



# Coaching Guide Athletics

**Special  
Olympics**





## **Welcome to The Special Olympics Athletics Coaching Guide - 2017 edition.**

In this guide, we aim to provide coaches, especially new coaches, with some key information to get you started in coaching Track and Field Athletics. Throughout the guide you will find some general information on coaching Athletics – from the clothing and equipment required, to some of the most important rules; from how to keep good training records to fostering sportsmanship in your team.

This guide should be read in conjunction with the Special Olympics Athletics Rules and Special Olympics Sports Rules Article 1.

Keep in mind, that this guide is just one resource which may be useful to you as you progress through your career as a coach. As you develop your own style of coaching, you will find other books, websites, magazines and coaches, who will help to shape your approach to coaching. Always be curious! Always be open to new ideas! Always keep your athletes at the heart of your coaching!

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

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They have helped fulfill the mission of Special Olympics: to provide year-round sports training and athletic competition in a variety of Olympic-type sports for people 8 years of age and older with intellectual disabilities, giving them continuing opportunities to develop physical fitness, demonstrate courage, experience joy and participate in a sharing of gifts, skills and friendship with their families, other Special Olympics athletes and the community.

Special Olympics athletics welcomes your ideas and comments for future revisions of this guide. We apologize if, for any reason, an acknowledgement has been inadvertently omitted.

### **Original Guide (2007)**

#### **Contributing Authors**

Susie Bennett-Yeo (Special Olympics Australia), Venisha Bowler (Special Olympics International), Wanda S. Durden, Dave Lenox, Ryan Murphy, Karla Sirianni (former Special Olympics International), Kelly Zackodnik (Special Olympics Canada).

#### **Special Thanks to the following for their contributions**

Janusz Rozum (Special Olympics Poland), Tony Wayne (Special Olympics North Carolina), Paul Whichard (former Special Olympics International), Brenda Hill (Special Olympics Canada).

Video Featuring Athletes from Special Olympics Canada: Fern Bremault, Chris Doty, Gino Lucarelli, Sarah McCarthy, Blayne Usselman.

Video Featuring Athletes from Special Olympics Virginia

### **2017 Review**

**Special Olympics Athletics Sports Resource Team:** Chairperson: Kelly Zackodnik (Special Olympics Canada). Members: Jan Blaauw (Special Olympics Netherlands), Peter Fenton (Special Olympics Ireland), Yvonne Grimes (Special Olympics Connecticut), Jeff Mohler (Special Olympics Indiana), Janusz Rozum (Special Olympics Poland), Tony Wayne (Special Olympics North Carolina), Susie Bennett-Yeo (Special Olympics Australia).

**Assisted by Special Olympics Athletics Coaches:** Jo Menten (Special Olympics Belgium), Aaron Masi (Special Olympics Vermont), Michael Bovino (Special Olympics Pennsylvania), Hannah Higginson (Special Olympics Great Britain), Barbara Hedden (Special Olympics Connecticut).

**Special Olympics International Staff:** Nadine Afioni, Monica Forquer, Fiona Murray, Will Schermerhorn, Jamie Valis, Kyle Washburn.

## Preparing for the Athletics Season

### GOALS

Goal setting is an important part of any training Program. They help to give us focus and direction. In addition, they help us to monitor our progress and development. For more information about goal setting and SMART Goals, you should read our Sport Psychology guide which is available on our resources webpage [resources.specialolympics.org](https://resources.specialolympics.org)

Here are some simple examples of SMART goals for athletes training in Athletics.

Event	Session Focus	Sample Goals
Shot Put	Correct Release of Shot	Extend the arm fully at release each put (90% of puts)
Sprints	Running Curves	Stay in lane for each repetition of the curve
Relays	Blind Baton Exchange	Smooth exchange (no fumbles) in 80% of exchanges
Middle Distance	Pacing for 3,000m	Hit agreed splits for each 800m
Standing Long Jump	Take Off	Both feet leave the ground simultaneously in 4/5 jumps

### PLANNING A TRAINING SEASON

Prior to every season, it is an important part of your role as coach, to plan your training season. You should consider all of the key elements of a season – Pre-Season, (General Preparation & Specific Preparation), Competition Season and Off Season. For more information on planning a training season, please visit our short guide on this topic on our resources webpage on [www.resources.specialolympics.org](https://www.resources.specialolympics.org)

In planning your athletics season, you should consider which capacities must be developed for the events in which your athletes are training. This means you may need to focus on different types of training across your group, particularly as the season progresses.

### PRACTICING FOR COMPETITION

The more we practice competing well, the better we get at competing. Competition is a key part of an athlete's training. It also helps to motivate athletes to train harder. Competitive activities can be exciting and fun. They also give athletes great feedback about how they are progressing. It is vital to include competitive activities in your athletes' training Program. Remember! Competition activities are not always formal competitions! Here are some simple ways you can do this with your Track and Field team:

Invite other clubs/schools to attend your training session and run a mini competition.

Ask a local high school/secondary school to join your training session, or join theirs.

Partner with local running clubs or track and field clubs.

Host friendly meets each month within your club and invite your athletes get to try out different events.

Create a local league in your community.

Invite families to be “Fans in the Stands” every few weeks. They will create a competition atmosphere. This can help your athletes learn to cope with the excitement and stresses of competition.

## HEALTH AND SAFETY AT A TRAINING SESSION

Every competition and practice area should be examined for dangers. Here are some examples you might see.

Metal grating around a long Jump pit: if broken it could create a dangerous landing zone.

Throwing Areas: You must ensure that you remove the risk of athletes, coaches or spectators being struck by a throwing implement. You should also establish clear rules about when implements can be collected from a throwing sector.

As coach, you should check all equipment to ensure it is in good working condition and safe to use. This includes: Hurdles, High Jump pits, throwing cages and circles, stop boards and sand landing pits.

Our ultimate aim is to provide a safe and secure environment for all. This includes athletes, coaches, spectators and anyone in our training or competition venue. A safe venue allows everyone to concentrate on the business of training!

## PLANNING A TRAINING SESSION

Good coaches plan the training and competition season. Good coaches also plan every training session. To learn about how to plan a training session, visit the guide on our resources page [www.resources.specialolympics.org](http://www.resources.specialolympics.org)

A training session should have the following components:

- Warm-Up
- Review and practice of previously learned skills
- Introduction of new skills, techniques or tactics
- Competition Practice
- Cool-Down and Review of Session

Keep your sessions varied. Good coaches keep a balance between challenging athletes and giving them a chance to experience success. Above all, make sure your training sessions are fun!

## UNIFIED SPORTS TEAM ATHLETICS

Unified Sports Team Athletics is a fully inclusive program. Special Olympics athletes and Unified partners train together and support each other as equal teammates. A team roster can be no more than 20 participants. There must be an equal number of athletes and partners. In a competition, each team member may compete in up to three events. There are five track, three field, and two relay events offered.

There are two elements which distinguish Unified Sports Team Athletics.

- 1) Each teammate scores points for their team based on their own competition performance. Every event division is scored. First place scores 5 points. Second place scores 3 points. Third place scores one point. The scores of all team members are added together. The team with the highest score at the end of the meet is the winner.
- 2) Athletes and partners compete against each other. Divisions are composed of competitors who all have similar times or distances. Athletes and partners are treated equally. They are not separated. This leads to an atmosphere of full inclusion.

Competition among everyone promotes equality and respect. It also removes labels. Participants are viewed simply by their talents, and attitudes become more enlightened.

Unified Sports Team Athletics engenders camaraderie and team spirit. Team members support and encourage their teammates in every event division. Each team member can contribute meaningfully to their team's performance. Each athlete's performance is important.

Lasting friendships emerge as teammates train together and become more involved in each other's lives.

A coach starting a Unified Athletics team has fewer restrictions than for Unified team sports. Athletes and partners do not need to be of similar ability levels. In fact, the coach can recruit teammates who have very different abilities. In competition they are grouped with others with similar times or distances. Remember, participants must be of similar ages and share a common love for athletics.

Early in the season, encourage team members to try different events. They should try both track and field events. Then help them to select up to three in which to specialize. They can focus their training on these events for competitions.

As a coach, it is essential you coach everyone on the team. Never separate the athletes and partners in instructional settings. All teammates learn and train together. Treat everyone the same. Adapt your coaching style to meet the needs of your team members.

You should also make sure athletes and partner share leadership roles. Encourage them to do activities together. E.g. In warm-ups and stretching ask pairs of athletes and partners lead the rest of the team.

Unified Sports Team Athletics is a great way to bring together athletes with and without intellectual disabilities in an enriching experience.

## **ATHLETICS ATHLETE SKILLS ASSESSMENT**

The sport skills assessment chart is a systematic method useful to determine the current skill level/ability of an athlete. The Athletics Skills Assessment Card is designed to assist coaches in

determining athlete's ability level in athletics. This can be done before they begin participation and during the season to assess their progress. Coaches will find this assessment a useful tool for several reasons.

- Help coach to determine with the athlete which events they are ready to compete in.
- Establish the baseline training areas of athlete.
- Assist coaches to group athletes of similar ability in training teams.
- Measure the athlete's progression (by repeating the assessment during the season).
- Help determine athletes' daily training schedule.

Before administering the assessment coaches need to perform the following analysis when observing the athlete.

- Become familiar with each of the tasks listed under the major skills
- Have an accurate visual picture of each task
- Have observed a skilled performer executing the skill.

When administering the assessment coaches will have a better opportunity in getting the best analysis from their athletes. Always begin by explaining the skill you would like to observe. When possible demonstrate the skill.

## INSTRUCTIONS

Use this tool at the start of the training and competition season. It helps to establish a baseline measurement of each athlete's starting skill level.

Ask the athlete to perform the skill several times.

If the athlete performs the skill correctly 3 out of 5 times, check the box next to the skill to indicate that the skill has been accomplished.

Plan repeat assessment sessions into your training and competition season.

Use the information in the assessment to determine focus areas for your training season. This may be skills the athlete must learn, improve or refine.

**NOTE:** Athletes may learn and master skills in any order. Athletes have accomplished the list for the event when all possible items have been achieved. Coaches can use this card in conjunction with competition results to help identify when an athlete may be ready to attempt a more challenging event.

### Special Olympics Athletics Skills Assessment Card

Athlete Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date:

Coach Name: \_\_\_\_\_

<p>Running Basics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Maintains a balanced and upright posture</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Maintains a hips tall position</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Lifts opposite knee/arm while running</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Does not swing the arms in front of the body or rotate the shoulders while running</li> </ul>	<p>Sprints</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Can perform a stand up or block start</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Has good foot speed</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Ability to start and finish a sprint event</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Sprints under control</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Likes to run fast</li> </ul>
<p>Starts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Performs a stand up sprint start</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates proper sprinting form</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Takes relaxed "On Your Mark" position in the starting blocks</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Takes balanced "Set" position in the starting blocks</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Performs a sprint start out of the starting position upon hearing start command</li> </ul>	<p>Hurdles</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Attempts to step over a low barrier</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Ability to step over a low obstacle while running</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Has good flexibility in hips</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Ability to start and finish a sprint</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Likes running over barriers</li> </ul>
<p>Middle Distance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Can run for 3 minutes at a steady pace</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Can run for 30 seconds at a fast pace</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Likes running 2-4 laps around track</li> </ul>	<p>Long Distance Running</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Runs in balanced and erect posture</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Runs with correct distance running form</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Ability to start and finish a 1600M race</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Ability to run at a certain pace</li> </ul>
<p>Relays</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Receives baton in a visual pass</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Performs an up-sweep/palm down baton pass</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Performs a down-sweep/palm up baton pass</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Performs baton pass in exchange zone</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Runs designated leg of relay race in proper manner</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Runs to teammate in proper lane</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Runs in lane while reaching back with designated arm</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Can run to teammate with baton</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Runs in lane while looking back at incoming runner</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Can run 100m/ 400m</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Likes running relays with teammates</li> </ul>	<p>Running Long Jump</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Performs a 9-step approach</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Performs a single leg takeoff</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates the step-style flight technique</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates the hang-style flight technique</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates proper landing technique</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Jumps on command and under control</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Can perform a good standing long jump</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Can locate his/her starting mark</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Can locate takeoff board</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Likes jumping into sand pit</li> </ul>
<p>Standing Long Jump</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Assumes a ready-to-jump position</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates the correct takeoff for a standing long jump</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates proper flight technique</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates proper landing technique</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Jumps on command and under control</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Athlete can perform two-leg takeoff</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Athlete likes jumping</li> </ul>	<p>High Jump</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Performs a 7-step approach for a flop style high jump</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Performs a flop style jump, landing on back</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Performs a scissor style high jump</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Performs a 7-step approach for a scissor-style high jump</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Jumps on command and under control</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Athlete can jump up into the air off one foot</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Athlete can take off with one foot and land in the pit</li> </ul>

