

Leather Pitching Target™



Self-directed Training Guide

SKILL TESTS

Congratulations

Dear Leather Pitching Target™ customer,

Congratulations...

and thank you for purchasing the Leather Pitching Target™ (LPT). The LPT is a highly effective, professional training tool combined with a self-directed training program designed to dramatically improve pitching performance.

To ensure safe operation with maximum benefit, please read the product care and use instructions and review them with anyone who will be using the LPT.

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Self-directed training

Because you can't always have a coach or mentor around to help you, we have developed a self-directed training program.

What is self-directed training?

It is a training process that allows a person to be self-taught by using the three most important keys to mastering a skill:

1. The ability to have instant and accurate feedback
2. The ability to make finer and finer distinctions
3. Incremental challenges with measurable achievement

Our self-directed training program incorporates each of these three keys and is designed to dramatically improve command.

First, the Leather Pitching Target™ is designed to easily track the impact location of each pitch, giving the user instant and accurate feedback on the location and quality of every pitch.

Second, after observing the results of each pitch, you must learn how to make the necessary adjustments in your release point to move the actual result closer to the intended result. For example, if you miss your “spot” by throwing a pitch 12 inches too high, you must correct that miss by delivering the next pitch 12 inches lower. Learning how to do this is a process that requires making finer and finer distinctions as you improve through repetition and by developing muscle memory.

Third, we combine skill tests with our “move-the-target-closer”

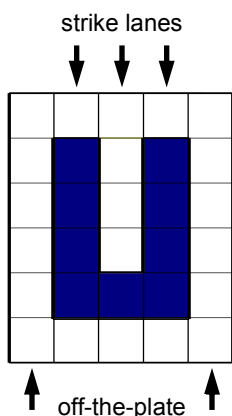
When you think about how little time a player actually spends with a coach, you will begin to realize just how important this self-directed training approach becomes.

By consistently using the Leather Pitching Target™ as instructed in this training guide, you will learn how to achieve pin-point control.

Self-directed training

For the advanced and professional pitcher:

The Leather Pitching Target™ has been engineered with you in mind. Once you and your competition reach a certain level of ability, it may no longer be “good enough” to hit anywhere in the inside or outside strike lanes to pass the 7-11 or Lanes skill test. For example, if you hit the middle side edge of the inside strike lane, that may be too much middle. You must now begin to make those finer distinctions required for greater levels of achievement. Now, instead of hitting anywhere in the inside or outside strike lane, you may want to hit from the center of the inside or outside strike lane to the center of the off-the-plate lane. Or, you may want to make an even finer distinction and hit from the corners of the strike zone to the center of the off-the-plate lanes. With the Leather Pitching Target™, **you** select your intended location and the acceptable tolerance for each pitch. The LPT simply makes it easy to track the results.



The Leather Pitching Target™ is comprised of five vertical lanes. The U outlines the strike zone borders and highlights optimal lanes for a pitch to be delivered. The three strike lanes include a middle strike lane, an inside strike lane and an outside strike lane. Off-the-plate lanes provide the functionality to practice the strategy of “expanding” the zone when ahead in the count.

The corners of the strike zone are represented by the sewing seam edges and not the entire 6” wide lanes as marked. The purpose of the horizontal and vertical sewing seam grid is to provide smaller focus zones within the target and to provide a mathematical reference point to calibrate proficiency. You can quickly and easily calculate the distance between intended impact location and actual impact location due to the layout of the 6” grid. Material shrinkage from the sewing process forms the standard 17” wide strike zone.

Move-the-target-closer

What is move-the-target-closer?

It is a proven learning method used to accelerate skill development.

Learning a new skill can be discouraging at first. You want to be good immediately and that is not always possible. If success is not achieved right away, you may become frustrated and perhaps even give up long before achieving your goals. Sometimes the best way to improve a skill is to move the target closer so you can create a point of reference for success. Moving the target closer removes the discouragement factor by providing incremental degrees of accomplishment right from the start and all along the way to skill proficiency. If you feel like you are improving, your confidence, enjoyment and motivation will also increase.

Example 1:

As a youth, I was the Idaho State indoor archery champion. How did I gain the proficiency required to be a state champion? I used the advanced learning technique of move-the-target-closer.

Regulation distance is 20 yards. When I first started out, I wasn't very good from 20 yards and it was somewhat discouraging. I wanted to be like Robin Hood and keep all of my arrows within the 3-inch diameter bulls-eye every time. So, in order to "pretend" to be good, instead of shooting from the regulation distance, I moved up to the 10 yard marker and practiced from there. After consistent practice at this closer range, I eventually rarely missed. My group of 5 arrows was often within the size of a quarter in the middle of the 3-inch bulls-eye. I started breaking knocks and splitting arrows so I moved back a couple of steps and practiced from this new, more challenging distance until I again rarely missed. This process was repeated until I consistently hit the middle of the bulls-eye from the 15 yard marker. My release point was being perfected by successful repetition at each step of my training, all along the way. Finally, after months of consistent practice, I was very good from the regulation distance so I backed up beyond the 20 yard marker and shot from 22 yards. Practicing from the 22 yard distance made the actual regulation distance "seem" easier. During my state championship round, I shot 51 out of 60 arrows into the 3-inch bulls-eye for a score of 291 out of 300. Even my nine misses were close, as they were all just outside the bulls-eye and within the second ring of the three-ring target.

