

THROWING THE BALL

(Eme)

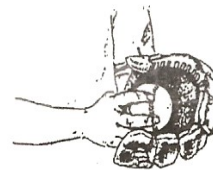
Hitting, pitching, and slick fielding get the attention, but throwing the ball is one of the most important baseball skills. Powerful, accurate throws cut runners down on the bases, and a strong arm can discourage runners from even trying to take an extra base. That can save your team runs and win games.

THE THROW

Start with the ball in your glove, because you usually throw after you catch.

Get the proper grip on the ball and bring the glove, your hand, and the ball toward your waist.

Your legs should be shoulder-width apart, with your weight on the balls of your feet, and the foot on your throwing hand side slightly behind your body.



Shift your shoulder around so that it points in the direction you want to throw. Bring the ball backwards, with the palm of your hand facing the ground, while at the same time bending the knee on your throwing-hand side as you bring all your weight onto your back foot.

Keep your eyes on the target. Stride toward the target by pushing off your back foot. Bring your arm up and forward, as if you're making a circle with your hand and arm around your shoulder. Keep your elbow a little higher than your shoulder.

Release the ball with a strong wrist snap. Put backspin on it by letting your fingers pull down on the seams as you release it. Follow through by bringing your back foot forward and your hand and body around so that you face the target squarely.



A Special Practice Tip

One of the best ways to practice throwing is to play catch while kneeling one knee. Position yourself about ten to fifteen feet from your partner and kneel, letting the knee on your throwing side touch the ground. Throw the ball firmly, but don't force it. If you can't reach your partner, move closer. Throwing while kneeling on one knee forces your elbow a little higher than your