	<input type="checkbox"/> Athlete can perform a consistent three-step approach <input type="checkbox"/> Athlete can perform a one-foot takeoff <input type="checkbox"/> Athlete can jump backward into the pit <input type="checkbox"/> Athlete can run on a curve <input type="checkbox"/> Athlete likes jumping
<b>Mini Javelin</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Grips the mini-javelin correctly <input type="checkbox"/> Performs a standing throw <input type="checkbox"/> Performs a one-step throw <input type="checkbox"/> Can perform a full 5-step run up and throw <input type="checkbox"/> Pulls the mini-javelin through, leading with the shoulder and elbow <input type="checkbox"/> Steps forward and holds hand above shoulder height <input type="checkbox"/> Releases the javelin at the correct height to ensure good flight. <input type="checkbox"/> Completes the follow through	<b>Shot Put</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Grips shot correctly <input type="checkbox"/> Takes a ready-to-put position <input type="checkbox"/> Performs a standing put, or wheelchair sitting put <input type="checkbox"/> Performs a sliding put <input type="checkbox"/> Performs a glide put <input type="checkbox"/> Puts shot in a forward direction <input type="checkbox"/> Puts shot in the shot put landing sector <input type="checkbox"/> Performs reverse or weight transfer <input type="checkbox"/> Can balance the shot in one hand using the correct grip <input type="checkbox"/> Can safely pick up and hold the shot in proper position <input type="checkbox"/> Likes putting the shot
<b>Wheelchair Racing</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Assumes a ready-to-race position <input type="checkbox"/> Performs a forward stroke and recovery <input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates ability to complete a wheelchair race <input type="checkbox"/> Races in a controlled manner <input type="checkbox"/> Likes wheelchair racing	<b>Softball Throw</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Grips a softball correctly <input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates proper overhand throwing technique <input type="checkbox"/> Throws softball on command <input type="checkbox"/> Throws softball in a forward direction <input type="checkbox"/> Throws softball in the softball marking area <input type="checkbox"/> Can properly grip softball in throwing hand <input type="checkbox"/> Can take a correct ready-to-throw position <input type="checkbox"/> Likes throwing a softball
<b>Race Walking</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Walks in a balanced and erect posture <input type="checkbox"/> Walks in proper form at low speeds <input type="checkbox"/> Walks at various speeds, slow-fast <input type="checkbox"/> Walks in competitive race walking form <input type="checkbox"/> Walks under control <input type="checkbox"/> Likes race walking	

## Tracking Your Athletes' Performances

### PERFORMANCE RECORD

As a coach, an important part of your role is to track the progress of your athletes. A performance record or log is a great way to do this. Not only is it a useful tool to have with you at competition, but it can also help motivate your athletes. It can help you to show them how much they have improved

over a period of time. Equally, it can help to indicate when an athlete's performance has plateaued. This may be a sign that the approach to training needs to change. Is the athlete bored with training? Have they lost motivation? Have your training sessions stopped challenging your athletes?

Coaching is a balancing act. You must provide opportunities for your athletes to both be challenged and to succeed. Too much of either may damage their motivation.

Here are some simple examples of a performance record. You do not need to complete this for every session. However, it is a great idea to record performances throughout the season. This should be both in training and competition situations. You can also share this with your athletes from time to time. Showing them how they have improved can be very motivating. Consider inviting them to keep their own training log. This will give them a sense of responsibility over their own training. Each coach should identify the best way for themselves to track the performances of their athletes.

## PERFORMANCE RECORD – EXAMPLE 1

In this example, the coach completes one page per training session or competition. Coaches can make additional notes. This means the coach needs just one page at a training session or competition. The disadvantage is that an athlete's records are spread across many pages. This can make it more difficult to monitor changes in performances. It can also be more difficult to arrange this information to support a protest against a Maximum Effort rule violation.

**Coach Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Training Session Date:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Time:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Venue:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Weather:** \_\_\_\_\_

Athlete Name	Event 1	Result 1	Event 2	Result 2	Electronic Time/ Stopwatch
Mary Smith	100m	18.23	200m	35.26	Electronic Timing
John Brown	400m Walk	1:32.5	Shot Put (4kg)	2.54m	Electronic Timing
Sarah Pitt	1500m	11.57			Stopwatch

**Additional Notes:**

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## PERFORMANCE RECORD – EXAMPLE 2

In this example the coach should have one page per athlete in a file. During training or competitions, the coach should record the athlete's performances. It can be helpful to note other information that might be relevant. Examples include the training venue; the weather (was it warm or cold? Was it windy?); How was the performance measured? Electronic Timing is more accurate than a stopwatch. Although coaches need one page per athlete in this example, it also means that all information is more easily accessible for each athlete during competition.

Coach Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Athlete Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date	Event 1	Performance 1	Weather	Indoor/Outdoor	Measured by
4/3/17	100m	20.6s	Cold	Indoor	Stopwatch
11/3/17	100m	21.2s	Cold	Indoor	Stopwatch
18/3/17	100m	20.8s	Cold	Indoor	Stopwatch
18/3/17	200m	41.4	Cold	Indoor	Stopwatch
25/3/17	100m	22.1s	Windy	Outdoor	Stopwatch
25/3/17	200m	43.8	Windy	Outdoor	Stopwatch
1/4/17	100m	20.1s	Mild	Outdoor	Stopwatch
1/4/17	200m	41.2	Mild	Outdoor	Stopwatch
1/4/17	100m	20.4s	Mild	Outdoor	Stopwatch
8/4/17	100m	20.36s	Mild	Outdoor	Electronic Timing
8/4/17	100m	20.45s	Mild	Outdoor	Electronic Timing
8/4/17	Long Jump	3.01m	Mild	Outdoor	Measuring Tape
8/4/17	200m	39.21s	Mild	Outdoor	Electronic Timing

## PERFORMANCE RECORD – EXAMPLE 3

This is the most detailed type of training record. The coach notes the athlete's name and event. They then provide a detailed description of the skills they are developing. The coach can keep note of successful drills or activities. They can also note which drills athletes found more challenging. While this is the most time consuming type of record to keep, it can also be a useful resource for the coach. It will help to not only track the athlete's progress, but their own development as a coach.

Event: Standing Long Jump

Athlete's  
Name

Joe Sky

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Skill: Flight Technique

Coach's Name Sam Jones

Skill Analysis	Dates and Coaching Methods	Coach Observations	Date Mastered
Perform proper flight technique for standing long jump			
Perform correct take-off behind take-off line or board.	5/31: Demonstration by coach. 5 Attempts: 3 moderately successful, 1 good, 1 did not complete	Re-measure take off distance Increase power of take-off.	6/13
Bring legs and upper body forward while in flight by piking hips			
Keep feet slightly apart and parallel during flight			
Holds head forward and focuses a couple of meters ahead			
Distance Jumped	June 30 <sup>th</sup>	Measured at 2.4m	

## CLOTHING AND FOOTWEAR

All competitors must wear suitable clothing and footwear for Athletics. You should talk with your athletes about what clothing is acceptable. Remember that this may be different for training and for competition.

Talk with your athletes about why the correct clothing and footwear is important. Explain that the correct attire can help them to perform at their best.

- Clothing should be suitable for the activity the athlete will do. This means:
- Comfortable clothing that does not restrict movement
- Suitable material (i.e. breathable, not denim)
- Well-fitted athletic shoes (Trainers, Spikes)\*
- Suitable for the conditions (i.e. weather, temperature, indoor/outdoor)

\* **Note: Barefoot running is permitted under the rules.**

At competition it is your job to ensure your athlete' clothing complies with the official Special Olympics Athletics rules.

## SHIRTS

Shirts should be:

- Comfortable
- Clean and Neat
- Allow freedom of movement. (A sleeveless shirt/vest gives a lot of freedom of movement. Athletes can wear a t-shirt underneath if desired.)
- Light fabric (T-shirts made of moisture wicking fabrics are preferred to cotton t-shirts. They allow the body and skin to stay cool and dry.)
- Suitable Length. (Shirts should be long enough to cover the torso but not to impede movement. Long shirts should be tucked into the waist band of shorts/pants)

## SHORTS

Shorts or tracksuit pants should be well fitting. They should not be too loose or baggy. They should be comfortable and allow freedom of movement. Some athletes may find running tights more comfortable.

## SOCKS

Athletics socks should be worn with any footwear. Well-fitting socks made of a breathable material will reduce moisture and may help prevent blisters and odour. They also support good foot hygiene and if cared for will last at least an entire season. They will also increase the life of the sports shoes.

## SHOES

A well-fitting running shoe is the most important item of clothing for any athletics athlete. Different sports require different shoes which are designed for both the movement of the athlete and the surface they will train upon. A good running shoe should have:

- A thick padded heel cushion. This may reduce incidence of shin splints, calluses and other lower limb injuries by absorbing impact.
- Thick durable rubber sole.
- A firm heel counter. This adds more stability and keeps the heel straight in the shoe.
- Good flexibility.
- Most importantly - a good fit!



Special Olympics Healthy Athletes Fit Feet Program provides great advice for proper foot care and footwear. Athletes should consider participating in Fit Feet screening when it is available. Ask your local Program for more information or visit our Healthy Athletes resource page [http://resources.specialolympics.org/Taxonomy/Health/Catalog\\_of\\_Fit\\_Feet\\_Resources.aspx](http://resources.specialolympics.org/Taxonomy/Health/Catalog_of_Fit_Feet_Resources.aspx)

## **WARM-UP CLOTHING**

Some athletes choose to wear track suits warming up prior to their training session or competition. They may also be used to help athletes to stay warm after a practice or competition.

Track suits/warm-up clothing should be:

- Light to medium weight
- Cotton sweatshirt or moisture wicking material
- Easily removed and put on
- Labelled with athlete's name (it is easy to lose kit when many people train together!)

Consider the weather and location of training/competition. Warm-up clothing may be heavier in cold weather. In wet weather you may need to consider waterproof or water resistant material. Nylon windbreakers are also a good choice for retaining warmth and keeping the athlete dry, windy weather.

## **TOP TIPS - CLOTHING AND FOOTWEAR**

Show your athletes examples of the correct attire (Photos, Videos)

Bring them to another team practices to see the athletes in action

Agree with your athletes what action you will take if they attend training without the correct attire.

Lead by example. Always wear suitable attire to training and competition.

## **ATHLETICS EQUIPMENT**

Track and Field Athletics has many events. Each event needs specific equipment. It is important that athletes train with the correct equipment for their event. Athletes should be able to recognize and select the correct equipment for their event. Practice identifying and naming each piece of equipment with your athletes during training. Encourage them to select the equipment they need at training. Remember that your athletes will need to be able to select their equipment independently at competitions.

## **TIMING DEVICES**

When timing your athletes in training or competition, accuracy is important.

You can do this manually, using an electric or digital stopwatch. Manual times are recorded in one tenth (1/10) of a second. This is the case even if the stopwatch displays one-hundredth (1/100) of a second.

A fully automatic timing (FAT) system may be used at some competitions. When FAT is used, times are recorded in one one-hundredth (1/100) of a second.

As coach, it is your duty to regularly record accurate times for all of your athletes.

## STARTING PISTOL



A starting pistol is used in most Athletics competition. It should also be used during training sessions. This helps to familiarize athletes with the gun before in a competitive event. A good start is important in any race and it takes practice to improve. In some situations a replacement may be permissible. Suitable replacements for the gun are a bell (mandatory in an indoor track), whistle or verbal start. You must discuss this with competition management before any event. A coach may use other replacements in practices only and not during competition.

## STARTING BLOCKS

The use of starting blocks is optional. The starting blocks must be anchored behind the start line. When in the start position, the athlete's hands are set just behind the start line. The blocks must be adjustable to allow the athlete to find the best starting position.



## HURDLES

Use hurdles that suit the ability of your athletes. Use practice hurdles when you introduce the basic technique of hurdling. Practice hurdles are collapsible or designed to fall over easily. If you cannot access specifically designed beginner or practice hurdles, you can improvise. A light stick balanced on cones of the correct height is a great alternative. Competition hurdles should only be used when athletes can hurdle with good, basic technique.

