



Pitching and Balks



CA DISTRICT 35 PITCHING and BALKS TRAINING

Presented by
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Rule 8.01

Legal Pitching Delivery

Windup

Set
(Stretch)



- Either position can be used at any time.



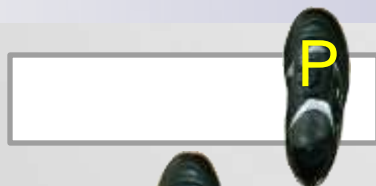
Rule 8.01

- Pitcher shall take signs from the catcher while standing on the rubber.
- Pitcher may disengage the rubber after taking the sign by stepping off with the pivot foot – because as we will see, moving the free foot is the start of the pitching motion
- Pitcher may not step quickly onto the rubber and pitch. This is a “quick pitch” which is a balk.
- NOTE: a balk or illegal pitch cancels any appeal in progress



Pitching Plate

Right Hand Pitcher



Right handed
pitcher, pivot
foot is right foot



Illegal



Illegal



P



P



Illegal

P



Illegal

P



Illegal

P



Rule 8.01(a) - Windup

- Pitcher shall stand facing the batter.
- PIVOT foot must be on or in contact with the rubber.
- FREE foot can be on OR off the rubber.
- Hands can be together or apart.
- Pitcher from this position must pitch without interruption or alteration.
- Pitcher shall not raise either foot EXCEPT to deliver the ball to the batter.
- Pitcher may take one step backward and one step forward with the free foot.





Rule 8.01(a) - Windup

Pitcher from the Windup may (with hands either together or apart):

1. Deliver the ball to the batter.
2. Step and throw to a base in an attempt to pick-off a runner.
3. Disengage the rubber. Pitcher must step off with the PIVOT foot first.

Pitcher may NOT go to a Set (Stretch) position WITHOUT disengaging the rubber (penalty: BALK).





Rule 8.01

With a runner or runners on base - it is a balk when the pitcher, after coming to a legal position, separates his hands without first disengaging the rubber





Rule 8.01(b) - Set

- Pitcher shall stand facing the batter.
- PIVOT foot must be on or in contact with the rubber.
- FREE foot must be in front of the rubber.





Rule 8.01(b) - Set

Pitcher from the Set position may:

1. Deliver the ball to the batter.
2. Step and throw to a base in an attempt to pick-off a runner.
3. Disengage the rubber. Pitcher must step off the rubber with the PIVOT foot first. If has come set must step off before separating hands.

Pitcher may NOT go to a Windup position WITHOUT disengaging the rubber (penalty: BALK).





Rule 8.01(b) - Set

- Before assuming the “Set Position,” the pitcher may make any natural preliminary motion known as the “stretch.”
- The pitcher must come to a complete and discernible stop when arriving at the set point (penalty: BALK).





Rule 8.01

The pitcher may “step and throw to a base in an attempt to pick off a runner”; if the pitcher throws to a fielder not covering the base, it is a balk, because the pitcher is not throwing to the base.



This infraction is typically only called for throws to first base.

