

Pitching Grips

(It's all about the seams)

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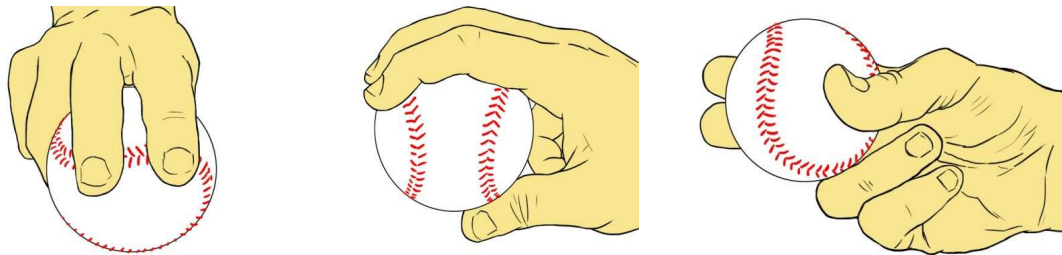
The 4-Seam Fastball

The 4-seam fastball may be the most important pitch. It's called the 4-seam fastball because it is held across the wide seams and tends to rise.

Grip: The index and middle fingers run across the wide seams. The fingers are close together and rest the side of the thumb against the seam.

Advantages: The 4-seam fastball is the fastest pitch.

Disadvantages: There is little movement.



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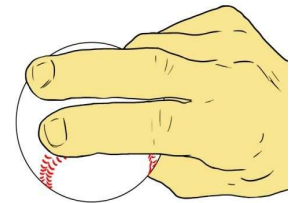
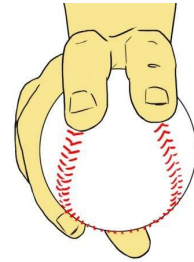
The 2-Seam Fastball (With the Seam)

The 2-seam fastball with the seam has the same mechanics as the 4-seam fastball and creates a tailing away action.

Grip: The pitcher places the index and middle fingers along the narrow seams, at the top of the horseshoe. It can be thrown with the fingers over the seam at the top of the horseshoe.

Advantages: The pitch is more likely to create groundballs than the four seam fastball and be tougher to hit.

Disadvantages: Not as fast as a 4-seam fastball.



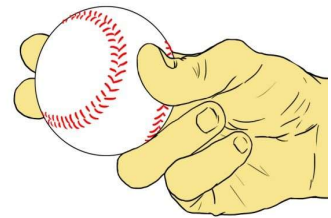
The 2-Seam Fastball (Across the Seam)

A fastball variation using a slight adjustment to the normal 2-seam.

Grip: Rotate the ball to either the left or right until the fingers are across the two narrow seams.

Advantages: Creates the most movement – down and away.

Disadvantages: It is the slowest of three fastballs.



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The Change-up

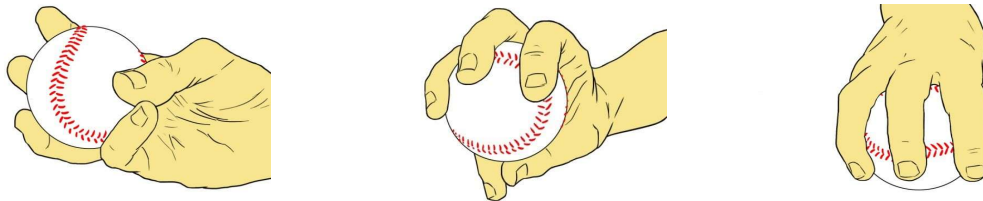
The changeup is used to change the timing of the pitch to the hitter and can be either a 3-finger or a circle change.

Grip: Depending on hand size, the changeup is a pitch that a pitcher needs to experiment with to get the grip that feels best. The three-finger changeup grip is great for smaller hands.

Advantages: It makes the fastball seem even faster to the batter.

Disadvantages: If the batter knows the changeup is coming, it can be hit hard. Do not throw it to the number 9 hitter!

3-Finger Change



Circle Change



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Cutter (Cut Fastball)

The cutter is slightly slower than the four seam fastball but has good movement. When thrown correctly the pitch should give short, quick, late movement, across and down.

Grip: Cut fastball grips are variations on the four-seam and two-seam. For the four-seam variation, take the four-seam fastball, and slide the fingers over to the horseshoe. When throwing the two-seam variation, use the two-seam grip and just rotate the ball a quarter of a turn to where they're in line with the horseshoe. The thumb goes the seam underneath.

Advantages: It can be hard to get solid contact with.

Disadvantages: Can be tiring if used too often.



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Splitter (Split Finger Fastball)

The splitter fastball causes a sudden drop at the plate.

Grip: For the split finger fastball grip, take the two-seam fastball and just keep splitting the fingers.

If the ball comes out and it does not do anything, spread the fingers more. It is thrown with the exact same motion as the cut fastball.

Advantages: Produces ground balls and a great double play ball.

Disadvantages: Can be tougher for small hands.