## RELAY BATON

Each relay team needs one relay baton. Competition batons should be 10cm in circumference. They may be made of anodized aluminum, or lightweight, unbreakable plastic. For practice, you can improvise. The following materials cut into 30cm lengths, with smooth edges could be used: dowels, old broom handles, or PVC pipe.



## LONG JUMP PIT

You must ensure the running long jump pit is safe for all of your athletes. Here are some important tips.

Ensure there is sufficient sand in the pit for a safe landing. It should have a depth of at least 30 cm of sand.

You must ensure the depth of sand is maintained during training and competition. Remember, each time an athlete jumps into the pit will displace some sand. Regular brushing and raking of the sand is important.

The landing pit must be long and wide enough to ensure a safe landing for all athletes.

A standard takeoff board is often more than 2m from the edge of the pit. In this case, you may need to put a temporary takeoff board/chalk line in the runway 1m from the front edge of the pit.

The long jump pit should meet IAAF requirements.

## HIGH JUMP PIT

The high jump pit consists of:

- Landing mats (should cover a minimum area and depth of 500 x 250 x 50cm). Only approved and certified high jump mats may be used; pits made of other materials (such as gym mats) are not acceptable.
- 1 pair of adjustable standards
- A crossbar (the ideal practice crossbar is a fiber glass crossbar)

## Shots

Special Olympics Athletics rules permit outdoor shots (iron) or indoor shots (covered with hard plastic) for use in competitions. However, the minimum weight requirements will be applied as listed below:

Category	Males:	Females
12+	4.0 kg	3.0 kg
8-11	3.0 kg	2.0 kg
Wheelchair	2.0 kg	2.0 kg



## SOFTBALLS

The official size for softballs is 30 cm and weight (blue dot, traditional flight). Tennis balls may be used by athletes for whom the softball is still too challenging. These events are developmental throwing events

Some competitions will have a maximum distance in place for these events.

## MINI-JAVELINS

Mini-javelins are made of rigid, plastic material. It has a shaft, a grip, and fins (see image). The tip is made of softer rubber with a blunt, rounded end. The mini-javelin is a safer alternative to an outdoor javelin. The following minimum weight requirements apply:

Category	Males:	Females
16+	400g	300g
8-15	300g	300g
Pentathlon Event	300g	300g



## MENTAL PREPARATION AND TRAINING

Skill learning and tactical training on the field of play are just two elements of training in any sport. More and more athletes and coaches use mental training elements to complement their physical training. To find out more, refer to the sport psychology coaching guide on [resources.specialolympics.org](http://resources.specialolympics.org)

Special Olympics Healthy Athletes Strong Minds Program provides great advice wellness and mindfulness. Athletes should consider visiting the Strong Minds program at Healthy Athletes events when it is available. Ask your local Program for more information or visit our Healthy Athletes resource page [www.resources.specialolympics.org](http://www.resources.specialolympics.org)

## FITNESS IN ATHLETICS

Cross training is when similar, but different mode of exercise is incorporated into an athlete's training in order to improve fitness or performance for the athlete's main sport. For example, in athletics, this might include cycling, rowing, aerobics or swimming because all of these activities help improve endurance.

It helps to improve the athlete's conditioning, but reduces the impact on the muscles and joints which are heavily used in their sport. Cross training can be done during the sports season to increase the amount of training days or in the off-season to help the athlete maintain fitness for their sport. It is also a great way of introducing variety and creating fun alternative activities for athletes.

Cross training can also play an important role in the development of fitness. You can find out lots more about Fitness by:

Visiting our Fitness section on the resources webpages

Checking out our exciting Fit 5 Exercise cards and information  
[http://resources.specialolympics.org/Fitness-Cards/#.WK7Ae\\_LpU-k](http://resources.specialolympics.org/Fitness-Cards/#.WK7Ae_LpU-k)

Visit the FUN Fitness information on our Healthy Athletes resource page

Athletes and coaches should also consider visiting the FUN Fitness program at Healthy Athletes events when it is available. Ask your local Special Olympics Program for more information.

## FIT 5

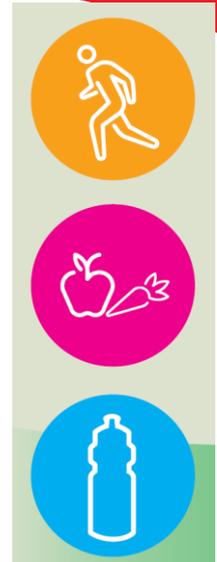
Fit 5 is a guide to achieving fitness and your personal best with physical activity, nutrition and hydration. It is based on the three simple goals of exercising 5 days per week, eating 5 total fruits and vegetables per day and drinking 5 water bottles of water per day. The guide provides tips and recommendations for achieving these goals and includes a fitness tracker to record progress. Athletes want to perform their best at every competition. They can do this by being fit. The Fit 5 plan will help them improve their health and fitness to make them the best athlete they can be.



### FITNESS CARDS

The fitness cards demonstrate how to do various exercises on endurance, strength and flexibility. They can be incorporated into practice or given to athletes to complete at home. The cards depict Special Olympics athletes completing the exercises along with written descriptions of how to properly perform the exercises. Videos of these exercises can also be found on the fitness resources page. The cards are leveled 1 through 5 with 5 being the most challenging. There are instructions on how and when to safely advance to the more challenging exercises. The cards and levels are designed to be mixed based on ability and allow for creativity in creating training programs to improve your fitness.

[http://resources.specialolympics.org/Fitness-Cards/#.WK7Ae\\_LpU-k](http://resources.specialolympics.org/Fitness-Cards/#.WK7Ae_LpU-k)



Special Olympics Healthy Athletes program also offers a FUN Fitness program. FUNfitness provides fitness screening and education services. Athletes can be assessed for flexibility, functional strength, balance and aerobic condition. Athletes and coaches can also receive information on how to improve performance and recommendations for maintaining an active lifestyle. Athletes and Coaches should consider visiting the FUN Fitness program at Healthy Athletes events when it is available. Ask your local Program for more information or visit our FUN Fitness pages

[http://resources.specialolympics.org/Taxonomy/Health/\\_Catalog\\_of\\_FUNfitness\\_Resources.aspx](http://resources.specialolympics.org/Taxonomy/Health/_Catalog_of_FUNfitness_Resources.aspx)

## TEACHING THE RULES OF ATHLETICS

The best time to teach the rules of athletics is during training sessions. E.g. Coach Andy is teaching a hand-off in relays. Coach Andy begins by explaining the main coaching points. In practice, he ensures the athletes make legal baton exchanges. Coach Andy also explains to his athletes why the exchange must be in the zone.

As coach, it is your job to know the rules of your sport. These include:

- Official Special Olympics Athletics Rules.
- Special Olympics Sports Rules Article 1. (Rule 11 the Maximum Effort Rule is very important)
- International Association of Athletics Federations rules of competition [www.iaaf.org](http://www.iaaf.org)

The Special Olympics Athletics rules were developed and modified for Special Olympics competitions based on IAAF rules. You AND your athletes must know the rules of their events. Some important event-specific rules are listed below. An athlete may be disqualified for breaking these, and other, rules.

## **GENERAL RULES FOR THE RUNNING EVENTS**

1. One false start per race is allowed without disqualification of the athlete who false started. The next athlete who false starts in the race will be disqualified.
2. Events run in lanes. Runner must remain in lane for the full race or from the start to the break-line.
3. Athletes are not automatically disqualified for leaving assigned lanes if no advantage is gained.
4. Runner must start behind the start line.
5. A runner will be disqualified if he impedes another runner's progress and gains an unfair advantage. This may be by obstructing, jostling or interfering. This may include accidental incidents.
6. Runner must wear trainers or athletic shoes. Barefoot is also acceptable.

## **GENERAL RULES FOR THE RELAY EVENTS**

1. Runners must pass the baton within the exchange zone.
2. Runners may not throw the baton to make a pass.
3. Runners must remain in their lanes throughout the 4x100 meter relay race.
4. Runners will be disqualified if they obstruct, impede or interfere with another runner's progress.
5. Within the takeover zone, the position of the baton is decisive not the position of the athlete.
6. Lane running in the 4x400M relay. The first leg is run in lanes. The second leg is run in lanes through the first turn. Athletes can break lanes at this point. Third and fourth legs are not run in lanes.

## **GENERAL RULES FOR THE LONG JUMP**

1. Always start behind the takeoff line.
2. The best of three non-consecutive jumps will be marked as the final score.
3. Measurement of distance shall be perpendicular to the nearest edge of takeoff board to the nearest break in the sand made by any part of the athlete or anything attached to the athlete.
4. Exit pit from the sides or forward. A foul will be called if an athlete walks back toward the runway, through their mark and crossing over the take-off line.
5. Long jump athletes must be able to jump at least 1m. This is the minimum distance between the toe board and sand pit.
6. Standing long jump athletes must jump simultaneously with both feet.

## **GENERAL RULES FOR THE HIGH JUMP**

1. Do not dive over the bar in competition or warm-up for competition.
2. If an athlete decides not to jump during their approach, they must stop. If time remains, they may restart their approach. If they have touched the pit, standards or bar or crossed the horizontal plane a foul will be called and they may not restart.
3. High jumps of any style must be made from a one-foot take-off. Do not take off from both feet.
4. Exit the pit from the sides or the rear.

5. Three consecutive fouls will determine final placement. Final score is last height cleared.
6. If two or more athletes are tied after a count back of failures, the result will be declared a tie. There will be no jump-off.
7. Athletes must be able to clear at least 1m to enter competition. The minimum opening height for all high-jump competitions is 1.00m.

## **GENERAL RULES FOR THE THROWING EVENTS**

1. Use an official size and weight softball, tennis ball or shot.
2. Enter and exit the back of the throwing ring/circle or area.
3. Throw the softball or tennis ball in any manner.
4. The best of three non-consecutive throws will be marked as the final score.
5. Do not step on or over the softball/javelin throw foul line.
6. Do not step on or over the shot-put stop board.
7. Shot Put:
  - A legal put must be initiated with one hand, from in close proximity to the neck or chin.
  - The hand must not drop below this position during the put.
  - The hand must not be taken behind the line of the shoulders.
8. Mini-javelin:
  - The mini-javelin must be held by the grip with one hand only.
  - It must be thrown over the shoulder or upper part of the throwing arm.
  - It may not be slung or hurled.
  - No competitor may turn completely around so that his/her back is towards the throwing area.

## **GENERAL RULES FOR THE WHEELCHAIR RACING**

1. Wheelchair athletes must start races with the front wheels behind the start line.
2. Motorized wheelchairs shall not be allowed in non-motorized wheelchair events.
3. All other running rules apply.

## **MAXIMUM EFFORT RULE**

Athletes must participate honestly and with maximum effort at all times. This includes all divisioning and/or final competition rounds. If an athlete/team competes with less than best effort to secure a place in a lower division, they may be disqualified.

## **IMPROVED PERFORMANCE**

Head Coaches must ensure that divisioning scores for their athletes reflect their ability. After divisioning, head coaches must verify that athletes' performances reflect their abilities. If this is not the case, the coach must submit an improved performance form. Coaching Tip: Bring a record of athletes' entry times/ performances to competition. This can be support a protest against a Maximum Effort Rule violation.

## UNIFIED SPORTS® RULES

1. There are some specific Unified Sports® competition rules which apply in athletics. These apply for Unified Relays or Unified Sports® Team Athletics. Please refer to the Official Special Olympics Athletics Rules.
2. Team rosters must have an equal number of athletes and partners.
3. Teams must have an adult coach. Player-coaches are not allowed.

## PROTESTS AND APPEALS

The rules of competition govern protest procedures. The competition management team enforces these rules. At competition, only the head coach can protest on behalf of an athlete. You must be familiar with the rules and know what you can protest. Sports Rules Article 1 will give you all of this information. Remember! You cannot make a protest simply because the athlete did not get their desired result. You must cite the specific rule violation/misapplication. Making a protest is a serious matter. It takes time to process and this impacts a competition's schedule.

Before competition, make sure you know the protest procedures for that competition.

## SPORTSMANSHIP

Coaches and athletes who commit to good sportsmanship place value on:

- Fair play
- Ethical behavior
- Integrity
- Respect.

## TOP TIPS FOR DEVELOPING GOOD SPORTSMANSHIP

Here are some simple ideas you can use to foster sportsmanship with your athletes. These tips apply to athletes and coaches alike.