Move-the-target-closer

Example 2:

My younger brother, Ray Swanson, is in the NBA Hall of Fame! At the age of 13, Ray won the Elks National Hoop Shoot contest. How did he gain the proficiency required to be a national champion? He used the advanced learning technique of move-the-target-closer.

Regulation distance for the free throw line is 15 feet. When Ray first started out, he wasn't very good at 15 feet and he wanted to be as good as the best NBA players when they shot free throws. So, in order to "pretend" to be good, he moved up to a crack in our driveway that was about 10 feet from the hoop and he practiced from there. He practiced shooting from that crack in the driveway until he never missed. Not only did he never miss, he rarely hit the rim from there: all swishes. He then backed up a couple of steps and practiced from this new, more challenging distance until he could easily make 100 in a row. Finally, using this systematic approach, Ray became proficient at the regulation distance. After winning the local, district, and state competitions, Ray made 24 out of 25 free throws in both the regional and national contests. As a reward for his tremendous achievement, his name was inscribed on a plaque in the NBA Hall of Fame.

Pitching, like archery and shooting free throws, is a learned skill. In order to accelerate your ability to achieve pin-point control, use this proven move-the-target-closer approach described in the two examples above. To begin, select a close-range starting distance and a skill test. The skill tests are described in detail on the following pages. Once you pass a skill test, move back 2' and repeat the test until finally reaching your regulation distance.

Using this highly effective system, you will quickly learn what it feels like to consistently deliver a pitch to your intended location. **You will experience the feeling of success every step of the way: learning, adjusting, refining and repeating your ability to throw a pitch, right where you want it, a higher percentage of the time.** Each skill test is progressively more challenging as you move back and will require finer and finer adjustments along the way.

Once a pitcher has been taught the proper mechanics of the delivery, there is absolutely no better system for gaining proficiency in pitch command than the LPT's self-directed training program.

Skill Tests

Begin at a **measured** starting distance from the target of between 20' and 40' (in increments of 2'), depending on ability.

We recommend that young pitchers under the age of 11 begin with the 10-10 skill test at a distance of 20'. High school pitchers may begin with the 7-11 skill test at a distance of 30'. College and professional pitchers may begin with the 7-11 skill test at 40'.

If you are unable to pass a skill test at your beginning distance, move the target closer until you can easily pass. Once you have found your starting distance, do **NOT** skip any 2' increments. You must "earn" the right to attempt passing a skill test at 50', for example, by passing all of the previous 2' increments from your starting distance. If you skip a 2' increment along the way, you will cheat yourself of this proven skill development system.

After successful completion of each skill test, move the target back 2' and repeat the skill test.

Throw each pitch with proper mechanics and a minimum of 80-90 percent effort.

A pitched ball breaking the plane of an intended zone or lane border counts as in.

Each skill test outlined below is described in detail on the following pages of this self-directed training guide.

a. 7-11 (most popular skill test)

b. Lanes

b. 10 -10

c. Pre-game bullpen routine

d. Simulation

e. Around the world

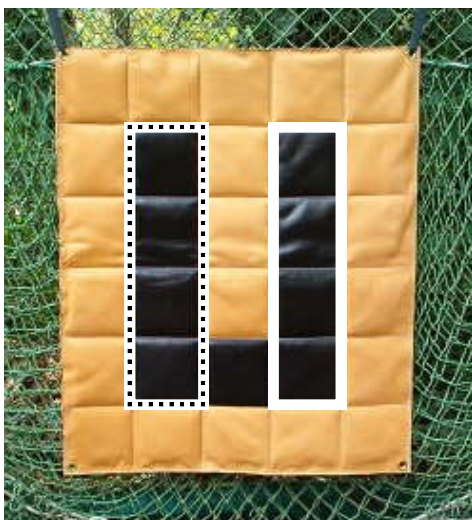
f. H-O-R-S-E

7 - 11

Objective: Throw 7 out of 11 inside lane strikes to a RH hitter. Then throw 7 out of 11 outside lane strikes to a RH hitter.

After successful completion of this skill test, move the target back 2' and repeat.

Begin each 7-11 skill test with your first make.



The **solid white border** in the above photo outlines the inside strike lane to a RH hitter. Hitting any zones or lanes other than those within the solid white border counts as a miss, even if a strike is thrown. This skill test focuses on command of the inside strike lane.

