 count' or 'contact hitter, 1-2 count'). Pitcher must call their pitch selection out loud before throwing: 'Fastball away to set up the changeup inside.' Execute the sequence. Debrief after each at-bat.	Pitching is chess. A pitcher without a plan is just guessing. Teach them to think: What is this batter's weakness? What pitch sets up my next pitch? The best pitch in the wrong location at the wrong count is a mistake pitch.	 Baseballs
7	<b>Mound Visualization Routine</b>	Between each bullpen pitch, the pitcher steps off the rubber and follows a 15-second routine: deep breath, look at the target, visualize the pitch going where they want it, step back on, and throw. Coaches time the routine and enforce it.	Elite pitchers are deliberate between pitches. This drill builds the habit of routine and reset — critical for composure in tight game situations. A pitcher who rushes from pitch to pitch is being reactive. A pitcher with a routine is being intentional.	 Stopwatch,  Baseballs
8	<b>Stretch Position — Quick Slide Step</b>	Player in stretch position with a runner on first. Practice a quick slide step (minimal leg lift) to speed delivery to the plate. Coach times from first movement to catcher's glove pop. Target: under 1.3 seconds. Alternate between full leg lift and slide step.	The slide step is the primary weapon against the running game. It sacrifices some velocity for a quicker delivery time. Cue: 'Foot stays low and slides toward the plate — no knee lift.' Avoid making the slide step look mechanical — it should be a natural, faster version of the normal stride.	 Catcher's Gear,  Baseballs
9	<b>Video Analysis Session</b>	Coach videos each pitcher from the side and from behind the plate during a bullpen session. Players review the footage immediately after. Coach identifies 2 checkpoints to evaluate: balance point and release point. Player watches and self-evaluates before the coach gives feedback.	Video is the most powerful teaching tool available. Players often feel like they are doing something correctly when the video shows otherwise. Ask the player first: 'What do you see?' Build self-awareness and the ability to self-correct. This is a skill that carries into every level they play.	 Tablet/Phone,  Baseballs
10	<b>Competitive Bullpen — Strike Zone Game</b>	Player throws a 15-pitch bullpen against a 'simulated at-bat' sequence. Coach calls balls and strikes by MLB rules — borderline pitches are called as they actually land. Pitcher tracks their own strike percentage. Goal: 65% strikes or better. Repeat weekly and track improvement.	In a real game, you do not get to choose the umpire's zone. Train in the actual strike zone. After the bullpen: 'What was your strike percentage? What pitch was the least consistent? What would you change?' Ownership of results drives improvement faster than coach-only feedback.	 Baseballs

 **Station Tip:** Substitute any of these drills into a hitting or defensive station slot. Rotate 3–4 players through the pitching station at a time while others continue at standard stations.