

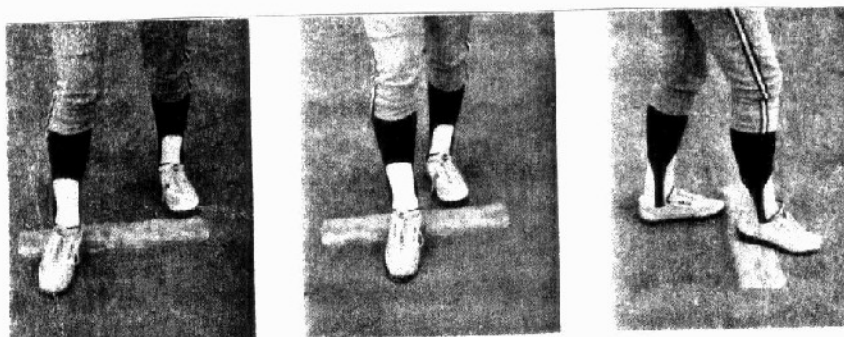
BASIC STANCE AND GRIP

These are not critical issues at the beginner stage, but they will become more important as you develop higher level skills. At this point, just learn the options and develop the technique most comfortable and effective for you.

STANCE

There are two basic methods. One has the feet close together (narrow stance), while in the other, the feet are spread wider across the width of the rubber (wide stance). Each has its advantage, but the most important factor is, what is most natural and comfortable for you.

In both cases the rear, or stride foot should be placed with the toe just touching the back edge of the rubber. The pivot foot (front) overlaps the front edge of the rubber enough to allow for a good push off the rubber. To clarify, for a right handed pitcher, the right foot is the pivot foot and the left is the stride foot. Reverse that for left handed players.



BASIC GRIP

Depending on the size of your hand, the ball can be held in 2, 3 or 4 fingers. The main thing is that the grip be firm and comfortable. It is a good idea to hold the ball across the seams and, initially at least, to release the pitch directly off the ends of the fingers. This produces a downward spin which you will use later when you learn to throw the drop pitch. To do this, just apply equal pressure with all the fingers on the ball, then let the ball roll off the ends of the fingers with the palm pointing forward. The ball should spin straight forward.