- Be a role model.
- Give your best effort during each event/training session.
- Train as you would like to compete.
- Always finish your event. Never quit (Unless you get injured).
- Fair Play at All Times, stick to the rules.
- Respect your teammates
- Respect your opponents
- Respect the decision of the officials at all times

# ATHLETICS PROTOCOL & ETIQUETTE

## EXPECTATIONS OF COACHES

1. Be a role model. Set a good example for athletes and fans to follow.
2. Give athletes direction on the responsibilities of being a good sportsman. Insist that sportsmanship is a priority.
3. Respect the judgment of officials. Abide by rules of the competition. Never behave in a way that could incite fans.
4. If your athlete has not performed as usual in divisioning, submit an Improved Performance form.
5. Treat other coaches, athletes, fans with respect. This includes opponents!
6. Shake hands with officials and the opposing coach in public.
7. Develop and implement sanctions for athletes or coaches who do not behave in a sportsmanlike way.
8. Read, sign and abide by the Special Olympics Coaches' Code of Conduct.

## EXPECTATIONS OF OFFICIALS

1. Ensure that every athlete receives courteous, objective and impartial officiating.
2. Be consistent in applying the rules of the sport to all competitors.
3. Know the current Official Special Olympics Athletics Rules and IAAF rules.
4. Treat every competition as a prestigious and important event.
5. Maintain a calm demeanor. Refrain from actions that draw attention away from the athlete.
6. Take appropriate steps to ensure that every athlete has a fair chance to compete.
7. Always keep the safety of all participants to the forefront.



## EXPECTATIONS OF ATHLETES AND PARTNERS IN UNIFIED SPORTS

1. Treat teammates with respect.
2. Encourage teammates when they make a mistake.
3. Treat opponents with respect: shake hands prior to and after contests.
4. Respect judgment of officials. Abide by rules. Never behave in a way that could incite fans or others.
5. Cooperate with officials, coaches and others to conduct a fair contest.
6. Do not retaliate in any way if opponents show poor behavior.
7. Accept seriously the responsibility and privilege of representing Special Olympics.
8. Define winning as doing your personal best.

9. Uphold the high standard of sportsmanship established by your coach.
10. Read, sign, and abide by the Special Olympics Athletes' Code of Conduct.

### **TOP TIPS FOR COACHING ATHLETES ON PROTOCOL AND ETIQUETTE**

1. Discuss examples of athletics etiquette.
2. Congratulate opponents after events, win or lose.
3. Control temper and behavior at all times.
4. Shake hands with officials.
5. Teach waiting for one's turn in field events.
6. Teach staying in lane during running events. Emphasis this when moving from the second curve to the straight-away. Remind athletes to follow the dotted lines.
7. Recognize good sportsmanship.
8. Give sportsmanship awards competitions or training sessions.
9. Commend the athletes when they demonstrate good sportsmanship.

### **REMEMBER**

1. Sportsmanship is an attitude. You show it in that is shown in how you and your athletes act on and off the field of play.
2. Be positive about competing.
3. Respect your opponents and yourself.
4. Always stay under control even if you are feeling mad or angry.

Term	Definition
<b>ANCHOR LEG</b>	The final or fourth leg of a relay race.
<b>APPROACH</b>	The run-up made by an athlete before performing the actual skill, i.e. long jumping, high jumping.
<b>BATON</b>	Tubular object carried by and passed between members of a relay team.
<b>BLIND PASS</b>	Passing the baton in a relay race with the outgoing runner receiving the baton from the incoming runner without looking at the exchange.
<b>CHUTE</b>	An extension of the straight-away on an oval or semi-oval track.
<b>CIRCLE</b>	The competition area for the shot put.
<b>CROSSBAR</b>	The bar, which can be raised and lowered, that is placed between two standards for the high jump.
<b>CROUCH START</b>	The all-fours position of a runner at the start of a sprint.
<b>DEAD HEAT</b>	When two or more runners cross the finish line simultaneously, resulting in a tie.
<b>DID NOT FINISH (DNF)</b>	When an athlete starts a race, but drops out before crossing the finish line.
<b>DISQUALIFICATION (DQ)</b>	When an athlete violates a rule, does not show up for a scheduled event, or gains an unfair advantage by impeding or interfering.
<b>DRIVE LEG</b>	The leg that exerts the force during a stride or takeoff.
<b>EXCHANGE ZONE</b>	The 20M-long zone in which the baton must be passed from the incoming runner to the outgoing runner during a relay race.
<b>FALSE START</b>	Leaving the starting blocks before the start command.
<b>FARTLEK</b>	A Swedish term meaning speed play. A type of workout which requires the runner while on a continuous run to use fast, moderate, or slow periods of running alternated as desired by the runner. This workout is both aerobic and anaerobic.
<b>FIELD</b>	Participation area for field events.
<b>FOOT STRIKE</b>	Striking the ground with the foot supplying the mechanical force that propels the body forward.
<b>FOUL</b>	An infraction of a rule.
<b>FRONT RUNNER</b>	An athlete who is leading a race, thus setting the pace.
<b>GRIP</b>	The hand position of a throwing implement.

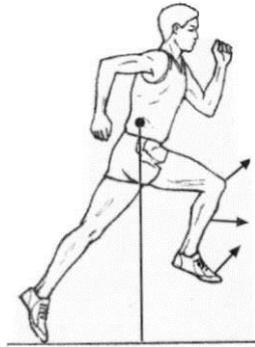
Term	Definition
<b>HANDOFF</b>	The exchange or pass of the baton between the incoming and outgoing runners of a relay team.
<b>HEAD WIND</b>	Direction of the wind blowing toward the athletes.
<b>HEAT</b>	A grouping of athletes for competition.
<b>INTERVAL TRAINING</b>	Alternating runs at maximum effort for specified times (usually 2-5 minutes) with "recovery" periods of jogging. Usually the period of rest is equal to the period of the run. This is an aerobic workout.
<b>JOGGING</b>	Running at a slow pace.
<b>KICK</b>	Acceleration of pace; leg speed at the end of a race.
<b>LEAD LEG</b>	First leg to leave the ground in jumping or hurdling.
<b>LEAD-OFF LEG</b>	First runner on a relay team.
<b>MARKS</b>	An athlete's starting point for a race or a jump.
<b>OVER DISTANCE</b>	Steady pace running in excess of 10 minutes in duration and the basis of any distance running or walking program. This is an aerobic workout. This is the only type of workout carried on year-round. Long Slow Distance (LSD) running is accomplished at a pace approximately 65 percent of VO <sub>2</sub> Max.
<b>PACE</b>	The rate of covering a specific distance while running or walking.
<b>PASSER</b>	The relay runner who hands off the baton.
<b>PASSING</b>	When an athlete declines to attempt a jump or throw when it is his turn.
<b>PIT</b>	The landing area for long jumpers and high jumpers, usually filled with sand or sawdust (long jump) or synthetic materials (high jump).
<b>RECEIVER</b>	The athlete who receives the baton in a relay race.
<b>SCRATCH LINE</b>	The restraining line which cannot be crossed in throwing and jumping events.
<b>SECTOR</b>	The landing area for the shot put and softball throw.
<b>SET</b>	A group of repetitions followed by a rest period.
<b>SHOT PUT</b>	Iron, plastic or brass spheres used for shot put competition.
<b>SPRINT TRAINING</b>	Repeated quality runs (in excess of 75 percent of the runner's basic speed) of 50-150m with rest periods that allow complete recovery. This is an anaerobic workout.

Term	Definition
<b>STAGGERED START</b>	The start used for the 200M, 400M, 800M, 4x100M and 4x400M relay races, in which the runners are positioned at different points around the curve of the track.
<b>STANCE</b>	An athlete's particular starting position.
<b>STARTING BLOCKS</b>	Metal blocks set on the track behind the start line, used to support the athlete's feet for all sprints.
<b>STRAIGHT-AWAY</b>	Straight area of a track from one curve to the next.
<b>STRIDE</b>	Distance covered by an athlete's leg cycle while running.
<b>TAKEOFF</b>	The act of leaving the ground.
<b>TAKEOFF FOOT</b>	Foot from which the athlete propels himself off the ground.
<b>TAKEOFF MARK</b>	Spot from which the athlete leaves the ground.
<b>TECHNIQUE</b>	The form used by an athlete to perform a skill.
<b>TOE-BOARD</b>	A restraining board, which the athlete may not cross over, used in the shot put.
<b>VISUAL PASS</b>	A relay pass with the outgoing runner receiving the baton from the incoming runner while looking back at the other runner and baton during the exchange.
<b>WARM-UP</b>	The gradual process of raising the body temperature and loosening muscles prior to strenuous exercise.

## OVERVIEW: BASIC MECHANICS OF RUNNING

Special Olympics athletes are, first and foremost, athletes. The basics of running mechanics are the same as for any athlete. Remember that some of your athletes may have physical impairments. You may need to work with them to adapt their running technique. As a coach, you may also need to adapt your coaching methods. You can best support your athletes learning by:

- Recognizing and understand their abilities.
- Making simple change to techniques and drills.
- Continue to challenge them AND give them a chance to experience success.



**Sprinter**



**Distance Runner**

## **Coaching Points – Basic Running Mechanics**

1. The quicker the foot strikes the ground, the faster the athlete runs.
2. When running fast, the heel must be lifted high under buttock.
3. Leg turnover and stride length determine the speed at which an athlete runs.
4. Getting Into Proper Running Form
5. Take a Hips Tall position with your trunk and head directly above the hips.
6. Let arms hang loosely at the sides of your body.
7. Close hands loosely with the thumbs up.
8. Lean forward slightly; bend ankles until body weight is centered on balls of feet.
9. Bend arms; bring hands to top of hips forming a 90-degree angle between lower and upper arms.
10. Keep head in a neutral position, looking forward, with facial muscles relaxed.

## **Top Tips for Coaching Basic Running Mechanics (Skill Development)**

1. Demonstrate the ideal running position. Ensure you keep the hips tall position and emphasize relaxed shoulders and arms.
2. Ask your athletes to walk with quick steps on balls of their feet.
3. Emphasize the foot striking the ground under the runner's body, not ahead of it.
4. Ask your athletes to run straight at you. Watch to ensure their shoulders stay parallel to ground and their upper body is not twisting back and forth.
5. Invite athletes to stand facing you or a partner. Ask them to mirror your body position.
6. Use a stick or broom handle to demonstrate upright position.
7. Video playback can be a great tool to review your athletes' body position. Show your athlete footage of themselves running and point out areas for praise and for improvement.
8. You can never do too much basic running drill work.
9. Encourage your athletes to train at least 2-3 days at home.
10. Be patient.

## **OVERVIEW: STARTS**

A good start is vital in any track event. It does not matter what the distance is. The basics of a start in Special Olympics is the same as any athletics event. However, you may need to vary how you

coach the start to meet your athletes' learning needs. The type of start your athlete uses may also be impacted by their ability.

Sprint races usually begin with a block start. In Special Olympics sprint events (up to 400m), athletes may use a stand up start or a block. Some athletes may not be able to use blocks due to balance or mobility limitations. Assess each athlete individually. Identify the start type that is best for them. Remember to challenge them too! In distance events, all athletes use the stand-up start. Make sure you know the specific rules related to starts.

The start involves 2 or 3 fundamental commands.

On your mark

Set (only in races from 400m upwards)

Go

Note that "Go" is usually a starter's pistol or whistle. You may need to adapt the start for visually or hearing impaired athletes.

### Block Start

Each athlete should set the blocks in a way that is comfortable to him/her. Coaches and athlete should discuss whether to use blocks. If they will use blocks they should agree when and how often to train on the blocks. Communication between athlete and coach, as ever, is vital. Coaches should always remember that an athlete's physical ability and range of motion may impact their ability to use a block start.

## SETTING THE BLOCKS

1. Align the blocks in the direction of start.
2. Place the Starting block 1 foot length from the Start line (Block Start 1)
3. Place the front pedal 2 foot lengths from the start line (Block Start 2, Block Start 3)
4. Place the rear pedal 2 and a half to 3 foot lengths from the start line or 1 foot length from the front pedal (Block Start 4)



Block Start 1



Block Start 2



Block Start 3



Block Start 4

**NOTE:** You may need to adjust the blocks based on your athletes' preference. This describes a good starting point for block setting. With practice you can help your athlete to identify and record how to set up their blocks.