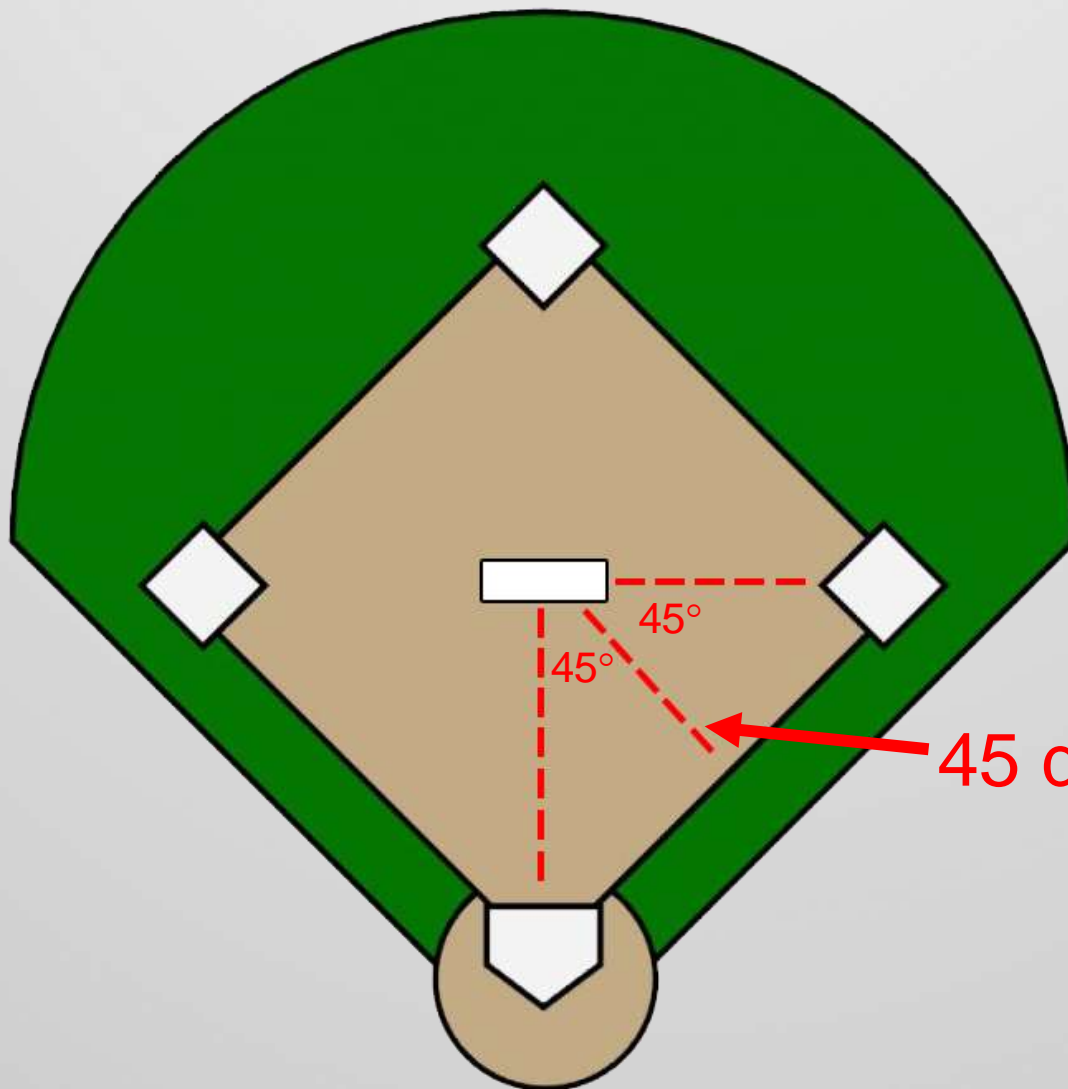


Rule 8.01 (c)

- At any time during the pitcher's preliminary movements and until the natural pitching motion commits that pitcher to the pitch, said pitcher may throw to any base provided the pitcher steps directly toward such base before making the throw.
- The pitcher shall step "ahead of the throw." A snap throw followed by the step toward the base is a balk
- The pitcher must gain direction and distance towards a base when throwing to the base. This is true for a step move as well as a spin move



