

## How a Bucket Will Improve Your Riseball

by Cindy Bristow

Throwing a good riseball means the pitcher has to have a firm front leg. Knowing that is one thing, getting your pitcher to be able to do it is another. I've got a drill that does the trick.

A firm front leg allows the pitcher to create incredible leverage and get under her riseball – causing it to break more. If you're tired of telling your pitcher to do it try letting her practice it using a bucket.

Grab an ordinary 5-gallon bucket and either put it lid side up, or if you don't have a lid, then put it upside down and place a towel over the top to make it little softer for the pitcher's knee.



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Then have your pitcher put her stride foot forward and place her back leg knee on the bucket as shown in the picture. Your pitcher should have her glove on and a ball – and be about 10 to 20 feet from the catcher, depending on how old and/or strong she is.

Then with her front leg really bracing her, have your pitcher go through her regular motion and throw a riseball to the catcher. When she first tries this drill it's not so important that the ball rise, but that she feel that front-leg pressure the pitch requires.

I've tried this drill with lots of pitchers and while it works for most of them, it doesn't work for everybody. The pitcher will notice right away if she's using her front leg stronger, or firmer or even straighter (these are some of the words I've had pitchers tell me it helped them feel).

After a few pitches to help her get used to pitching in this position, the pitcher should be able to start throwing pretty good riseballs – or at least pitches with pretty good spin. Again, the purpose of this drill is to help her firm up her front leg, so if she can feel that, it's a victory!

Creating a firm front leg can be a very complicated and confusing concept to some pitchers, but that doesn't mean we can't be simple in our solutions. The easier a solution is the more likely it will work.