## Coaching Points - Block Starts

1. Special Olympics athletes use the same standard block setting as other athletes. Coaches should consider the ability of athletes to set their own blocks. You can develop a strategy or routine with your athletes to help them set their own blocks.
  - Athletes must be able to remain still in "On Your Mark" position.



2. Athletes should distribute weight evenly over their hands and back knee.
3. Athletes must be able to take and hold a balanced "Set" position. This includes holding his/her weight on their hands behind the start line.
4. On the Starter pistol athlete steps forward with rear foot first into run.



## Coaching Points - Stand Start Training

### Using a 2 command Start: “On your Mark”, Starter Pistol

1. Before the “On your mark” command, the athlete’s weight should be on their back foot.
2. On the “On your mark” command, the athlete shifts their weight to the front foot.
3. Athlete assumes the racing position and awaits the starter pistol.
4. On the Starter pistol signal they run.



### Using a 3 command Start: “On your Mark”, “Set”, Gun

1. Athlete assumes the same initial position (weight on back foot).
2. Between the “On Your Mark” and “Set” commands, the athlete shifts their weight from back to front foot.
3. Athlete assumes the racing position and awaits the starter pistol.
4. On the starter pistol signal they run.

## Insert 2.11 Stand Start Video

## Training Drills for Starts

<b>Drill</b>	Partner Push Drill	<b>Purpose</b>	Develop arm and leg drive Allow coach to evaluate efficiency of athlete’s start
<b>Reps:</b>	8 x 3-4 steps	<b>When to Use</b>	Beginning of Skill work
<b>Teaching Points</b>			
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Take proper set position.</li> <li>2. Coach stands in front of athlete.</li> <li>3. Coach places hands on athlete’s shoulders.</li> <li>4. On command, athlete drives explosively into a fully extended position.</li> <li>5. Coach provides resistance and support</li> </ol>			
<b>Points of Emphasis</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Powerful and Explosive knee drive</li> <li>• Strong thrusting arm action</li> </ul>			

<b>Drill</b>	8 Step Drill	<b>Purpose</b>	Increase strength and power of start Develop explosive movement patterns Develop consistency in foot strike and leg frequency
<b>Reps:</b>	8 x 8 steps	<b>When to Use</b>	Beginning of Skill work
<b>Teaching Points</b>			
1. Begin from a start command 2. Drive out of blocks taking only 8 steps			
<b>Points of Emphasis</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Decrease in time over distance</li> <li>• Powerful and explosive coordination of arm and leg action</li> </ul>			

<b>Drill</b>	Partner Up Start Drill	<b>Purpose</b>	Improve arm strength and coordination Improve reaction time to start command or sound of pistol
<b>Reps:</b>	8 x 5-10 steps	<b>When to Use</b>	Beginning of Skill work
<b>Teaching Points</b>			
1. Take regular push up position 2. Lower knees to track 3. Move power leg forward. 4. Move rear foot about 12 inches behind front foot 5. On command, execute start.			
<b>Points of Emphasis</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quick knee drive - explosiveness</li> </ul>			

## TOP TIPS FOR COACHING BLOCK STARTS (SKILL DEVELOPMENT)

1. Practice setting the blocks several times. Develop a strategy with your athlete for setting blocks.
2. Front leg pushes back forcefully to provide needed drive out of blocks.
3. Body moves both forward and upward.
4. Do repeat starts for 10, 20 and 30 meters while maintaining good sprinting form.
5. Concentrate on reacting to the sound of start command.
6. Emphasize using arm action to get out of blocks quickly.
7. Emphasize using force against ground or block pedal.
8. Emphasize that the back foot needs to go beyond starting line on first step.
9. Place colored tape two meters in front of start line on which athlete can focus.
10. Emphasize first moving back foot forward and front arm back.
11. Practice moving arms and back foot at sound of pistol or start command.
12. With your athlete's permission, you may need to physically move their feet and arms into the correct position. This should only be as they learn the skill. For competition they must be able to perform a block start independently.
13. To practice drive (athlete's forward leg pushing against block) out of the blocks, have athlete jump into air from set position and jump in the air and land in set position.

# TOP TIPS FOR BLOCK STARTS AT COMPETITION

## Remind your athletes to:

1. Raise their hand to the official if they are having trouble with setting their blocks.
2. Take time to set the blocks correctly.
3. Back into their blocks.
4. Develop a routine. Practice it. Repeat it at competition.
5. Relax – breathe.

## Sprinting Key Skills Checklist

### YOUR ATHLETE CAN

- Perform a stand-up or block start
- Maintain erect posture with hips tall
- Push off the track with balls of feet
- Move foot backward under body upon landing
- Drive knees up so thigh is parallel (horizontal) to track
- Maintain high heel recovery as drive foot leaves ground
- Maintain tall posture, with slight forward body lean from ground, not from waist
- Swing arms forward and back without rotating shoulders
- Keep feet flexed, toes up
- Sprint under control for entire race

### OVERVIEW: THE SPRINTS (100M-400M)

Power and coordination are important elements in producing speed. We can improve speed through good running mechanics and coordination. Read the "Basics of Running Mechanics" section for more information.

Speed is determined by two main factors. These are:

- Stride Length (Length of each step)
- Stride Frequency (How often steps are made)
- Improving both of these factors will increase your speed.

A sprint has four main phases:

- The start,
- Acceleration,
- Maintaining momentum
- The finish.

Coaches must break down each phase to help athletes understand and learn.

### START PHASE

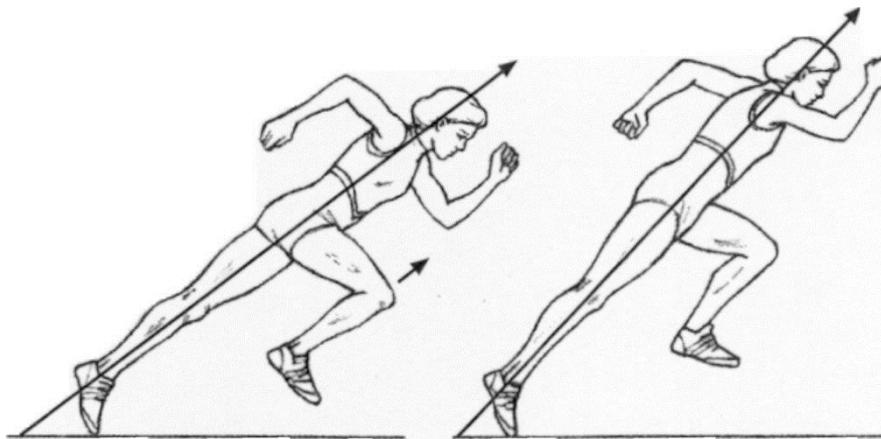
Read the "Starts" section for more information.

## Coaching Points for Phases of Sprinting

### COACHING POINTS - ACCELERATING PHASE

After the Start, the accelerating phase begins.

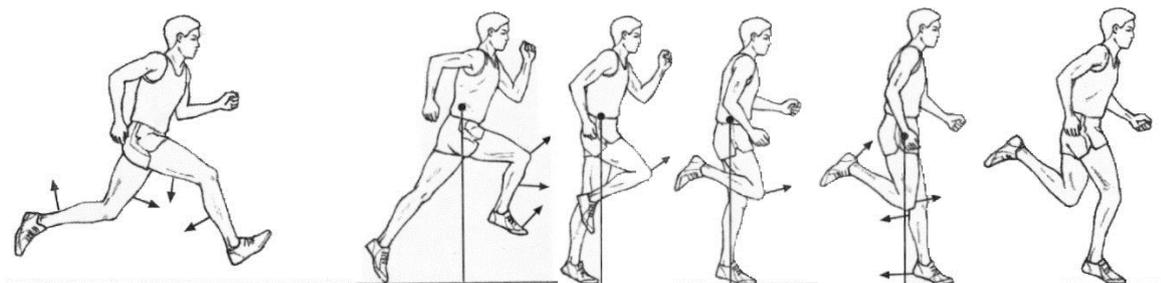
1. Acceleration is created by driving or pushing with the drive leg until it is straight.
2. The free leg drives low and fast the pace the foot under the body's center of gravity.
3. The athlete must lean forward. The more the athlete leans forward, the more acceleration they create.
4. Vigorous arm action helps keep balance, rhythm and relaxation.
5. It is helpful to show athletes a good demonstration, photos or videos of this skill. This can help them to better understand what they must do.



### COACHING POINTS - MAINTAINING MOMENTUM PHASE

In this phase, the focus is on maintaining speed.

1. The athlete must combine good basic mechanics with the speed they created in the accelerating phase.
2. The key focus areas are as follows:
  - a. Posture/Body Position
  - b. Head Position
  - c. Arm Action
  - d. Leg Action



## COACHING POINTS - FINISH PHASE

This is a very important skill to practice. The point at which the athlete's chest crosses the line determines their final time. While sprinting toward the finish line, the athlete should have good running posture and a normal stride action.

In the final strides of the race, the athlete should:

- Run through and not to the finish line. Coaches can help athletes to learn this by asking athletes to pretend that the finish is a few meters beyond where it really is. This encourages them to maintain their momentum
- The athlete should lunge forward and lean through finish line.
- Coaches can create different scenarios to help learning. E.g. Place people standing in different areas at the finish line. This helps athletes to experience the reality of a race finish and to practice in a competition like situation

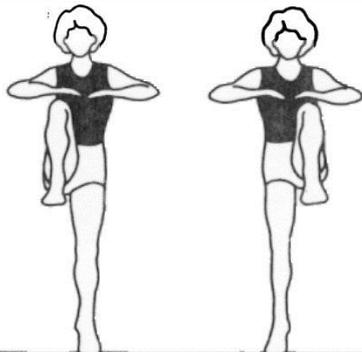


## Training Drills for Sprinting

<b>Drill</b>	Skips	<b>Purpose</b>	Develop quick leg action Develop consistency in proper foot strike
<b>Reps:</b>	3x30m	<b>When to Use</b>	Warm Up
<b>Teaching Points</b>			
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Take hips tall position</li> <li>2. Bend and drive one leg up</li> <li>3. Extend leg from knee</li> <li>4. Drive leg down on ball of foot.</li> <li>5. Alternate legs every other skip.</li> <li>6. Jog back to start</li> <li>7. Repeat.</li> </ol>			
<b>Points of Emphasis</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Heel drive to buttocks</li> </ul>			

<b>Drill</b>	Quick Step Running	<b>Purpose</b>	Develop quick leg action over distance
<b>Reps:</b>	3x30m	<b>When to Use</b>	Warm Up
<b>Teaching Points</b>			
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Take hips tall position</li> <li>2. Run in place, bringing heels up and under buttocks.</li> <li>3. Run forward using medium length strides</li> <li>4. Use low knee lift.</li> <li>5. Carry upper body erect. Slight forward lean.</li> <li>6. Hold head level, slightly forward.</li> <li>7. Keep relaxed arm action.</li> <li>8. Maintain a smooth pace throughout run.</li> <li>9. Walking lunges back to the start point.</li> <li>10. Repeat.</li> </ol>			
<b>Points of Emphasis</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lead with knee then extend leg</li> <li>• Foot is flexed</li> <li>• Leg drive down is very fast</li> </ul>			

<b>Drill</b>	Fast Leg Drill	<b>Purpose</b>	Develop quick foot and leg action
<b>Reps:</b>	3 x 10-15 seconds	<b>When to Use</b>	Warm Up
<b>Teaching Points</b>			
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Take hips tall position.</li> <li>2. Quickly alternate driving knees up.</li> </ol>			
<b>Points of Emphasis</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quickness in legs and arms</li> <li>• Little ground time.</li> </ul>			

<b>Drill</b>	Knee Claps	<b>Purpose</b>	Develop straight forward running position Develop proper body balance
<b>Reps:</b>	3x30m	<b>When to Use</b>	Warm Up
<b>Teaching Points</b>			
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Take hips tall position.</li> <li>2. Hand raised chest high. Palms open, facing down with elbows bent.</li> <li>3. Drive knee to palm with quick leg action.</li> <li>4. Alternate legs</li> <li>5. Walking lunges back to starting point.</li> </ol>			
<b>Points of Emphasis</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use short steps – little distance covered with each step</li> <li>• Maintain slight lean forward.</li> <li>• Do not lean back when driving knee to chest.</li> </ul>			

## TRAINING TO IMPROVE TECHNIQUE - SPRINTING

<b>Observation</b>	<b>Correction by coach</b>	<b>Drill/Test</b>
--------------------	----------------------------	-------------------

Arms and shoulders rotate	Keep torso parallel to direction of running	Practice while running on the spot. Sit on ground, leg stretched out in front and do running arm action.
Athlete not running in upright position	Make sure drive leg is being fully extended (push off)	Bounding and Strides
Athlete is tense (Fists clenched, shoulders high)	Practice running relaxed. Emphasize correct breathing	Practice relaxation and breathing techniques
Athlete weaves in lane	Feet should be parallel to lane lines	Run on lane lines and between cones/pylons

## TOP TIPS FOR COACHING SPRINTING (SKILL DEVELOPMENT)

1. Practice the correct arm movement:
  - a. By standing in front of the athlete and asking them to hit your hands with their hands while making the correct arm action.
  - b. While running on the spot.
  - c. By sitting on the ground with legs stretching in front. By sitting it is more difficult to rotate the trunk. This encourages the correct arm movements.
2. Stand in front of the athlete and ask them to run in place hitting your hands with their knees. This helps them to develop the correct knee lift.
3. Practice running in different lanes. Ensure your athletes can run from any lane.
4. Remind athletes that everyone must stay in their designated lanes during sprint races. Use pylons or cones to help guide athletes to remain in their correct lane. Remember that they cannot be used in competition. Athletes should be able to remain in lane before entering a competition.
5. Practice sprinting form on straight-aways and curves.
6. Ask your athlete focus on finish line. Practice with people standing in different areas of the finish area.

