This is an excerpt from *Football Skills & Drills, Second Edition*
By Thomas Bass.

**Throwing Technique**

All quarterbacks want to pass the ball. A quarterback’s success as a passer depends a great deal on the amount of time that he devotes to learning the proper mechanics for throwing the ball. One of the most important ways for the quarterback to grow is to master the throwing techniques.

If a quarterback is having trouble passing the ball accurately, the coach should take the time to review the basics of throwing. A quarterback should not be allowed to continue throwing bad passes. Before passing, the quarterback needs to master securing the ball in both hands, taking the drop that the play requires, and executing the footwork needed to prepare to pass. The quarterback also needs to know how to grip the ball and the movement that he should go through as he passes the ball.

Every good pass starts with the grip on the ball. Without a proper grip, the throw will lack the accuracy or velocity that the quarterback needs. The size of the quarterback’s hands will cause some variation in the way that he is able to grasp the football. Regardless of the size of his passing hand, the quarterback grips the ball near the center (figure 2.13). He places the index or first finger of his throwing hand near the tip of the ball, off the laces and across the seam where the laces are located. He places the middle and third fingers across the laces. The fingertips of these two fingers are on the surface of the ball, not on the laces. The little finger just reaches the laces of the
ball. The coach should check the quarterback’s grip during every practice.

The quarterback should feel the most pressure between the ball and his passing hand just behind the center point on the back of the ball. Depending on the size of his hand, the quarterback may need to adjust the base grip slightly, but he must keep the pressure in the same location.

Until the quarterback is ready to release the ball, he should keep his nonpassing hand on the ball, placing it lightly on the underside of the football to keep the ball more securely in his grasp (figure 2.14). Most quarterback fumbles occur during the exchange from the center or when the quarterback removes his nonpassing hand and starts running with the ball in only one hand. The quarterback does not have complete control of the center snap exchange, but he must have total control when he is going back to pass. He must keep both hands on the ball whenever possible.

The quarterback’s passing motion begins with a step forward on the foot opposite his passing arm (figure 2.15a). The quarterback aims the toes of this lead foot directly where he wants the ball to go. The lead foot is important—the quarterback must step directly toward where he is going to pass the ball. The quarterback’s body is now in position. With this step, the quarterback’s entire body begins to point at the spot where he wants to deliver the ball. At this moment, his lead foot and hips are aimed at the target.

At the same time that the quarterback steps with his lead foot, he releases his nonpassing hand from the ball and brings his passing
hand back, bending the elbow on his passing arm (figure 2.15b). The ball is above his shoulder pads and slightly behind his helmet.

When the quarterback begins to deliver the pass, his hips and shoulders move toward the target, ahead of his passing arm and hand (figure 2.15c). An accurate passer who passes with touch and velocity always begins the passing movement with his entire body, not just his arm. The quarterback needs to understand that arm speed and ball velocity result from using his entire body to make the throw.

As the quarterback’s body moves forward toward the passing area, his shoulder, passing arm, and hand also begin to move forward (figure 2.15d). His elbow is bent, and he holds the ball high. The quarterback finally allows his passing arm to come forward as he delivers the pass.

As the passing arm comes forward, the quarterback’s lower arm passes over and in front of his elbow. The hand and the ball extend forward, and the ball comes out of his hand in a tight spiral. When the quarterback releases the ball, he points his hand and fully extended
passing arm directly at the passing target. After the release, the passing hand rotates to the inside and the palm of the passing hand finishes the passing motion turned down to face the ground (figure 2.15e).

Quarterbacks need to practice throwing to make it one smooth motion. At the moment of release, every part of the quarterback’s body should point directly at the passing target. His body should be in a direct line to the passing area. The lead foot, hips, shoulders, head, eyes, and passing hand should all point in the same direction. The coach may want to have a quarterback who is just learning the passing motion practice setting up and going through the entire sequence without the ball until the player becomes comfortable and the coach thinks that the player is doing it correctly every time.

The quarterback needs to step to throw to all areas of the field, not just to the middle or to the side of his passing hand.

Source = http://www.humankinetics.com/excerpts/excerpts/how-to-achieve-top-throwing-technique