

What is the CANpitch Program?

CANpitch is Softball Canada's national pitching program created to provide a standardized curriculum based on Softball Canada's Long-Term Player Development framework to introduce and develop the skill of windmill pitching to children and youth. The primary objective of the program is to provide a vehicle to enhance the development of pitching skills and knowledge of players across Canada especially at the grassroots level.

Throughout the program pitchers will:

- learn and develop the fundamental skills of pitching.
- meet other players and develop friendships.
- see their progress as they move from one stage of pitching development to the next following a clearly defined pathway.
- be introduced to the concepts of fair play, fitness, safety, teamwork, and the importance of a positive attitude.
- have a fun, memorable experience.

Why sign up?

Pivotal to the CANpitch Program is a revolutionary team of Master and Regional Pitching Instructors in every province and territory. Instructors include former National Team players, former and current elite level pitchers, as well as youth softball coaching experts. Once appointed, every instructor receives ongoing training to become experts in every aspect of working with pitchers.

The instructors deliver leading-edge technical pitching instruction through group lessons using a 6-week curriculum created by a team of pitching experts with a focus on meeting children's learning and individual needs, whatever their ability level. This means the CANpitch Program is truly athlete-centred, inclusive, and most importantly, fun.

The instructor to pitcher ratio is kept low (maximum of 1:10 and in most cases lower) to ensure each pitcher receives individual attention. Pitchers progress at their own rate through the curriculum at weekly group lessons and by practicing on their own. Instructors use various teaching aids and activities that create a fun learning environment.

The benefits of a nationally standardized pitching program like CANpitch are:

- More athletes will be exposed to the pitching position and develop fundamentally sound mechanics which will increase the competitive level in Canada.

- All athletes across Canada will have the same opportunity to learn how to pitch from pitching experts.
- CANpitch Instructors are part of a national network of pitching coaches that participate in yearly professional development sessions which fosters a sense of community and the sharing of best practices ensuring the program evolves and improves over time.

Who can enroll?

The CANpitch Program is open to all athletes that want to learn or improve the fundamental skills of windmill pitching. No previous pitching experience is necessary to participate.

How does the CANpitch Program work?

The CANpitch Program currently has three developmental levels with plans to add more in the future:

- 1) FUNDamentals (ages 8-9)
- 2) Learning To Train (ages 10-12)
- 3) Training To Train (ages 13-16)

All participants will be evaluated at the beginning of the program and will be trained at the level that best suits their developmental needs. The CANpitch Program is offered in a 6-week block. It is expected that a pitcher would likely participate in more than one 6-week block over the course of the year. This structure allows the pitcher time to participate in other activities and interests as well as ensures their long-term development over their career.

CANpitch FUNDamentals (Ages 8-9)

The FUNDamental stage is the entry level for young pitchers. At this level, pitchers should learn two basic concepts: proper grip and how to deliver the ball towards the target. Emphasis is also placed on smooth, rhythmic wrist and arm action.

Structured Lessons: 60 minute session once per week.

Additional Practice Time: Participants are encouraged to practice one additional session per week on their own time with parents.





Where can I find out more information?

To learn more about the CANpitch Program or find a list of nationally trained Master and Regional Pitching Instructors, visit

www.softball.ca

For more information about the CANpitch Program in your area or to host a CANpitch Clinic, please contact:



CANpitch Learning To Train (Ages 10-12)

In the Learning To Train stage, pitchers continue to learn fundamental pitching skills. The goal of this stage is to systematically build on the skills learned in the FUNdamentals stage by increasing the speed of the motion and throwing to basic targets while maintaining proper mechanics.

Structured Lessons: 60 minute session once per week.

Additional Practice Time: At least 20 minutes one to two times per week with a coach, catcher or parent.



CANpitch Training To Train (Ages 13-16)

Pitchers at this stage are beginning to understand the skills associated with being a successful pitcher. Improving velocity, control, and ball movement are the next priorities in the progression of skill development. Pitchers at this stage will be encouraged to develop at least two (2) pitches: a fastball and a change-up (females) or the drop ball and change-up (males). Based on the instructor's assessment, the drop ball, curve ball and rise ball may also be introduced at this stage based on the pitcher's size, strength, and ability.

Structured Lessons: 60 minute session once per week.

Additional Practice Time: At least 20 minutes up to 3 times per week with a coach, catcher or parent.

What can parents do?

Softball Canada encourages parents' active participation in their child's development by:

- 1) Acting as your child's catcher during weekly instructional and practice sessions.
- 2) Asking your child how you can best support them when drills or tasks become challenging.
- 3) Modeling respectful, sportsmanlike behaviour and bringing a positive attitude to each session.



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