The **dotted border** in the above photo outlines the outside strike lane to a RH hitter. Hitting any zones or lanes other than those within the dotted border counts as a miss, even if a strike is thrown. This skill test focuses on command of the outside strike lane.

Lanes

Objective: Throw 2 out of 3 pitches to each of the five vertical lanes of the target before getting 3 outs.

After successful completion of this skill test, move the target back 2' and repeat.

Begin each Lanes skill test with your first **pitch**.

Throw 2 out of 3 middle lane strikes, followed by 2 out of 3 inside lane strikes, followed by 2 out of 3 outside lane strikes, followed by 2 out of 3 in the inside off-the-plate lane, followed by 2 out of 3 in the outside off-the-plate lane. Each lane must be passed in the correct order. If you fail to throw 2 out of 3 in any lane, it counts as an out and you must attempt to throw 2 out of 3 in that same lane again.



Figure 1



Figure 2

The **dotted borders** in Figure 1 above outline the middle strike lane and both off-the-plate lanes. The **solid white borders** in Figure 2 outline the inside and outside strike lanes.

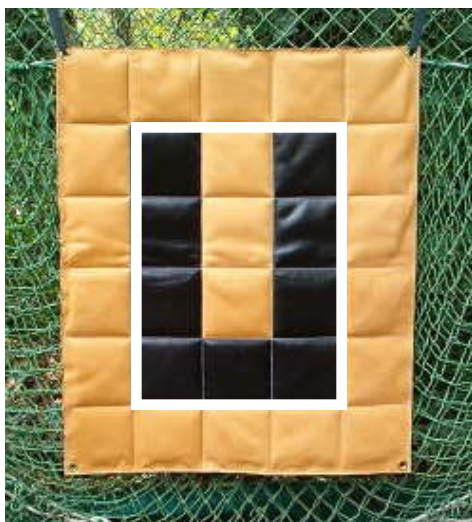
This skill test focuses on developing the ability to command each of the five lanes of the plate.

10 - 10

Objective: Throw 10 strikes in a row.

After successful completion of this skill test, move the target back 2' and repeat.

Begin each 10 - 10 skill test with your first make.



The **solid white border** in the above photo outlines the strike zone. Hitting any part of the target within the white border counts as a strike. This skill test focuses on the ability to be a strike throwing machine. A high level of concentration must be maintained to throw 10 consecutive strikes.

Pre-game bullpen routine

Objective: Develop and practice a pre-game bullpen routine.

Set 1 from the windup

3 fastballs down the middle

3 fastballs on the inside strike lane

3 fastballs on the outside strike lane

3 change-ups down the middle

3 breaking balls down the middle

3 breaking balls off-the-plate, down and away (out pitch)

Set 2 from the stretch

1 fastball down the middle

1 fastball on the inside strike lane

2 fastballs on the outside strike lane (double up)

1 change-up down the middle

1 change-up down (out pitch)

1 breaking ball down the middle

1 breaking ball off-the-plate, down and away (out pitch)

Set 3 from the stretch with slide step

1 fastball down the middle

1 fastball on the inside strike lane

2 fastballs on the outside strike lane (double up)

1 change-up down the middle

1 change-up down (out pitch)

1 breaking ball down the middle

1 breaking ball off-the-plate, down and away (out pitch)

Set 4 from the windup

Simulate your approach against the leadoff hitter

Simulation

Objective: Simulate pitching to a hitter in game situations. Make pitch sequence selection and location decisions depending on the count.

Start at a distance between 10' - 20' closer than your regulation distance depending on ability.

H-O-R-S-E

Objective: Be the last player left in the game.

Rules: Two or more players compete against each other in this game of skill. A turn order is decided in which players will make their pitches. The first player calls out the intended pitch and location on the pitching target. If the intended target is hit, the second player must match the same pitch and location or receive a letter, beginning with H and proceeding to E. Players are eliminated when they have all the letters of the word HORSE. If the second player hits the intended target, the third player must make the same pitch and so on for the number of players in the game. If all players hit the intended target and the original player's turn comes up, the original player chooses a new pitch location. A player may choose a single 6" x 6" square zone, a single vertical lane, or multiple zones in which to hit.

Warranty

OutPitch Sports LLC warrants this product to be free from defects in materials or workmanship under intended normal use, as explained in the *Product Care and Use Instructions*.

The **PROFESSIONAL** Model is warranted for one (1) year and the **SELECT** Model for (6) months from date of original purchase.

During this period, such defects will be repaired or the product replaced, at OutPitch Sports option, without charge. This warranty does not cover commercial use or damage caused by misuse, accident, negligence, normal wear (including scratches, abrasions, discoloration due to usage or exposure to sunlight), or failure to follow the care and use instructions. The customer is responsible for the shipping charges on all returned items. Any unit submitted for repair must be sent transportation charges prepaid to:

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