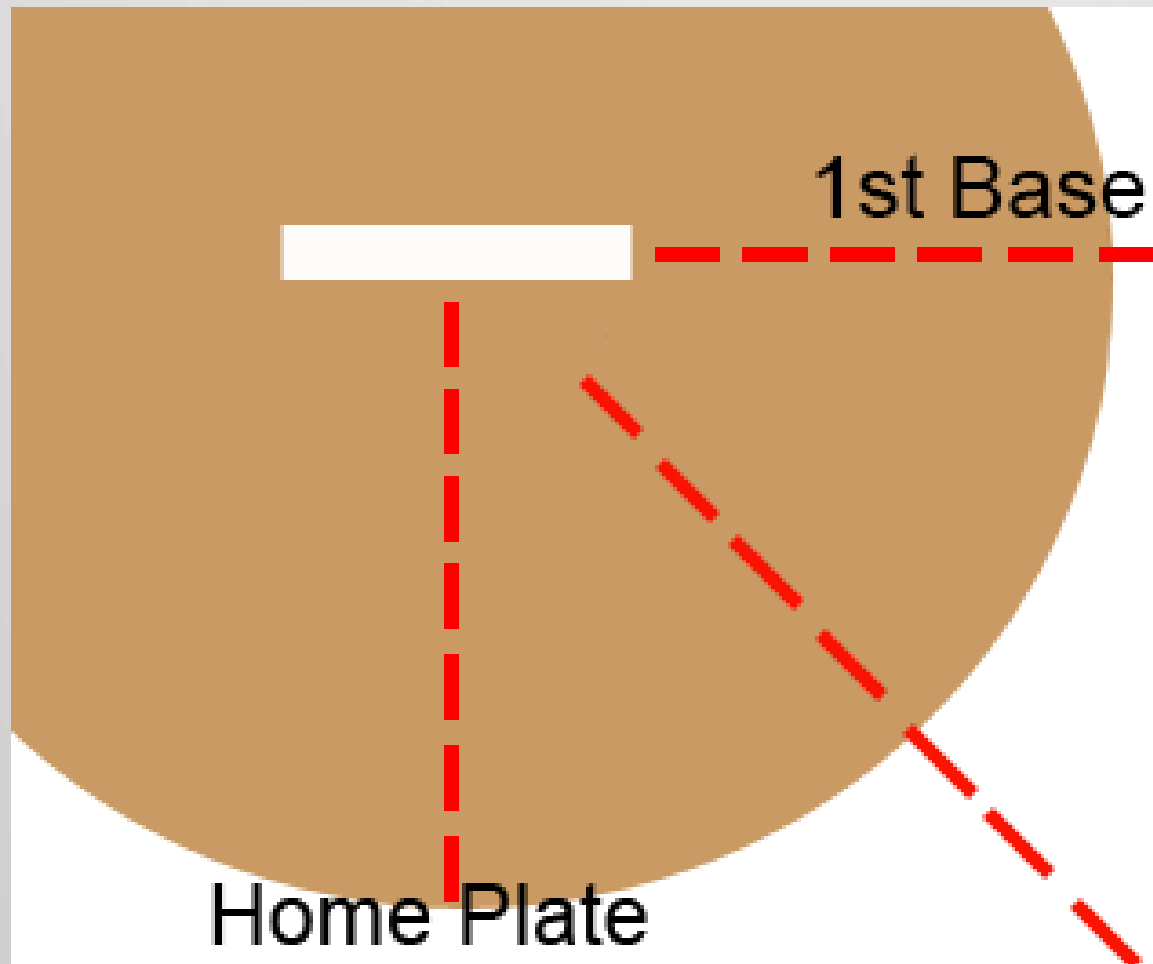
Step Towards Base



45 degree line



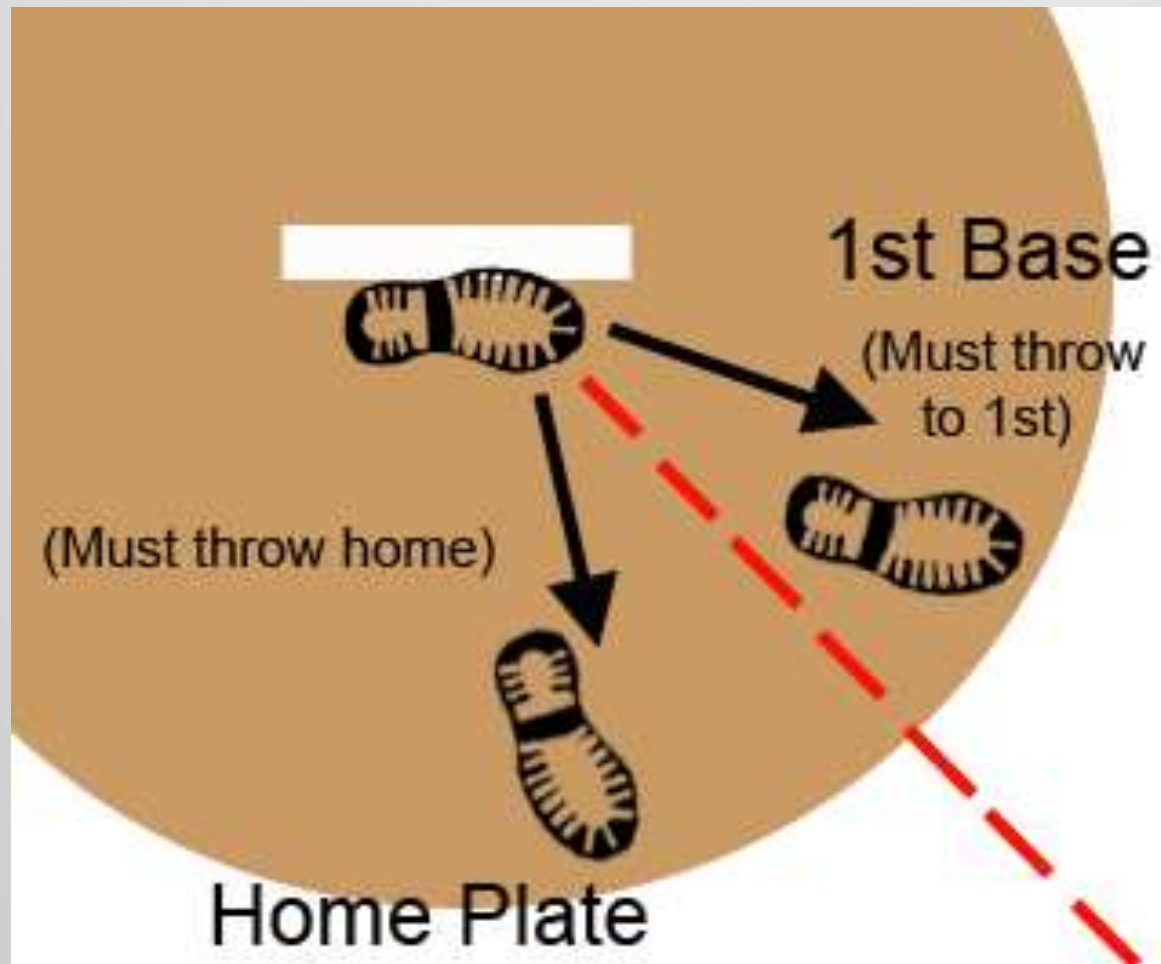
Step Towards Base



When throwing to first, the pitcher must step more towards first than home



Step Towards Base



When throwing to first, the pitcher must step more towards first than home



