

The following information will help you to get the most out of your pitchingsmart strike zone system (pssz).

What is the pitchingsmart Strike Zone: This is a tool for any baseball or softball pitcher to help them improve on their accuracy while also learning how to pitch smart. It is a multi shaded strike zone area with a matching matrix that tells a pitcher the smartest location to throw a pitch using the count as the deciding factor for the specific situation. After only a few hours of using the pssz you will memorize each count and the corresponding shaded symbols. You will also be able to picture each shaded area around the strike zone. Consequently, you will be able to visualize the “smart” location for this pitch in your head for each and every count.

About the pitchingsmart Strike Zone; I designed the pitchingsmart Strike Zone with the attitude that a successful pitcher must make each and every batter hit the ball if they want to get on base. This means that I must throw pitches to a location that the batter will swing at but **NOT HIT HARD** if they do hit it.

The actual rule book strike zone is the entire 17” wide yellow and red shaded areas inside of the bold 1” black line. There are 3 other shaded areas (Dots, Green & Stripes), all of which are 4-1/2” wide and overlap each other by one half (2-1/4”). In that order, they progressively get farther away from the red area of the strike zone and each of those areas is a specific target for a specific situation. The pitches to these areas also get harder to **hit hard** as they progress away from the red area. Note that each shaded area goes completely around the strike zone. That means that your pitch can be effective anywhere around the entire zone. You may use your different pitches to throw at different areas (top, bottom or sides) of each shaded area.

Understanding the Matrix; To the right of every possible count, there are two shaded symbols. One for 1st choice and the other for 2nd choice. **The first choice is the smartest location to throw a pitch for that count.** The 2nd choice means that IF you are going to miss the 1st choice, miss it towards the 2nd choice.

Using the Pitching Smart Strike Zone to learn to pitch smarter. It should be hung up at the distance from your pitching rubber to home plate. The pssz is designed to work with the count being the biggest factor in knowing the situation. Just play a simulated batter, inning or an entire game one pitch at a time using the matrix provided. You can pick your own pitches to throw to the location shown in the matrix. Be realistic and honest. If you get a pitch too close to the no-no zone, probably a base hit. Closer yet might be an extra base hit of some sort. If you throw a good borderline pitch on a 1-2 count, probably a swing and an out. It is fun to do and it helps your thinking game.

Using the Pitching Smart Strike Zone to practice location. Your specific target should be the same size as the ball you are throwing and that specific target should be dead center in the middle of the smartest shaded area (1st choice). However, by choosing a smart location to begin with, you should have an area of success about the size of a cantaloupe. Success means the result is a strike or an out. Many times, moving the location of a pitch more than a few inches is too much and can mean the difference between a routine out or a line drive into the gap. I would recommend using most of your “location” practice time throwing at the dotted area as this is where you should be most of the time. I would also recommend either and/or both bottom corners of the zone because I believe that a pitch that is low and away is the hardest location for most batters to **hit it hard** and a pitch low and in is the second hardest location for a batter to hit hard. A pitch dead center of the dotted area means that your ball is 1/2 in the strike zone and it should be a strike if the batter doesn’t swing at it. This location should also produce mainly routine outs IF they do swing and hit it.

