

Four Seam Fastball – The “Must Have” Pitch for any Pitcher

The most basic pitch is the four seam fastball. Players should already be familiar with the grip since it is the same one you use as a fielder to get a straight throw. The four seam fastball goes straight with very little movement so an effective four seam can be relied on when you NEED a strike. Using this pitch to consistently get strikes will keep the game moving and prevent boredom for the fielders. Hard throwers will use this pitch to set up a batter for an off speed pitch later in the count (change-ups) and older pitchers will start mixing in breaking pitches (curveballs, sliders, screwballs).

To grip the four seam fastball, place your index and middle fingertips directly on the perpendicular seam of the baseball. The "horseshoe seam" should face into your ring finger of your throwing hand (as shown in the picture on the left). I call it the horseshoe seam simply because the seam itself looks like the shape of a horseshoe.



Next, place your thumb directly beneath the baseball, resting on the smooth leather (as shown in the picture on the right). Ideally, you should rest your thumb in the center of the horseshoe seam on the bottom part of the baseball.

Grip this pitch softly, like an egg, in your fingertips. There should be a "gap" or space between the ball and your palm (as shown in the middle picture). This is the key to throwing a good, hard four-seam fastball with maximal backspin and velocity: A loose grip minimizes "friction" between your hand and the baseball. The less friction, of course, the quicker the baseball can leave your hand.