

Both Feet Pitching, Basics and Advanced

The purpose of this document is to define pitching off both feet, releasing off either the front or back foot. There are many obvious reasons for using both feet: movement left and right, saving energy, using different muscle sets, and messing with batter timing. But there are some not so obvious: improved control, and ease of mastery. This short document will introduce the basics, and then show how the basics can quickly become advanced. My previous documents [“Both Feet on the Rubber”](#) and [“Strikes Around the Edge”](#) introduced the basics of pitching off both feet. Here we will continue keep the ball out of the middle by continuing to use the middle aim points for all pitches. Here we get more advanced, getting the batters to swing out of the zone, by mixing and matching the grips, release points, and heels and toes. The beauty of this whole system, the reason it increases control and is easy to master: it all feels the same. Whipping off the front heel or back heel, front toe or back toe, all feels the same. When whipping (as opposed to using the hand arm muscles) the different grips feel the same. The ball feels light on release. A high release should feel the same as a low release. Just like a bull whip, a towel, or any whip, the release points all feel the same.

Basics: Balance Points, Heel and Toe, Front and Back

Practicing the basics, we are hitting the middle front of the strike zone with low drops or high-rise balls; and the middle back of the strike zone with high drops and low-rise balls. By the way, the strike zone has fifteen sides: five on top, five on bottom, and five on the sides. In other words, it takes fifteen lines to draw a strike zone, a volume that sits over the plate.

We throw the basics off both feet. When whipping it feels the same. We throw the low basics off the heel and the high basics balanced off the toe. With basics, we are learning how to balance off the throwing heel or toe. Once we learn the balance, the rest is easy. Don't forget to snap back with the feet to whip the ball forward.

Basics: Long Grip for High Release, Short Grip for Low Release

We learn balance points by using a short grip or open palm grip for the low pitches and a long grip or closed palm grip for high pitches. Later, we will mix and match this without changing balance.

Basics: Thumb Positions for Rise, Drop, or Change

When whipping, the spin comes from the whip, and not our hand. That's why the ball feels light on release. Where we put our thumb determines where the ball comes out of our hand and that determines rise, drop, or change. One way to describe thumb position is inside of the thumb touching the ball for a drop, thumb flat on the ball for a rise, and outside of the thumb on the ball for a change. When whipping it is that simple, even a little person can and should throw all three spins. Keep it simple: use the same release point for all three spins.

Advanced: Mix and Match

There are some pitches we want to start out coming right down the middle that break away out of the strike zone. We want the batter to chase. Plus, we also want our misses to help us, not just stay out of the middle of the strike zone. Because we are whipping, the only thing we are focused on when pitching is the balance point and getting a good whip. Our grip does the rest, automatically. So, we can swap grips before we start and using a different balance point the ball will start coming to the middle and break out of the zone. Most important though, using the same basic targets, the misses will also help. Warning! when we swap grips, we must really concentrate on the balance point. It is easy to automatically do what you always do with that grip, but you are changing balance points. Here are some examples: 1) A high rise out of the zone that starts down the middle is done off the toe with a short or open rise grip. Once you get the grip, just focus on the toe and whip it like a low rise off the heel. 2) An off-speed drop is done by throwing a high release off the heel with an open grip. Pitching with three speeds is very effective. Throw that off-speed drop with the same whip we throw on all the pitches. 3) Another example: Throwing the long-grip drop off the heel. This one will start coming to the middle and finish at the bottom of the strike zone down the middle or on the corners.

Summary: Both Feet Pitching, Basics and Advanced

The purpose of this document is to define pitching off both feet. Many obvious reasons for using both feet: movement left and right, saving energy, using different muscle sets, and messing with batter timing. But some not so obvious: improved control, and ease of mastery. This short document introduced the basics, and showed how the basics quickly become advanced. [“Both Feet on the Rubber”](#) and [“Strikes Around the Edge”](#) introduced the basics of pitching off both feet. Here we continued to keep the ball out of the middle by continuing to use the middle aim points for all pitches. Then we got more advanced, getting the batters to swing out of the zone, by mixing and matching the grips, release points, and heels and toes. The beauty of this whole system, the reason it increases control and is easy to master: it all feels the same.