

8M Figure Eight and Windmill

8M Figure Eight and Windmill Deliveries

The purpose of this document is to describe, recognize, and combine the use of Figure Eight and Windmill fastpitch deliveries. Because they let you know the release points and which way the ball will move, I believe hitters should recognize these deliveries. Because the combination of these deliveries multiplies the release points changing timing, I believe pitchers should combine these deliveries. I also believe the specific combination of Windmill and Figure Eight deliveries described here: the easiest to master.

The Figure Eight Windmill Delivery

The Figure Eight Windmill Delivery is a combination of the original Figure Eight delivery with a Windmill. The best pitchers I ever saw (Jimmy Moore, Michael White, and Chuck D'Arcy for example) all used it to throw the hard low rise balls early to set up all the other pitches. They also used the regular windmill without a twist. The eight in the delivery is caused by the twisting of the shoulders while the ball moves straight overhand or underhand. I can't find any pictures labeled a Figure Eight Fastpitch Delivery on YouTube. I am looking for one with the follow through and release going inside-out with arm extension. Here in the advertisement for [Michael White's Power Drive](#) is the best example I can find. Also, here is one for the [Figure Eight Overhand Delivery](#). Either way (overhand or underhand) the Figure Eight is how you throw hard off your front foot with a low release point.

Figure Eight Windmill History

In the history of fastpitch deliveries however, Figure Eight and Slingshot came before Windmill. Plus, Figure Eight and Windmill are often used in combination. The original Figure Eight did not look like a Windmill, but when Windmill came along, they were combined. They were combined so there was a Figure Eight Windmill and a regular Windmill. But from now on in this article and my other pitching strategies (even though they both have a Windmill movement) we will just call them Figure Eight and Windmill. To throw hard down low with the Windmill motion pitchers used the twisting Figure eight shoulder movement. By not twisting with the Windmill motion, it was easier to throw high rise balls, high drops and drops that curved down while moving down.

Two Movements: Figure Eight and Windmill

There are two basic pitching movements. One is twisting and the other is non-twisting. Just about everything about one is exactly the opposite from everything about the other. Like the difference between pulling and pushing, they even use different bones and muscles. The twisting movement will be called the Figure Eight, and the non-twisting movement will be called the Windmill. So, to simplify the language from now on I will call the Figure Eight Windmill the Figure Eight and the non-twisting windmill the Windmill. Each of these two movements can be done off either foot. But, why would you want to do that? You will want to do that to change speeds, increase

8M Figure Eight and Windmill

accuracy, and increase apparent movement. Because it is easy and effective, you want to be able to change speeds on each pitch you throw. For apparent movement and to expand the strike zone to the batter, you want to be able to change your release points. Probably most important, you also want to know which pitches are good for speed low in the strike zone

In and Out Movement and Accuracy

Sometimes you want to increase your chances of throwing a strike and sometimes you don't. You want your rise balls to go straight up and your drops to go straight down, but all pitches move in or out (left or right). The Figure Eight pitches tend to break and error in and the Windmill pitches tend to break and error out. Therefore, combining Windmill with Figure Eight the pitcher can error towards or away from the plate. Sometimes you want to increase your chances of throwing a strike and sometimes you don't.

Release Points

Using both Windmill and Figure Eight release points will increase your speed and accuracy. Once you learn the twisting Figure Eight movement, it is easy to do off either foot. The same for once you learn the non twisting windmill movement. The key is learning both movements and keeping them separate. They are both inside-out movements defined in my other documents. See my other documents for the definition of apparent movement and the speed effect of the position of the thumb upon release. Once you learn both the Windmill and Figure Eight movements, you will be able to easily combine them for speed, accuracy and apparent movement. Again everything is opposite for the Figure Eight and the Windmill. For a Figure Eight off the back foot, the thumb is on the ball for a low pitch and the thumb is off the ball for a high pitch. The opposite is true for Figure Eight off the front foot. So, if you can use the Figure Eight movement you can throw a high speed Figure Eight pitch in front of the front hip and easily change speeds by changing the hip on your Figure Eight. Both those Figure Eight's pitches (fast and slow both with good arm extension) will look the same to the batter. To throw a low Windmill pitch off the front foot you have to keep your thumb on the ball, while it is easy to throw a high Windmill pitch off the front foot. Like almost everything else, the thumb positions upon release for the two movements are opposite. So, you can change speeds by changing feet on a movement or by changing movements on a foot. Once you learn the movements though, changing movements, feet and release points is easy. The following is a little information on release points: A lefthander has a left side release point, a right hander releases from the right side. Figure Eight has a low release point and Windmill has a high release point. A pitch off the back foot or hip has a high release point, and a pitch off the front foot has a low release point. It may seem complicated, but in practice it is very simple. Most pitchers only use three pitches at a time: rise, drop and change with only three signals, but when you can use both movements you can easily vary them to put the ball where you want when you want.

8M Figure Eight and Windmill

Summary: Figure Eight Windmill Deliveries

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