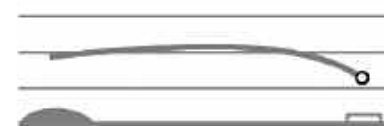
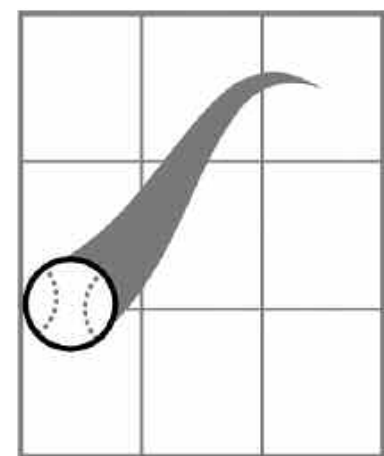


Getting a grip on five basic pitches

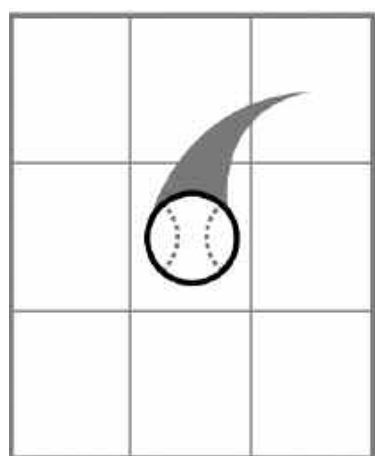
Rangers bullpen coach Andy Hawkins spent 11 years in the majors and won 84 games along the way. Hawkins, who was the team's interim pitching coach at the end of last season, breaks down what the five basic pitches are expected to do once they are released from the pitcher's hand. (Hawkins' descriptions are what he would want the pitch to do as a right-handed pitcher.)



Two-seam fastball

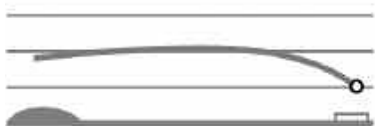
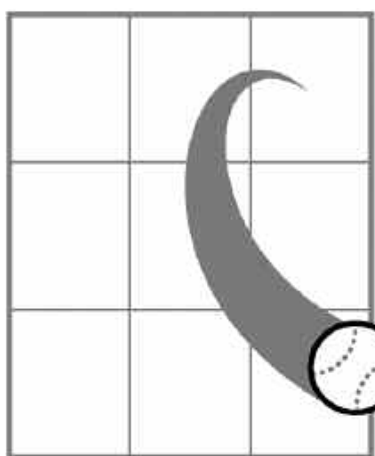
For a two-seam to be successful, it needs to sink when it's down in the strike zone, and tail when it's up. It should sink away from a hitter.

By ANTHONY ANDRO/
Special Contributor
Photos by:
RON JENKINS/Special Contributor



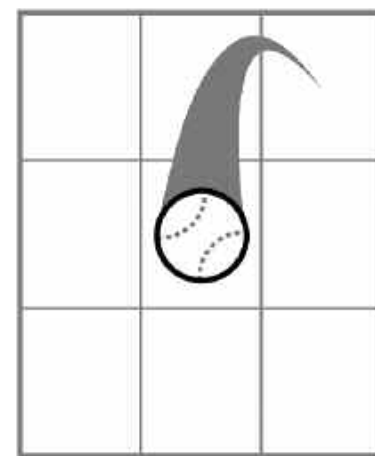
Four-seam fastball

This is the straightest pitch a pitcher throws. It also has the highest velocity. A pitcher wants it to start straight and stay there. It's also the pitch most pitchers use when they need to throw a strike. It has the least movement of any pitch.



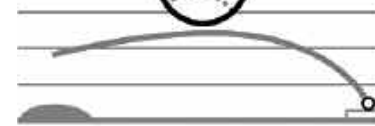
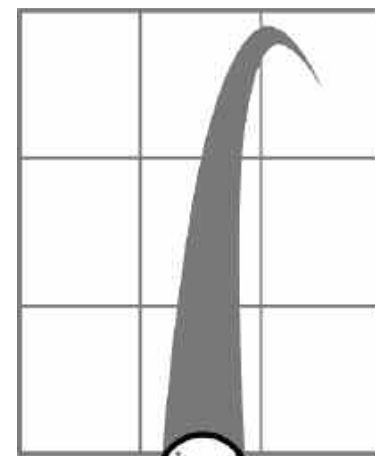
Slider

It should look like a fastball to a hitter until it gets to the plate. Then it should have a late break. The arm slot is similar to a curveball. For a right-handed pitcher, a slider should break away from a right-handed batter and into a left-handed hitter.



Changeup

For it to be successful, it has to look just like a four-seam fastball. The delivery and arm speed coming out of the hand should look identical to a fastball. When it's halfway to the plate, it slows down. It should also have the same spin as a fastball.



Curveball

Side break is more important than straight over the top depth. A 12-6 curveball is in reference to the angle of the break. Hawkins had more of a 7 to 1 because of the arm slot. Tight spin is important without a hump, because that's easily defined by a hitter.