## TOP TIPS FOR SPRINTING AT COMPETITION

Remind your athletes to:

1. Relax
2. Focus on their technique
3. Lean through finish line

## Hurdles Key Skills Checklist

<b>YOUR ATHLETE CAN</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Perform a stand-up or block start</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Maintain erect posture with hips tall</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Run from blocks to first hurdle using proper sprint form</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Drive lead knee up first, then extend slightly bent lead leg over hurdle</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Drive trail leg over top of hurdle, turning knee and foot outward</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Keep trail-leg knee higher than foot, toes higher than heel</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Continue rotating knee to chest</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Drive lead leg down to ball of foot</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Bring trail leg through with foot directly striking track on ball of foot</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Sprint between hurdles consistently, using three- or five-step rhythm</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Sprint from last hurdle to finish line</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Sprint under control for entire race</li></ul>

### OVERVIEW: HURDLES

Hurdles races require good technique in both sprinting and hurdling. Athletes who can clear a hurdle quickly and efficiently and continue sprinting, run faster times.

Good hurdlers develop the skill of stepping rather than jumping over the hurdles. Rhythm is the crucial. Athletes must clear the hurdles with as little change to their stride as possible. Athletes should try to use the same number of steps between each hurdle. Basic foot speed is also important for becoming a good hurdler.

Training hurdles are great for learning correct technique. They are lightweight, collapsible and/or adjustable in height. They are ideal for introducing hurdle skills and for indoor training.

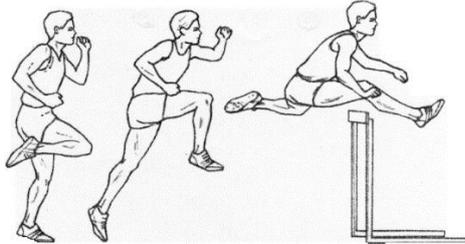
Before a coach introduces hurdles, they must assess the athlete's physical ability. Ensure your athlete has the mobility and flexibility to learn how to hurdle correctly. This will reduce their risk of injury. Remember! Mobility and flexibility can often be improved with training.

### COACHING POINTS - HURDLES

1. Take Block Start Position. Foot of Lead Leg in rear block.
2. On start signal, sprint from blocks to first hurdle. Keep body erect using good sprint form. Athlete should take 8 strides to first hurdle.
3. Extend slightly bent lead leg over hurdle and lift up on ball of the foot of the lead leg, using opposite elbow and lower arm for balance.
4. Drive trail leg over top of hurdle by turning knee and foot outward. Keep the knee higher than the foot and toes higher than then heel.
5. Continue rotation until knee is up to chest.

6. Drive lead leg down to ball of foot.
7. Bring trail leg through with foot directly striking track on ball of foot.
8. Sprint between hurdles.
9. Maintain a consistent number of strides between hurdles.
10. Sprint from last hurdle to finish line.

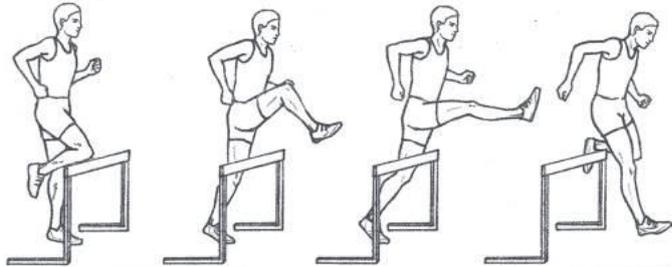
### Take Off



### Clearance



### Landing



## TRAINING TO IMPROVE TECHNIQUE - HURDLES

Observation	Correction by coach	Drill/Test
Trail knee/foot hits hurdle	Trail leg must be parallel to hurdle. Foot should hang down. This requires strong hip flexors	Flexibility exercises for hip and surrounding muscles
Athlete lands too far away from hurdle	Adjust stride length to athlete takes off farther from hurdle	Practice with adjusted stride length – bring lead leg downward aggressively
Approach to first hurdle is irregular	Build confidence Build power and increase effectiveness from starting blocks. Stay low, focus on first hurdle	Practice alongside hurdles Focus on stride length and pacing.

## TRAINING DRILLS FOR HURDLES

<b>Drill</b>	High Knee Lifts	<b>Purpose</b>	Develop knee drive Develop coordination
<b>Reps:</b>	3 x 30m	<b>When to Use</b>	Warm Up
<b>Teaching Points</b>			
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Take hips tall position</li> <li>2. Alternating legs, drive knees up as high as possible while walking</li> <li>3. Gradually increase pace from walking to jogging</li> <li>4. Jog/Skip back to start</li> </ol>			
<b>Points of Emphasis</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stay on balls of feet</li> <li>• Maintain a slight forward body lean</li> </ul>			

<b>Drill</b>	Skips	<b>Purpose</b>	Develop quick leg action Develop consistency in proper foot strike Develop hurdling rhythm
<b>Reps:</b>	2 reps each leg	<b>When to Use</b>	Warm Up (Can be done with or without hurdles)
<b>Teaching Points</b>			
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Place 8-10 hurdles about 1.8-2.4m apart</li> <li>2. Take hips tall position</li> <li>3. Begin skipping 1m from first hurdle</li> <li>4. Drive bent leg up, atop hurdle.</li> <li>5. Extend leg from knee</li> <li>6. Drive leg down on ball of foot.</li> <li>7. Go over hurdle with every other skip.</li> <li>8. Jog back to start</li> <li>9. Repeat with other leg.</li> </ol>			
<b>Points of Emphasis</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lead with knee then extend leg</li> <li>• Foot is flexed</li> <li>• Leg drive down is very fast</li> </ul>			

## **TOP TIPS FOR COACHING HURDLES (SKILL DEVELOPMENT)**

1. Demonstrate clearing trail leg to help your athletes visualize this skill. Do this by standing with lead-leg foot on ground 3cm in front of the hurdle crossbar.
2. Let athletes practice by walking beside hurdle and clearing lead leg only. Then repeat, this time clearing the trail leg only.
3. Practice alongside hurdles focusing on stride length and pacing.
4. Practice with three hurdles at first to master clearing both lead leg and trail leg.
5. As your athlete improves, introduce a five-step stride between hurdles. When your athlete has mastered this you, progress to a three-step stride between hurdles.
6. Use photos or videos of good hurdling technique. Look for images that show the full sequence of the skill: Approach, takeoff, layout, trail leg clearance, and landing.
7. Remember! Hurdling is a running motion, not a jump.
8. Practice using both legs as lead and trail leg until the athlete reaches consistency in 3 or 5 step stride.
9. Encourage athletes who need to improve their flexibility to do extra stretching at home.
10. Focus on building your athletes' confidence.

## **TOP TIPS FOR HURDLES AT COMPETITION**

Remind your athlete to:

1. Take two or three starts to first hurdle when on track warming up.
2. Use visual imagery to practice going over hurdles and maintaining three- or five-step stride pattern between hurdles.
3. Remember! A hurdler is a sprinter and should warm up like one

## Relays Key Skills Checklist

### **YOUR ATHLETE CAN**

#### **FIRST LEG**

- Perform a block start or stand-up start
- Hold baton in hand while running
- Sprint under control with hips tall, erect posture, slight forward body lean from ground
- Run the curve, staying in lane
- Pass baton in exchange zone with designated technique

#### **SECOND LEG**

- Receive baton in exchange zone with designated technique
- Hold baton in hand while running
- Sprint under control with hips tall, erect posture, slight forward body lean from ground
- Run the straightaway
- Pass baton in exchange zone with designated technique

#### **THIRD LEG**

- Receive baton in exchange zone with designated technique
- Hold baton in hand while running
- Sprint under control with hips tall, erect posture, slight forward body lean from ground
- Run the curve in lane if 4x100
- Pass baton in exchange zone with designated technique

#### **FOURTH “ANCHOR” LEG**

- Receive baton in exchange zone with designated technique
- Hold baton in hand while running
- Sprint under control with hips tall, erect posture, slight forward body lean from ground
- Run the curve
- Lunge forward and lean through finish line

## Overview: Relays

Relay passing/Baton exchange is one of the most difficult concepts to teach.

Coaches must include relay passing into regular training sessions. Place athletes in order according to their strengths. Some athletes are better at handing off than receiving a baton. Each position in the order requires its own skills (see table below). Official Special Olympics Athletics rules list all the relay events offered in competition.

## BEGINNING AND ADVANCED EXCHANGES

**BEGINNING EXCHANGES:** The baton carrier has baton in the right hand. The baton receiver accepts the baton in the left hand. He/She immediately moves it to the right hand. There is a risk that athletes could drop the baton when changing hands or that this switch could impact their running action.

**ADVANCED EXCHANGES:** The baton receiver does not switch the baton from one hand to the other. The runners exchange as follows:

Leg	Athlete Role
Lead-off Leg	carries baton in right hand
Second Leg	receives in left hand, carries in left hand and passes with left hand, stands closer to right in lane
Third Leg	receives in right hand, carries in right hand and passes with right hand, stands closer to left in lane
Fourth Leg or "Anchor" Leg	receives in left hand, carries in left hand, stands closer to right in lane

When possible, it is recommended to teach athletes the advanced exchange.

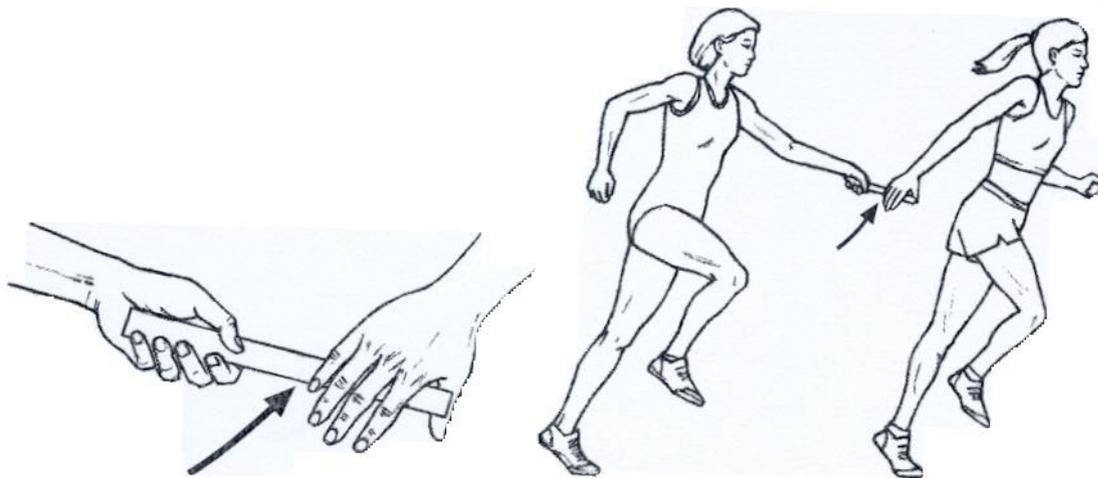
The baton must be placed firmly into the waiting runner's palm. There are two common ways to teach this exchange.

- Up-sweep exchange
- Down-sweep exchange.

