

## PROPER PITCHING POSITIONS

### 2018 POE

The National Federation rules committee, and the State baseball committee, devoted extensive attention to pitching rules for 2018.

Hybrid or modified pitching positions are continually developed and introduced into the high school game, but NFHS rules specify the requirements for the pitchers. There are only two positions that a pitcher can use in NFHS baseball: the windup position and the set (also known as the stretch) position.

The starting position of the non- pivot foot determines whether the pitcher is going from the windup or set position. Remember the pitching requirements begin once the pitcher engages the pitcher's plate.

Pitchers in the wind-up position are required to have their non- pivot foot on or behind a line extending through the front edge of the pitchers' plate. If the pitcher's non-pivot foot is in front of that line and attempts to pitch from the windup, he has made an illegal pitch or committed a balk. The state committee is fully aware of the difficulty in properly seeing a violation of this rule from behind the plate and from the "B" and "C" positions. A good rule of thumb is to determine if the non-pivot foot is in line with, or overlapping, the pivot foot.

In the set position, the pitcher shall stand with his entire non- pivot foot in front of a line extending through the front edge of the pitcher's plate and with his entire pivot foot in contact with or directly in front of the pitcher's plate. He shall go to the set position without delay and in one continuous motion; he shall come to a complete and discernible stop with both hands in front of his body and his glove at or below his chin. Note; a mere change of direction does not constitute coming to a stop.

**"Umpires must be aware of the position of the non- pivot foot."**

All Associations in the state are encouraged to discuss these rules, ideally using pictures and videos to help in illustrating what is legal, and what is not. Each association should provide guidelines to umpires to assist in managing situations where the letter of the rule may be marginally violated, but the spirit of the rule is intact.

"Practice the skills to determine if the pitch is legal or illegal. Coaches and players don't know what the expectations are from game to game if we are not consistent. It is imperative that the pitching positions and movement are completely understood. These requirements provide guidance that the batter and baserunner(s) know when they can swing and run and when the pitcher is in a position to deliver the ball, creating a level playing field for all involved with the game. When non- approved mechanics that are contradictory to NFHS rules are used, they can confuse the athletes, coaches, fans, and umpires."

"See you at the yard!"

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