BALKS - from the 2005 NFHS Baseball Rules Book

Turning the shoulder to check runners, while in contact with the pitcher's plate is a balk ONLY after bringing the hands together during or after the stretch. (p. 39)

Pitcher shall go to the SET position without interruption and in one continuous motion – or a Balk results. (p.40)

From a SET position, in order to go to a WINDUP motion (or vice versa), the pitcher must first step clearly backward off the plate with his pivot foot first (e.g. right-handed pitcher's pivot foot = right foot). (p.40)

While touching the pitcher's plate, pitcher cannot feint toward the batter or 1st base – or drop the ball without it crossing a foul line. (p.43)

Pitcher, when touching the plate, must step with non-pivot foot directly toward a base (occupied or unoccupied) when throwing/feinting to that base.

Pitcher cannot throw or feint to an unoccupied base when it is not an attempt to put out or drive back a runner. (p. 42)

While in a SET position, if the pitcher takes his hand off the ball – and does not pitch to the batter – then he must throw to a base or feint a throw to 2nd or 3rd base. (p. 43)

When pitcher fails to pitch to a batter when the entire non-pivot foot passes behind the perpendicular plane of the back edge of the pitcher's plate, it's a Balk EXCEPT when feinting or throwing to 2nd base in an attempt to put out or drive back a runner. (p. 43)

With runner(s) on base, the pitcher – not touching the plate – makes any movement naturally associated with his pitch; places his feet on or astride the pitcher's plate, or positions himself without the ball within approx. five feet of plate (hidden ball trick). (p.42)

If pitcher steps and "feints" toward 1st base he must first disengage from the pitcher's plate (unless he never touched it to begin with). (p. 41)

If pitcher comes SET and then steps with his non-pivot foot toward Home or 1st – and does not deliver the ball – it's a Balk.

SET position – before starting his delivery, pitcher shall stand with his entire non-pivot foot in front of a line extending through the front edge of the pitcher's plate, and with his entire pivot foot in contact with or directly in front of the pitcher's plate. (Rule 6, sec. 1, Art. 3; p. 40)

BALK Interpretations – from the 2005 NFHS Baseball Case Book

To comply with the requirement to "step directly toward," the pitcher must step to the 1st base side of a 45 degree angle between the center of the pitcher's plate and between Home and 1st base. (p.47)

While on the plate the pitcher may step toward 3rd base and "feint" a throw, and then step towards 1st and make a throw without disengaging the pitcher's plate.

Pitcher must step directly toward 2nd or 3rd base when "feinting" a throw.

After pitcher (from a SET position) raises his hands above his head, brings them together, and pauses with both hands in front of the body, he cannot separate his hands without pitching or first stepping back off the plate.

SET position – when heel of pivot foot is outside a line through the end edge of the plate it's a Balk (p. 41). Pivot foot required to be entirely in front of pitcher's plate within the plane of each end of the plate, and in contact with it. (p. 44)

A "quick pitch" is a Balk if runner(s) are aboard. Otherwise, it's an illegal pitch and a "ball" is called. (p. 45)

Batter steps out as pitcher starts his pitching motion. He requests "time" but umpire doesn't grant it. Runner on base. If pitcher delivers pitch, ump calls 2 Strikes – one on the actual pitch and one for stepping out. If pitch is not thrown, ump calls 1 Strike for stepping out. (no Balk). If pitcher throws a wild pitch", 2 Strikes are called – one for the actual pitch and one for stepping out – and the ball is ALIVE. (p. 48-49)

With runner(s) on base the pitcher, in the SET position, steps quickly back off the plate and with a motion – much like his pitching delivery – throws to Home. It's a Balk. While not touching the pitcher's plate he shall not make any motion/movement naturally associated with his pitch. (p. 49)

A right-handed pitcher may not assume a left-hander SET position in order to keep a runner on 1st base close. (p. 45)

With a runner on base and the pitcher in the SET position – ball is in his glove hand and pitching hand at his side – he cannot remove the ball from the glove hand and come SET. (p. 44)

The pitcher, with his hands already together in front of his body, may not separate his hands without delivering a pitch. (p. 43). No "second stretches" are allowed. (p. 43)

While in either the WINDUP or SET position the pitcher cannot adjust his cap or shake off a signal from the catcher with his GLOVE (hat = OK). (p. 43)

The pitcher, from a WINDUP position, may have one hand at his side and the other in front when taking a "sign" from the catcher. He may then bring his hands together and PAUSE. Not a Balk. (6.1.2I; p. 39)

The pitcher, while in a WINDUP or SET position, may not step forward to throw out a runner advancing – he may pitch only. (p. 42)

When the pitcher jumps" to make a throw to 2nd – or feint therein – he may come down astride the plate with his non-pivot foot towards 2nd base. However, his pivot foot must contact the ground BEFORE the ball is released. (p. 45)

From a SET position the pitcher only has to STOP before a pitch, NOT to throw to a base.

Once the pitcher intentionally contacts the plate with his pivot foot, restrictions begin. From a SET position he cannot remove the ball from his glove or toss ball in glove. (p. 44)

Pitcher is limited to not more than two pumps or rotations while in a WINDUP position.

Pitcher, from a SET position, cannot lift his non-pivot foot AFTER the STOP, without pitching or stepping directly toward and throwing to a base. (p. 45)

From a SET position the pitcher cannot feint a throw toward 3rd with a movement of the shoulder – or remove one hand from the glove and make an arm motion – but no throw to 3rd base. (p. 48)

If a pitcher makes a pickoff throw to 1st base and the First baseman is NOT on the bag it's NOT a BALK if, in the umpire's judgment the fielder is close enough to the base to legitimately make a play on the runner. (p. 49)