Coaches should choose the method best suited for their athletes. The Down-Sweep exchange is more popular and easier for athletes to learn. It allows the runner to see where they are placing the baton.

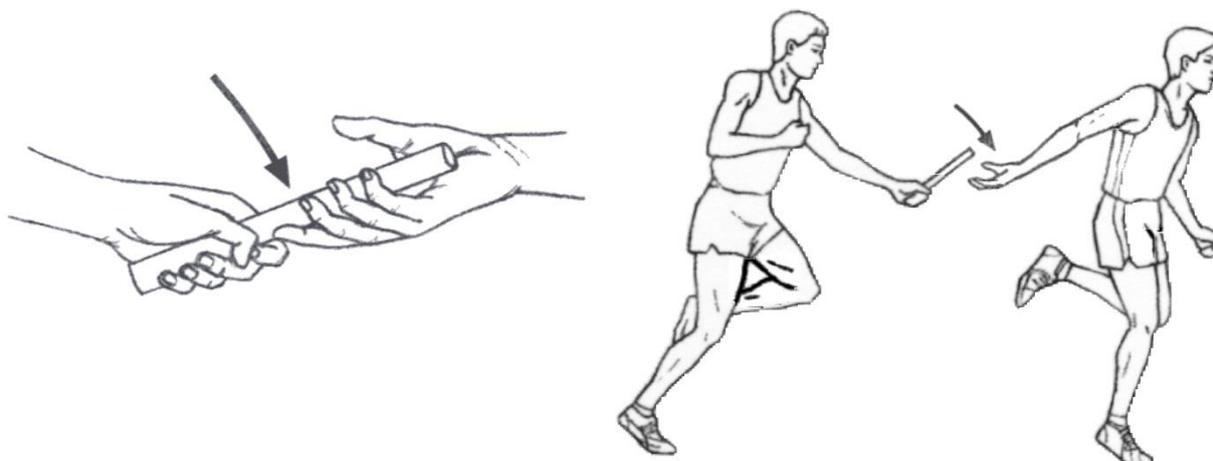
## COACHING POINTS UP-SWEEP BATON EXCHANGE

1. Outgoing runner begins to sprint at the signal from the incoming runner
2. Outgoing runner reaches back with receiving hand – forming an inverted V (see image)
3. Incoming runner places baton into outgoing runners hand, in an upward sweeping motion
4. Outgoing runner takes the baton from incoming runner and sprints.



## COACHING POINTS DOWN-SWEEP BATON EXCHANGE

1. Outgoing runner begins to sprint at the signal from the incoming runner
2. Outgoing runner reaches back with receiving hand – almost parallel to the track.
3. Outgoing runner's palm is facing up, forming a V with thumb towards torso.
4. Incoming runner places baton into outgoing runners hand, in downward sweeping motion
5. Outgoing runner takes the baton from incoming runner and sprints.



## COACHING POINTS - RECEIVING A VISUAL PASS

1. Receiving athlete stands in front of first zone line (nearest start line) to the right side of lane.
2. Place power foot forward. Look back over the left shoulder.
3. Hold left hand back. Keep body weight slightly forward.
4. Look back over left shoulder for incoming runner.
5. Begin running forward when incoming runner reaches a point 4-5 meters from exchange zone.
6. Keep left hand back, fingers pointing to left, thumb pointing down and palm up.
7. Watch incoming runner pass baton overhand into left hand.
8. Turn to look forward, continue running and move baton to right hand.

## 4 X 100M RELAY

All runners in the 4x100m and 4x200m relays must stay in their designated lanes the entire race.

Leg	Baton Ability	Athlete Strengths
<b>Lead-off Leg</b>	Passes baton	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Good starter, with good acceleration and balance</li> <li>• Can run the curve, staying in the lane</li> </ul>
<b>Second Leg</b>	Receives baton Passes baton	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Very fast runner</li> <li>• Ability to run strong straightaway</li> <li>• Excellent speed and endurance</li> </ul>
<b>Third Leg</b>	Receives baton Passes baton	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can run the curve, staying in the lane</li> </ul>
<b>Fourth Leg or "Anchor" Leg</b>	Receives baton	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Most competitive runner</li> <li>• Ability to catch and pass runners</li> <li>• Consistent finisher</li> </ul>

### TOP TIPS FOR COACHING 4X100M RELAY BATON EXCHANGE (SKILL DEVELOPMENT)

1. Holding baton
  - a) Use a piece of tape around the baton, indicating where the athletes should hold it.
2. Receiving baton
  - a) Identify all the 20m exchange zones with athletes.
3. Practice holding the recovery hand back. The receiving hand depends on what type of exchange is chosen.

## 4 X 400M RELAY

A visual pass is often used for the 4x400m relay. This technique can also be used for the 400m (4x100m) relay. However, the exchange may take longer.

In the 4x400m relay, the lead-off (first) runner must stay in lane the entire lap. The 2nd runner may break for lane 1 after running around the first turn. The 3rd and 4th runners may break for lane 1 after receiving the baton. However, they must not impede another runner.

Leg	Athlete Role
<b>Lead-off Leg</b>	Get the team out in front. Must be aggressive and strong, and have a good sense of pace. Ability to run in lane the entire lap.
<b>Second Leg</b>	Keep the team in the race. Must be physically strong, able to handle bumping. Must be able to negotiate the breakpoint. If the team is not in first place, job is to get team in first place.
<b>Third Leg</b>	Put team in a position to win. Must be able to run well from behind or maintain a lead and build upon it. Often, this is second best possible anchor on team.
<b>Fourth Leg or "Anchor" Leg</b>	Secures the victory, puts the relay away. Must be able to run well from behind or maintain a lead. Ability to catch and pass runners. Often, the strongest/fastest leg – the "horse."

## TRAINING TO IMPROVE TECHNIQUE - RELAYS

Observation	Correction by coach	Drill/Test
Incoming runner runs into outgoing runner	Outgoing runner may need to start running sooner. Outgoing runner may not be standing close to the correct side of the lane	Correction of starting position. Repetitive practice building to full speed.
Exchange happens outside of zone	Outgoing runner may need to start running later	Practice with incoming runner shouting command at same spot. Tip: Use a mark on the track.
Incoming runner has difficulty putting baton in outgoing runner's hand	Receiving arm position must be at correct height and angle Athlete practices holding the receiving arm steady.	Outgoing runner needs to be aware of how the arm is held using proper form. Outgoing runner can focus on strengthening exercises to hold arm in correct position.

### Baton Handoff Drill

Insert Video 3.22 Baton Handoff Drill

## TOP TIPS FOR COACHING RELAYS (SKILL DEVELOPMENT)

1. Demonstrate correct stance for running start.
2. Demonstrate correct hand position for passing and receiving baton.
3. Demonstrate ready position for outgoing (receiving) runner.
4. Practice hand-off while walking and jogging, and in race conditions.
5. Emphasize making the exchange as quickly as possible.
6. Demonstrate hand-off between all legs of the relay.
7. Establish running order as soon as possible.
8. Remind athletes that the incoming runner must remain in lane at all times. This includes after exchange has been made. Nothing they do should interfere with other runners.
9. Encourage relay runners carry the baton during other parts of the session. E.g. conditioning, sprint drills. This will help them to become comfortable and confident in holding the baton.
10. Remind the incoming runner to run through the pass. This means they should not slow down in the exchange zone. Encourage them call out to the outgoing runner if he/she is running too fast or too soon to complete the exchange in the zone.
11. Place strip of tape on the track to indicate incoming/outgoing runner marks.

## TOP TIP FOR RELAYS AT COMPETITION

1. Remind your athletes to be confident and avoid nervousness. Lack of confidence and focus leads to errors in exchanges.

## Middle Distance Key Skills Checklist

Your Athlete Can
Run longer distances (400m/800m/1500m)
Pace self (or can learn)
Demonstrate speed, strength and endurance
Maintain erect posture with hips tall
From the back of the foot, roll through the ball of the foot and push off
Show spring, rhythm and light touch in foot action
Have controlled, relaxed arm action
Keep shoulders not hunched and elbows tucked in
Keep body relaxed and moving efficiently

### Overview: Middle Distance

Middle distance events are the most demanding in track and field because they are actually long sprints. 800m and 1500m events are considered middle distance. Training is designed to develop these skills listed. A training program should be developed to meet individual needs.

### Training for Middle Distance

Middle distance training focuses on pace. The key for a coach is to keep a balance between training volume and intensity. Athletes need a strong aerobic base. It helps them to be able to pace themselves, but speed is also an important part of their training. Middle distance athletes need good endurance to maintain speed over a race.

Middle distance runners should try and maintain a prescribed pace established by the coach.

Example: During a 1600m training run, the athlete would run each of four 400m laps in 2 minutes per lap. The coach might also set a target time for athletes to run a given distance. Example: Run 200m every 3 minutes. To increase the challenge, the athletes would increase speed or decrease time between intervals.

Athletes can do “surges” to develop speed. Example: Set out cone at intervals around the track. The athlete runs at normal stride to first cone. Then they “surge,” or increase speed, to next cone. They continue to alternate from normal to “surge” pace between cones.

## STAND START

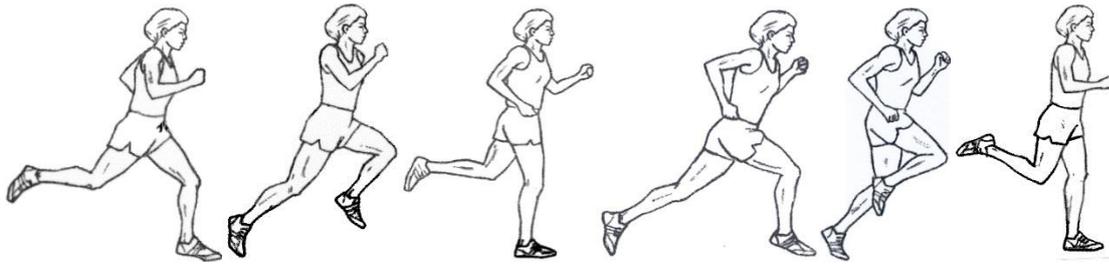
All distance runners must use a standing start. All distance races begin with a 2 command start. Refer to the Starts section for more details.



## COACHING POINTS FOR MIDDLE DISTANCE RUNNING TECHNIQUE

When coaching middle distance runners, the coach needs to find the right combination of speed and endurance for each athlete.

1. It is important to have a comfortable stride and rhythm and to not over stride.
2. Unlike sprinting, the foot strikes the ground less on the ball of the foot and more to the back of the foot. The foot rolls onto the ball and pushes off.
3. The knee has some flexion.
4. Knee lift is lower than that of a sprinter.
5. Heel does not go as high as a sprinter.
6. Leg movement is smooth.
7. Swing arms from shoulders. The elbows are bent at around a 90-degree angle but can straighten a little more on the down swing. Arms and shoulders should be relaxed.
8. Head straight; chin level, focus ahead 20-30 meters.



## TRAINING TO IMPROVE TECHNIQUE - MIDDLE DISTANCE RUNNING

Observation	Correction by coach	Drill/Test
Runner not erect enough. (Chin is too low; )	Remind athlete to: Position the chin higher Hold shoulders back. Maintain this position.	Practice Correction
Runner appears to be bobbing up and down (excessive bouncing).	Remind athlete to: Pull through elbows. Wrist needs to go hip to chin.	Practice correction. Do arm movement while standing.
Runner is "twisting."	Remind athlete to: Keep torso in a forward direction and toes pointed forward.	Have runner run on a line or inside of the lane.

## TRAINING DRILLS FOR MIDDLE DISTANCE RUNNING

As a general rule, duration for the 800m runner is not very long, 25-35 minutes on non-track days and 45 minutes to an hour on the long run day. Remember: the focus is maintaining speed over a longer distance.

<b>Drill</b>	Russian Workout	<b>Purpose</b>	Develop Speed Endurance
<b>Reps:</b>	5 (increasing to 15 over time)	<b>When to Use</b>	Mid Season
<b>Teaching Points</b>			
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Run 5x200m at <math>\frac{3}{4}</math> race pace.</li> <li>2. Rest 45 seconds between each 200m.</li> <li>3. After five repetitions, rest three minutes.</li> <li>4. Repeat.</li> </ol>			
<b>Points of Emphasis</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Athlete developing speed endurance</li> </ul>			

## DISTANCE RUNS

Middle distance training should include a distance runs. There are two main types of distance run, depending on the type of effort and recovery needed.

