



Downriver Baseball's Pitching Mechanics Checklist

What do we look for in a Pitcher's Delivery?

Top Side

- **Arm Action**
 - How smooth is it? we want to be fluid and loose.
 - Ideally, it's a nice smooth motion. Short, not too far extended, and doesn't have moments of pause or stall.
- **Shoulders**
 - How long can you stay closed?
 - Just like the hips, keep them closed as long as possible.
 - Chin/shoulder connection is an easy way to stay closed down the mound.
 - 45 degree angle as a preset also helps until strength is gained
 - Hip/Shoulder separation is essential to generating power and torque. As the hips start to fire, the shoulders need to stay closed until the Hips are just about done/ exhausted.
- **Front Side**
 - How high does it get? Are we leveling ourselves out down the mound? Where is your front elbow pointed?
 - This helps with direction, deception and leverage. Make sure you have some height with it. Doesn't have to be way up there but it needs to be around the shoulder height. **We do NOT tuck our glove**
 - Firm and out in front, front side(glove) and we take our chest to our glove, we do not tuck it.
 - The move is a upper 1/3rd trunk rotation where our glove "appears" to tuck but in reality we are closing the gap with our body.
- **Head**
 - How level is it through your delivery? How about at your finish?
 - Less is more here. The less you move/jerk around the less guesswork that is needed to repeat your delivery.
 - Focus on keeping your eyes level through release.
- **Arm Slot**
 - Is it natural? Most are 3/4 to low 3/4. Shouldn't be a forced slot. Do what feels good. (within reason)
- **Release Point**
 - Where is it in relation to your body? On time? Early? Late?
 - VELOCITY happens out in front! Think to release as close to home plate as you can.
- **Finish**
 - How balanced is it?
 - Your throwing arm should be loose and finish out in front and across your body.
- **Balance**
 - From start to finish, you have to be in control of your body. From your leg lift, to separating over your back foot, to gliding down the mound, to release and to your finish...**How in control are you?**
- **Tempo**
 - 1.2 seconds or less from first movement to release... 1 second is ideal GO FORWARD FAST!
 - This eliminates the need for the slide step adjustment and makes tunneling that much more effective.
- **Direction**
 - All of your energy should be going directly at the plate. There is no other option here. Take your body to your target. Feel your body closed as it goes down the mound for as long as it can and then once your front foot hits, FIRE with MAXIMUM EFFORT!!





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Bottom Side

- **Pivot foot**
 - Is your heel against the rubber? Don't worry, it doesn't have to be, the starting position is unique to each thrower
 - If it is angled with your heel off the rubber, this is fine if you maintain parallel feet when coming set.
- **Leg Lift**
 - How high is it?
 - Needs to be high enough to fully sit the hip forward. Aim chest height and back shoulder depth
- **Rhythm & Separation**
 - Are your lift leg and hands moving in unison?
 - Are they on time? Is your arm up at foot strike? If not, adjust the hand break.
 - Are you separating over your back foot? Or some other point in your motion?
 - Separation over your back foot is crucial for the timing of your delivery. When your stride foot hits the ground, the baseball should be above your throwing elbow with arm cocked.
- **Hip Coil**
 - We like to pre-set with the hips coiled to improve delivery timing, coiling the hips helps load up power which also create what many call a "Backside V" when your head stays over the rubber while your hips lead. AKA the Vector angle.
- **Hips**
 - How long should they stay closed?
 - The goal is as long as possible. The longer they remain closed; the more of your power you are transferring up the kinetic chain into the baseball. Hold that power in as long as you can and let it explode as late as possible.
- **Leg Drive**
 - As our hips lead us down the mound, this is when our back leg will use the flex in it to drive/create energy down the mound.
 - Our back knee remains over our foot/big toe as we drop slightly into drive, then starts its extension as we continue down the mound.
 - At front foot contact it should be in full extension.
 - We should be creating a back foot drag line; if our spine is centered and trunk is going towards home.
- **Stride**
 - How long is it and where is it going?
 - Length in a stride is good. A good length is close to the height or your body. Think 5-7 of your own feet, increased by 1-2 when on a full sized mound.
 - We want to stride directly towards our target, actually a little closed. Stay away from striding open or too far closed. We want to thread that middle ground and land at a slight angle with our foot to optimize rotation and energy transfer.
- **Stride Foot**
 - Foot should land slightly closed. When a pitcher tries to point their stride foot towards home, this causes the whole lower half, and sometimes their upper half, to open too soon. See above: We want to thread that middle ground and land at a slight angle with our foot to optimize rotation and energy transfer.
- **Front Foot Contact**
 - This is your firing position. Are you still closed, or have you started to open already?
 - If everything has been done right up to this point, at front foot contact, the moment your foot hits the mound, you should be in a closed, powerful position. Stride foot, both knees, hips, shoulders and front arm should be closed still (towards the front side of the body). Then simultaneously (lower half leading the upper half), at front foot contact, everything from the ground up will start to turn/explode towards the plate.
- **Stride Leg**
 - It's our brake. Think of a pole vaulter. As we are moving down the mound creating energy/power, that forward momentum in our lower half will stop once our stride foot hits the ground.
 - The lower half stops while our upper half then starts its movements into our release.
 - The front leg is like a firm brace. It needs to be firm to brace the forward movement to allow maximum energy to go from the lower half into the upper half. IT DOES NOT NEED TO BE LOCKED!
 - A weak front knee will result in lower velocity and added strain on the throwing arm.



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What do we look for in a Pitcher's Delivery?

Athlete's Name: _____

Bottom Side

Pivot Foot: Heel on or off the rubber?

Leg Lift: How high, depth? Preset coil?

Rhythm & Separation: Do your/their hands & leg move in sync? Separate over your back foot? If arm is not on time, play with this first.

Hip Coil: Preset? Leading down the mound @ first movement?

Hips: How do they move down the mound? How long are they closed for?

Leg Drive: Back leg action? How efficient is it?

Stride: Length and back leg action?

Stride Foot: Open, straight or closed? How does it relate to the hips?

Front Foot Contact: Is the body closed or open? Where is the baseball at?

Stride Leg: Firm or weak at landing? Locked or bent? Heel point?

Top Side

Arm Action: It is too long and out of control or short and under control? Is it smooth or herkie jerky?

Shoulders: Closed longer than your/their hips? Preset? (Y/N)

Front Side: How high? Elbow to your/their hip? Controlled glove? Tuck? (Y/N)

Head: Is it steady and under controlled through release? Level at release?

Arm Slot: Natural appearance? High, 3/4, low 3/4, side arm? Comfort level?

Release Point: Even with the side of your/their head, even with front foot or out front?

Finish: Balanced? Square to the plate? Tilted? Falling over?

Balance: Are we under control from beginning to end?

Tempo: How is the pace of your/their delivery? What hold time variation are we using?

Direction: Open, straight or across your/their body?

Quicker Delivery: 1.2 seconds or less and how are we varying our hold times? 1,2,3 or even 4 count.