

# How To Coach A Pitcher

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Many coaches run into the issue of how to coach a pitcher, especially when they have never been a pitcher before. Even if a coach has prior experience as a baseball pitcher, it simply isn't the same; mentally or physically.

Coaching a female athlete, for one, can prove to be a difficult task in itself; coaching a pitcher is a whole other story. Not only are you dealing with the emotions of a female athlete, you are dealing with one that has the pressure of the game on their shoulders. The pitcher controls a large portion of the outcome and it is well known that they have to be mentally prepared, ready, and tough to see success within the game. Wins and losses are heavily weighed on the pitching performance and can affect the mental and physical stability of the pitcher. As a coach, it is your job to help them maintain confidence and aggressiveness in practices and games without putting excessive pressure on them, without being overly critical, and by showing that you support them.

Many pitchers already understand the pressure of the game and their role as a prominent player. Pitching is 80% mental, 20% physical and a coach can easily play into those percentages. If a coach is constantly nagging their pitchers, telling them that they need to throw this and that without error or else they will be pulled, that pitcher will fail. Regardless of how mentally tough that pitcher may be, the lack of confidence and negative consequence from a coach will only lead to negative results. Your lack of confidence in her pitching will only deteriorate her confidence in herself.

It is expected that a coach supports their pitchers simply because they picked them up on their team for a reason. If they didn't have faith and confidence in their pitchers ability, they should not have brought them on the team. Yes, it can be extremely frustrating to watch a pitcher struggle in a game, or not throw to her ability, but getting mad and showing disappointment in that athlete will not help the situation. Again, with pitching being 80% mental, there is probably something going on with her that is deeper than her physical ability. As a coach, and an adult, remember that you are there to support and show them that you will stand behind them as athletes in both their good and bad outings.

So aside from "having your athletes back," get to know your pitcher. If you don't know anything about your pitcher, you will struggle to understand her while she is in a game. Female athletes can be hard to read, so the more you can get to know her, the better you can connect regarding pitch calling, her endurance, and her mental stability on the mound.

If your pitcher goes to a pitching coach, attend a lesson. See how she interacts with her instructor and key in on the things she is focusing on developing. A huge point for male coaches to understand is that you are not a pitcher. You have never played fastpitch softball, you have never been a fastpitch pitcher, and you will never be a fastpitch pitcher. Despite thinking that you could coach a pitcher mechanically, understand that you are wrong. J Even though you may think you see certain things that your pitcher could work on, discuss it with their pitching coach first. They may already be working on that exact thing, or they could be working on something entirely different. It is important to maintain that connection with their pitching coach as they have more one on one time, they confide in them, and are in their profession for a reason. Once you make this connection, it will better your relationship with your pitcher and you will be able to reiterate what their pitching coach tells them during practices and games.

As a coach, it is your role to be a supportive figure for all your female athletes. Pitchers in particular need to know that you trust them, you have confidence in them, and that you believe in their ability. The more you show them this support, the more confidence they will have in their own game, in turn, bettering their performance every outing.

**Key Points:**

**Pitching is 80% mental, 20% physical; a coach needs to play positively into these percentages**

**A female pitchers wants to feel needed and important on a team, more so from their coach than her teammates**

**Be supportive of your pitcher; the more confidence and faith you have in them, the more they will perform**

Credit to Gary Leland, of Fastpitch.TV and link to <http://Fastpitch.TV>