Step Towards Base

- These three examples are all balks
- The pitcher does not step on the first base side of the 45 degree line with his free foot





Step Towards Base

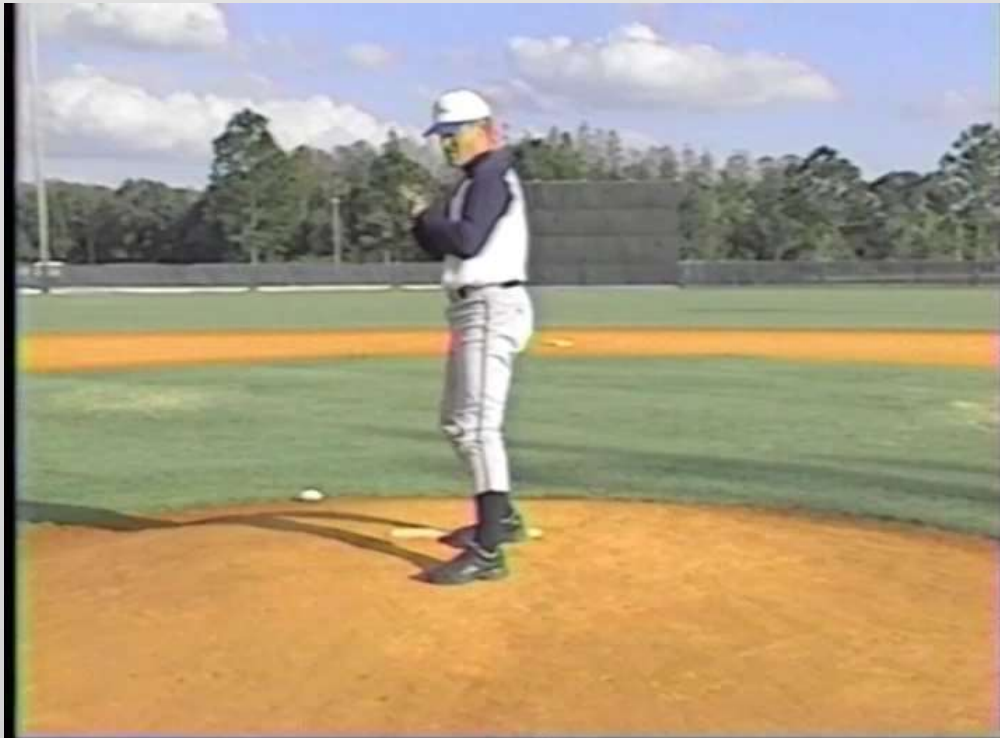
- This is a balk
- The pitcher does not step ahead of the throw





