

8D Footwork and Grips

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The purpose of this document is to describe subtle adjustments to footwork and grips.

This document describes grip types as characteristics of footwork, and subtle changes to footwork are improvements related to those grip types. So far, I have not introduced grip types, because of their relationship to footwork and the quality and understanding of the footwork has to be more advanced. In other words, I did not want to introduce too much too soon. However, when the time is right the subtle changes to footwork with their corresponding grip types should help both speed and control. By the way, this applies to both overhand and underhand.

Pushing and Pulling

Even though in earlier documents we have introduced pushing and pulling footwork, this document will subtly improve that footwork. When pushing, our balance is on the inside of the foot, and when pulling our balance is on the outside of the foot. All throwing uses power in the hips, but the pushing hip movement is completely different than the twisting hip movement when pulling. For example, catchers can throw to second base from their knees without any hip twist. They just whip their body with their hips front to back. When twisting or pulling, we balance on the outside of the feet, and when pushing or whipping we balance on the inside of the feet. Therefore, when throwing with a pulling motion, the feet will be slightly pigeon toed or turned in, and the person may look a little bowlegged. A person looks slightly knock-kneed with feet turned out when pushing or whipping with that front to back hip motion.

Footwork Balance and Grips

The subtle footwork improvements come from both balance and grips. Because grips and balance are subtle, they are advanced concepts added to pull everything together. To review, remember we throw hard by getting the thumb off the ball, and we flip or thumb the ball to throw soft. With these grips, I am talking about the grip before we release the ball. When we are pulling the ball right before the release, the thumb will circle towards the forefinger. When we are pushing the ball right before the release, the thumb starts out opposite the forefinger and ends up towards the little finger. Another way to describe these two basic grips is to say the ball is centered in the hand when pulling and centered between the two largest fingers and thumb when pushing. When everything else is correct, whether the ball spins up or down in either of the two basic grips is also very subtle. Rise-balls or drops, curves or fastballs, come subtly from the way the finger tips are on the seams and/or a slight bend to the tip of the index finger.

Summary: 8D Footwork and Grips

The purpose of this document has been to describe the relationship between footwork and grips. This advanced relationship should be introduced as a solution to the struggle to perfect the basic footwork. However, when the time is right the subtle changes to footwork with their corresponding grip types should help both speed and control.