



The mental approach to your pitches

What are you telling yourself when a certain pitch is called? What pops in your head? Does your body react physically?

- Fastball
- Curveball
- Changeup
- Slider

You shouldn't be thinking about mechanics or instruction. Too late. Simplify with short simple cues and allow your body to make its own adjustments based on your mental state. Use your bullpen sessions to translate that mental cue to your body to establish the necessary muscle memory.

Fastball cue: soft grip & "throw through the catcher". That is your only cue.

Curveball: finesse, stay tall, pull it down. Don't think about power

Slider- "throw through the catcher". The slider is a power pitch and should be thrown as one; similar to the fastball.

Changeup: - "stay back", loose grip toward the finger tips, not deep

Firmness of grip

How firm should you grip each pitch? Grip's are all different. One of the hardest things to do is to maintain an appropriate grip.

Fastball: grip like an egg; not too soft that you might drop it; not too firm that you'll crack it; maintain the "egg grip" on the fastball even when your amped up and trying to throw it through the catcher.

Change up: similar to fastball.

Slider: Grip tight

Curve ball: between the fastball and slider, firm but not too firm.

Know who's up

3-4-5 hole? lead-off? 7-8-9? 2nd time through the order?

- more fastballs the first time through the order; limit off speed to 2 strike counts; get people out with your fastball. You don't have to solely rely on your secondary pitches to get guys out.

Know the situation

- throw more fastballs based on where in the order. Ex: If the 4 hole is up and 1st is open with 2 outs that you don't have to pitch to him; if 9 hole and the bases are loaded, challenge him. Make that guy beat you and with your fastball.

Pitchers don't make mistakes (reality, they do)

Lemonade out of lemons

- don't let it show that you made a mistake; if/when you miss a spot, attitude is it was a "purpose pitch".
- how can the pitch you just threw make your next pitch more effective? Hitters don't know you missed your spot. Use what happened in the pitch before to make your next pitch even more effective. There is no such thing as a wasted pitch; every pitch has a purpose

Trust your defense

Don't think you have to strike everyone out

Trust your stuff

Be ready to throw every pitch in every count at any given time. If you don't feel that way in a game, then work harder in your bullpen sessions to give yourself that kind of confidence.

- don't work on things until you get them right, work on things until you can't get them wrong.

Get strike one

The most important pitch is strike one

- pound the zone

Pitch with swagger

Convince yourself that you are a better pitcher than he is a hitter.

Closing thoughts

- Simplify your approach with mental cues
- Awareness; who's up; score; inning
- Have confidence because you have prepared well