Step Towards Base - Jump Turn -

- Must gain ground towards the base
- Must not throw while off the ground





Rule 8.05

- A pitch delivered to the batter when the pitcher does not have the pivot foot in contact with the pitcher's plate is a BALK with runners on base (a BALL with no runners on)
- From the Set position, when a pitcher swings **any part** of his free foot past the back edge of the pitcher's rubber, it is a balk if he does not pitch to the batter, unless he throws (or feints a throw) to second base on a pickoff play.





Rule 8.05(a)

With a runner or runners on base - it is a balk - when the pitcher while touching the rubber makes any motion naturally associated with the pitch and fails to make such delivery



Starts motion then steps off



Knee jerk then stops



Drops free foot heel then steps off



Leans forward then throws to 1st



Rule 8.05(a)

Note that the act of bringing the hands together is NOT part of the natural pitching motion and does NOT obligate the pitcher to pitch



The pitcher may step off after bringing his/her hands together with no penalty, but must not separate his/her hands until he/she has stepped off



Rule 8.05(b)

With a runner or runners on base - it is a balk - when the pitcher, while touching the plate, feints a throw to first base and fails to complete the throw



Feint to first



Shoulder feint



Knee buckle

- The shoulder turn looks like the start of a move to first.
- Bending one or both knees also looks like the beginning of a throw to first.
- The runner will see all these motions as beginning a throw to first but no throw is made, hence balk



Rule 8.05(b)

The pitcher may feint a throw to any other base. He/she may also feint a throw to third and then wheel and throw to first, providing he/she breaks contact with the rubber before throwing to first.





Rule 8.05 (j)

- A ball which slips out of the pitcher's hand while he is on the rubber is a balk with runners on base (umpires: watch the pitcher's feet!)
- With no runners on base it will be called "no pitch", unless it crosses the foul line, in which case it shall be called a ball





Rule 8.05

With a runner or runners on base - it is a balk - when:

- d) the pitcher, while touching the plate, throws, or feints a throw to an unoccupied base, except for the purpose of making an appeal or play
- f) The pitcher delivers a ball to the batter without facing the batter
- g) The pitcher makes any motion naturally associated with the pitch while not touching the pitcher's plate
- h) the pitcher unnecessarily delays the game;
- i) the pitcher, without having the ball, stands on or astride the pitcher's plate or while off the plate feints a pitch;
- k) the pitcher, while giving an intentional base on balls, pitches when the catcher is not in the catcher's box;
- l) removes one hand from the ball other than in an actual pitch, or in throwing to a base;



Rule 8.05

- **PENALTY FOR A BALK:** The ball is dead, and each runner shall advance one base without liability to be put out unless the batter reaches first on a hit, an error, a base on balls, a hit batter, or otherwise, and all other runners advance at least one base in which case the play proceeds without reference to the balk. When a balk is called and the pitch is delivered it will be considered neither a ball nor strike unless the pitch is ball four (4) awarding the batter first base and forcing all runners on base to advance.
- When a balk is called, if the pitch is delivered, a pitch shall be charged against the pitch count regardless of whether the batter put the pitch into play. However, on a balk that is called on a pickoff attempt or in an instance that the pitcher does not deliver the pitch, no pitch shall be charged to the pitch count.

