



**PITCHING REGULATION (Fast Pitch Only)**  
**ISF POINTS OF EMPHASIS**  
**Issued Jan 15, 2010**

There are six basic features to the pitching rule. They are:

**1. CONTACT WITH THE PITCHER'S PLATE:**

- The pitcher must start with both feet in contact with the pitcher's plate.
- The feet do not have to be on top of the pitcher's plate.
- The pitcher may heel and toe but the heel and toe must make contact with the pitcher's plate.
- The contact must be within the 61.0 cm (24 in) width of the pitcher's plate.
- The feet touching only the sides of the pitcher's plate is not considered to be in contact.

**2. SIGNAL**

- The signal must be taken while standing on the pitcher's plate.
- A signal may be taken.
- Looking at the catcher is the same as taking the signal.
- The hands must be separated while taking the signal.
- The ball may be held in either the bare hand or in the glove.
- The ball may be in front, to the side or behind the body.

**3. PRELIMINARY TO DELIVERY**

- After the signal the pitcher must bring the glove hand and bare hand together in front of the body. The ball may be in the glove or bare hand.
- In front of the body means not behind the back. Holding the ball in both hands at the side of the body is considered in front of the body.
- The body must come to a complete stop. This position (the pause) must be held for a minimum of two (2) seconds and not more than five (5) seconds.
- Movement from the pitcher gripping the ball in the glove during the pause is not a violation.
- During the entire preliminary process both feet must remain in contact with the pitcher's plate.
- The feet may not move backwards.
- Either foot may slide across the pitching plate but cannot lift off the pitching plate. **Clearing the cleats to enable the foot to slide is not considered to be lifting the foot or to be losing contact with the pitcher's plate.**

**4. START OF THE PITCH**

- The pitch starts when the hands separate or there is any motion that is part of the windup. The pitcher shall not push off from a place other than the pitcher's plate prior to the hands separating.
- Once the hands have separated, the pitcher cannot stop or step back off the pitcher's plate.

- To stop the pitching sequence, the pitcher may move off the pitcher's plate by stepping back prior to the separation of the hands or the start of the pitching motion, however both feet must be off the pitcher's plate prior to the separation of the hands or the start of the pitching motion.
- Any movement of the feet must be forward or sideways.
- Lifting the front of the pivot foot (toes) and rocking on the heel is legal as long as the rear of the foot (heel) remains in contact with the pitcher's plate and does not move back.
- ***Lifting either the toe or heel of the non-pivot foot (stepping foot) is also permitted provided the non-pivot foot does not move backward before moving forward.***
- ***The pitcher may lift the heel of the pivot foot, and use the front of the pivot foot to start his/her momentum. In this action, it is permissible to lift the heel of the pivot foot, twist the foot and push off with toes or the ball of the foot, provided the pivot foot does not move forward of the pitcher's plate prior to the push off. This is considered to not have lost contact with the pitcher's plate.***

## 5. DELIVERY

- The pitcher may drop his/her arm to the side and to the rear before starting the windmill motion. The arm going to the rear does not count as passing the hip.
- The pitcher's arm may pass the hip twice but there cannot be two (2) full revolutions.
- The wrist may not be farther from the body than the elbow.
- During the delivery, there cannot be a stop or a reversal of the forward motion.

## 6. STEP AND RELEASE

- A step by the non-pivot foot must be taken, and it must be forward toward the batter, within the 61.0 cm (24 in) length of the pitcher's plate.
- The pivot foot must push off from the pitcher's plate.
- The pitcher may not step in front of the pitcher's plate with the pivot foot and start the push-off.
- After the push-off with the pivot foot the pitcher may drag, jump or leap.
- If airborne (leap or jump) the pitcher may land and then throw.
- If leaping or hopping, the pitcher must have continuous motion when he/she lands and throws.
- As the pitcher pushes from the pitcher's plate the hands must be separated. They cannot be joined in the glove and all movement of the pitching arm must be continuous.
- Once he/she lands, he/she cannot take another step.
- It is not considered a step if his/her landing foot twists and slides forward simultaneous with the release of the ball.
- The ball must be released when the non-pivot foot reaches the ground.