

# **LEVEL-O CERTIFICATE COURSE IN CRICKET COACHING**

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## **Lecture 37: INSWING**

Alright, everyone, welcome to an exciting session focused on the art of swing bowling, specifically the inswing and outswing deliveries. As we know, variations are crucial weapons in a fast bowler's arsenal. The more types of deliveries a bowler has, the better equipped they are to challenge the batter. We often see pace bowlers swinging the ball inwards (inswing), outwards (outswing), or even achieving reverse swing.

Our fundamental skill in swing bowling is the ability to make the ball move in the air. This movement, or swing, is what allows a bowler to trouble the batter and potentially take their wicket. The degree to which a bowler can control this swing, the way they deliver the ball to achieve it, and the resulting movement all speak to the quality of the bowler. We've seen many masters of swing bowling, such as Wasim Akram, Waqar Younis, Brett Lee, James Anderson, and India's Bhuvneshwar Kumar, all demonstrating exceptional control over both inswing and outswing.

How do we achieve this swing? It's largely dependent on aerodynamics – how we utilise the air, combined with the bowler's technique. This includes how they grip the ball, their release angle, the use of their fingers, body mechanics, and even the pitch of the ball. All these factors work in unison to produce a swing delivery.

Today, we'll delve into the inswing. But first, let's understand why a ball swings at all. This is primarily due to air mechanics and the condition of the ball. We know that a new ball has two relatively similar sides, while an older ball typically has one side that has been polished and the other that might be scuffed or rough. Bowlers utilise this difference in surface condition to generate swing.

The science behind it involves fluid mechanics. When air flows over the ball as it's bowled, the difference in surface between the rough and polished sides creates different air flow patterns. On the rough side, the friction with the air causes turbulence and a low-pressure zone. Conversely, the smoother, polished side allows the air to flow more freely and frequently, creating a high-pressure zone. As a fundamental principle of fluid dynamics, the ball will move from an area of high pressure to an area of low pressure. This pressure difference is what causes the ball to swing in the air.

Now, let's specifically talk about the inswing. An inswing is when the ball moves in the air towards the batter. To achieve this with a conventional swing (using the difference in shine and

roughness), the shiny side of the new ball, or the polished side of an old ball, is typically positioned on the right-handed batter's offside, pointing towards fine leg. The rough side is then on the right-handed batter's leg side.

When delivering an inswing, the grip is crucial. Starting with a normal basic bowling grip, you need to slightly tilt the seam of the ball towards the fine leg. It's important to keep your wrist straight throughout the delivery; there should be no last-minute flicking of the wrist to generate the swing. The middle finger plays a key role in imparting the inswing movement upon release, with the tip of the finger being used at the point of release.

The release position for an inswing is typically at the top of the head. The follow-through should be in line with your body, allowing your hips to open up and your hand to move naturally in that direction. This coordinated body movement is essential for generating the desired swing.

There are other factors a pace bowler can consider for maximising inswing. One of these is the point of release relative to the crease. For maximum inswing, it's often beneficial to release the ball slightly away from the stumps, rather than too close. This allows the angle created by the release point to work in conjunction with the swing, making it more challenging for the batsman as the ball moves back into them. Releasing too close to the stumps might result in the ball swinging across the batter and potentially down the leg side.

To learn and develop the inswing, we start with the grip. A coach plays a vital role here, ensuring the middle and index fingers are positioned correctly on the seam, and the seam is tilted slightly towards fine leg. The player mustn't put excessive pressure on the middle finger. This grip needs to be practised and reinforced repeatedly.

Once the grip is correct, we move to action development. Just like building a basic pace bowling action, we start with simple drills. One such drill is one-step bowling. The player takes the correct inswing grip, leans forward, and from a short one-step run-up (often starting at the number three cone or marker), they go into their loading position and then release the ball to swing it inwards. The follow-through should be in line with the body. This drill helps the player get a feel for the action and the release. Corrections, especially regarding the follow-through being in line with the body, are made immediately.

As the bowler gains consistency with the one-step drill, we progress to a three-step bowling action, using markers to guide their run-up. The focus remains on maintaining the correct grip, a straight wrist at release, and a follow-through that allows the body to move naturally in line with the intended swing.

It's important to understand that the inswing is a weapon that needs to be developed and mastered gradually. It's not something that can be taught or applied effectively in matches from the very beginning. A bowler needs to have a sound basic bowling action and good control over their deliveries before introducing swing bowling. Only when a bowler has matured, bowls with good technique, and has confidence in controlling the ball should they be taught the intricacies of swing.

Furthermore, the strategic use of the crease, specifically the release point relative to the stumps, is crucial for maximising the effectiveness of the inswing. Releasing the ball slightly away from the stumps allows the natural angle and the inward swing to combine, making it a potent weapon against the batter.

Now, let's transition to the outswing. What is an outswing? An outswing is when the ball moves in the air away from the batter. So, if a right-handed batsman is batting, the outswing will take the ball away from their body, towards the slips or gully region. To achieve this, the bowler needs to utilise the aerodynamics and their technique to make the ball deviate outwards in flight. This again requires a specific grip, release point, and coordinated body movement to effectively move the ball away from the batsman.