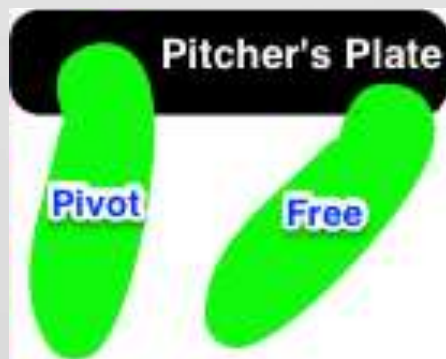


Rule 8.01



Legal Pitching Delivery

Windup

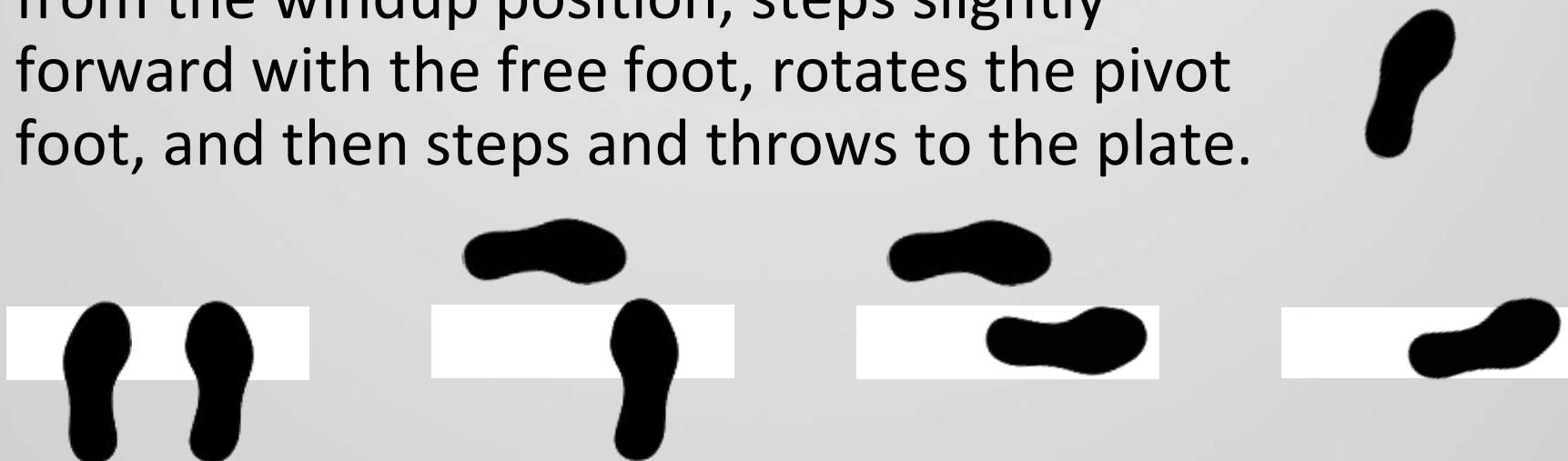


- Either position can be used at any time.
- Pitcher may NOT go to a Set (Stretch) position WITHOUT disengaging the rubber (penalty: BALK).



Modified Windup

In Little League baseball, a delivery is sometimes used in which the pitcher starts from the windup position, steps slightly forward with the free foot, rotates the pivot foot, and then steps and throws to the plate.



This delivery, sometimes called the “modified windup” is a hybrid of the windup and set positions, and is allowed by Little League Baseball at all levels.



Modified Windup

Here is an example of a Little League pitcher using the modified windup position.



Thanks to
Mason
Caster
RVLL 2022



Modified Windup

For purposes of the balk rule, this is considered the set position, meaning if the pitcher swings **any part** of his free foot past the back edge of the pitcher's rubber during the delivery, it is a balk if he does not pitch to the batter or throw (or feint) to second.



Rule 8.02(a)(1)

- The pitcher may not bring the pitching hand in contact with the mouth or lips while in contact with the pitcher's plate.
- **EXCEPTION:** The pitcher may bring the hand in contact with the mouth or lips while in the 10-foot circle (**Intermediate (50-70) Division/Junior/Senior:** 18-foot circle) surrounding the pitcher's plate provided he/she distinctly wipes off the pitching hand before contacting the ball.
- **PENALTY:** For violation of this part of the rule the umpire shall immediately call a ball (which adds to the pitch count) and warn the pitcher that repeated violation of any part of this rule can cause the pitcher to be removed from the game (*might just be a habit, so warn them*). However if the pitch is made and a batter reaches first base on a hit, an error, a hit batter, or otherwise, and no other runner was put out before advancing at least one base, the play shall proceed with out reference to the violation (*not going to penalize the batter*).





Rule 8.02(a)(2)-(6)

The pitcher shall not-

- Apply a foreign substance to the ball.
- Spit on the ball, hand or glove.
- Rub the ball on the glove, person or clothing.
- Deface the ball in any manner.
- Deliver a “shine ball,” “spit ball,” “mud ball” or “emery ball” (foreign substances)
- For violation of 8.02(a)(2)-(6), the umpire shall call the pitch a “ball” and warn the pitcher. Adds to pitch count.





Pitching and Balks



End of Pitching and Balks