1. Distance Run: Duration of 35-40 minutes. The pace is set so that the runner can manage without too much stress. This should be a flat, soft-surfaced, continuous run. This is more common early in the season. Do not worry so much about time. As the season progresses, mark each mile and make necessary corrections.
2. Hill Running is more difficult. The first 20 minutes maximum are flat. The next 30 minutes must have a series of uphill climbs or a steady hill climb. As with the long slow run, do not worry so much about time.

## INTERVAL TRAINING

Below are some examples of interval sessions. Sample recovery times are listed. Coaches can adjust as necessary.

	<b>Increasing speed/decreasing recovery reps</b>	<b>Russian intervals</b>	<b>Pick-up Reps</b>
<b>Intervals</b>	4 x 200m	3 x 300m at set pace	4x400m at set pace
<b>No. Sets</b>	2 sets	2 sets	1
<b>Recovery in Sets</b>		Jog 100m in 30s	90s
<b>Recovery between sets</b>	No additional recovery between sets	Jog 800m	

## TOP TIPS FOR COACHING MIDDLE DISTANCE RUNNING (SKILL DEVELOPMENT)

1. Demonstrate stand-up start with commands. (Refer to Starts section)
2. Demonstrate and practice breaking into lane one at the correct point.
3. Practice one turn stager start as used in 800M.
4. Demonstrate and practice how to safely pass another runner. Run around the runner on the outside. Get two strides ahead before cutting back in.
5. Run or ride along with runners on a bike to help control running pace. A stopwatch, pedometer or GPS watch can help you to monitor pace.
6. Establish split times with athletes for certain distances of the race.
7. Make sure athlete receives ample recovery time from training.
8. Train to race: Simulate race conditions as much and as often as possible. (e.g. start each practice interval with 2 command start).
9. Learn when to stop a session when an athlete is not running well. Practicing slow teaches you to race slow.

## TOP TIPS FOR MIDDLE DISTANCE AT COMPETITION

1. Plan the race.

2. Warm up thoroughly.
3. Save energy for the last part of the race.
4. Run your race and plan.
5. Surge when others try to pass.
6. Never take the lead unless you plan on keeping it.
7. Maintain contact with the leader if not leading. Keep in striking distance.
8. Respond to the moves of other runners.
9. Avoid getting behind or boxed in.

[Check out our Sample 8 week Training Plan for 800m in the Distance Running appendix.](#)

[Click or tap here to download the Sample 8 week Training Plan for 800m](#)

## Long Distance Key Skills Checklist

<b>Your Athlete Can</b>
Run longer distances
Pace themselves (or can learn to)
Maintain erect posture with hips tall
Settle more on the back of the feet. Roll through the ball of the foot and push off
Show spring, rhythm and light touch in foot action
Have relaxed arm action
Keep shoulders not hunched and elbows tucked in
Keep body relaxed and moving efficiently

## Overview: Long Distance Running (3000m-10,000m)

Long distance events are great for athletes who enjoy running. Long distance athletes must commit to training throughout the week on a long-term basis. Well planned training programs are vital for success in long distance events. Training must be consistent and progressive. Sessions should be designed to challenge athletes physiologically and psychologically. The goal of the training is to support the athlete to maximize their potential and competition experience.

NOTE: Half Marathon and Marathon events and training will be addressed in the following section.

## Training for Long Distance Running

There are several types of training techniques for long distance runners. A training plan should be designed to match an athlete's fitness and skill level. Training plans should be reviewed often and adjusted as needed based on the athlete's progress. Variety in training techniques is vital. Different

types of sessions have different goals. A well balanced and varied program ensures the athlete develops in all the key areas.

## LONG DISTANCE TRAINING TECHNIQUES

### Interval Training

- Repetitive training runs (often on a track).
- Effort and recovery are usually equal.
- Effort can be from one to five minutes.
- Recovery can be walking or slow running.

### Fartlek Training

- Also known as “speed play.”
- Athlete combines normal run with varying bursts of effort (speed).
- Usually on a varied terrain (flat and hills).

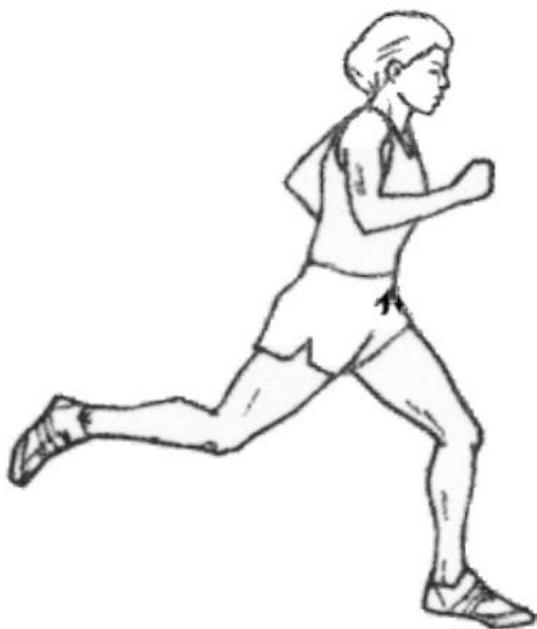
### Long Runs

- Athletes run for a specified distance or time at a moderate speed for longer distances.

### Speed Training

- Aims to improve the speed at which the athlete can maintain relaxed and correct running form.
- Mainly during the pre-competition and competition phase of the season.
- Example: Athlete runs 1x600m all out with a 20-minute rest interval. This is followed by 10x100m as fast as possible, with a 100m walk interval between each.

Coaches can find information on different techniques are in coaching or running books, magazines and on the Internet.



## COACHING POINTS - LONG DISTANCE RUNNING TECHNIQUE

1. Stride length and rhythm should be comfortable. Do not over stride.
2. The foot strike is more to the back of the foot than in sprinting. The foot rolls onto the ball and pushes off.
3. The knee is slightly bent.
4. Leg movement is smooth.
5. Swing arms from shoulders in a comfortable back and forward movement. Keep the arms and shoulders relaxed.
6. Keep the head straight and chin level. Focus ahead 20-30 meters.

## TRAINING TO IMPROVE TECHNIQUE – LONG DISTANCE RUNNING

Observation	Correction by Coach	Drill/Test
Athlete's leg drive causes the body to move upward instead of forward.	Make sure hips maintain same level – do not rise up and down.	Practice each step as a push forward and not a push upward. Observation
Arms swing across the chest.	Arm movement should be back and forward and not across chest. Ask athlete to point where they are going with each arm swing.	Sit-down arm movement drill.
Athlete tenses up while running.	Improve aerobic/anaerobic endurance	Concentrate on relaxation, especially facial muscles (relaxation drills).
Head is swinging/ bobbing side to side.	Ensure arms are moving back and forward and not across the chest. Ensure athlete is running upright and not leaning back.	Concentrate on technique. Ask athlete to look straight ahead and focus on something down the track.

## TOP TIPS FOR COACHING LONG DISTANCE RUNNING (SKILL DEVELOPMENT)

1. Run in place bringing heels under buttocks.
2. Demonstrate rolling the foot forward. Emphasize pushing off the balls of the feet.
3. Demonstrate a quick turnover (leg speed)
4. Demonstrate a smooth foot strike (No pounding downward).
5. Encourage athletes to be aware of the front part of their foot leaving the ground to get better push-off.
6. Check for upper body twisting by looking at athlete from front view.
7. Check for crossover of feet or toes pointing outward.
8. From side view, check that hands are relaxed and stop at midline of torso on upward swing and back at hip on downward swing.

9. Demonstrate how arm tempo can help control rate of leg speed turnover.

## LONG DISTANCE EVENTS SAMPLE WORKOUTS

Creating sessions to meet the needs of your athletes is difficult. [Here you will find sample training plans for 3,000m, 5,000m and 10,000m.](#) Adapt and modify these plans as needed. Remember that each of your athletes is unique. Your training plan should address each athlete's strengths and weaknesses.

[Click or tap here to download the Sample 8 week Training Plan for 3km PDF](#)

Athletes preparing for long distance events should have at least a 12-week training plan. Athletes should train 4-5 days per week to improve performance. Remember to slowly increase to this level if the athlete trains less often. Racing/Competition is an important part of the training plan. Coaches should decide how often an athlete races based on their fitness and skill level. A good starting point is one race every two weeks. Races will not always be formal Special Olympics competitions. Athletes can race teammates at a training session or enter a local community race.

The following key explains the abbreviations used in the training plans in the Distance Running Appendix.

<b>M</b>	<b>Miles Run</b>	<b>Ae</b>	<b>Aerobic</b>	<b>RE</b>	<b>Relaxed Effort (60%)</b>
<b>X</b>	<b>Intermittent Running</b>	<b>An</b>	<b>Anaerobic</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>Effort (80%)</b>
				<b>ME</b>	<b>Maximum Effort (90-100%)</b>

[Click or tap here to view the entire Distance Running Appendix](#)

## ENERGY SYSTEMS

The body has 3 main ways of using energy. Two of these are important for marathon training. 1) Anaerobic Energy System. 2) Aerobic Energy System.

The anaerobic system gives short, intense bursts of energy without the need for oxygen. In doing this it creates by products such as lactic acid. These cause the muscles to feel tired and sore. This means we cannot exercise for a long time using this system. In distance running training, this usually means short bursts of high speed or longer periods of speeds faster than race pace.

The aerobic system uses oxygen and does not produce the same by products. This means we can use this energy for longer. However, the energy is a lower intensity. In distance running training, this often is seen in the long, slower run sessions.

Good distance runners have maximized the efficiency of both energy systems.

[Check out our Sample 12 week Training Plan for 5km and 10km in the Distance Running appendix.](#)

## Marathon Running Key Skills Checklist

## Your Athlete Can

Perform a stand-up start

Maintain an erect posture with hips tall

Keep head level

Maintain rhythmic stride pattern

Build a strong aerobic base

Run a minimum distance of 10k

Develop speed, endurance and strength

Develop anaerobic strength and endurance

Train over long distances at different speeds

Maintain a relatively flat foot strike under hips and body weight

Move continuously forward to ball of foot from flat foot strike

Maintain comfortable arm swing without twisting body

Run under control for entire race

## Overview: Marathon

Competing in a marathon can be a challenging athletic achievement. An athlete's goal may be:

- A fast time.
- A personal best.
- Simply to finish the race.

Whatever the goal, all runners deserve the best training program to help them achieve it.

The athlete will have many questions about training.

- How many miles should I run per week?
- What is the correct intensity and volume of sessions?
- What should I include for recovery?
- How do I plan my long runs?

Every runner is unique and so there are no concrete rules. A coach should work with the athlete to create an individual training plan. The plan should consider the athlete's ability and their marathon goal.

Training for a marathon is a significant commitment. Poor quality training or training too much or too little will hinder performance. It can lead to failure to complete the race or even injury. The distance covered in training should increase slowly. A good guideline is no more than 10% per week. Rest days and recovery sessions are as important as running. They should be carefully planned and followed.

It is vital to match the training program to the needs, goals and abilities of the athlete. The coach must know and understand the basic principles and components of training. With this, he/she can design a successful training program for athletes of any ability. The coach must first identify the athlete's training needs. He/She must then develop the program to maximize the athlete's abilities.

Our Athlete Nutrition, Safety and Fitness guide has some additional advice which may be useful.

No athlete should ever enter a marathon without adequate training.

## Training for Marathon

Marathon training is a science. There are many books and websites available on this topic alone. Many theories and techniques are promoted. Coaches who plan to train athletes for the marathon should spend time researching these theories. Learn more about marathon training. Use this knowledge to develop better training plans for your athletes.

### VO<sub>2</sub> MAX

Fitness is sometimes measured using VO<sub>2</sub>max. You will see this term often in marathon books and websites. It measures how much oxygen the body can use. The higher the number, the longer an athlete can train before feeling tired. VO<sub>2</sub> max is affected by two main factors:

1. How much oxygen moves from the lungs to the blood.
2. How much oxygen the muscles can take from the blood to use.

### ANAEROBIC AND AEROBIC TRAINING

Marathon runners must train both systems. A marathon needs energy over a long period of time (endurance). This means that aerobic energy is very important.

Anaerobic training helps the muscles to:

1. Become better at clearing the by products from the muscles.
2. Increase the intensity we can train at before the by-products begin to build up.

Marathon training includes runs that are long, short, easy and hard.

Aerobic training focuses on increasing the amount the athlete runs (volume). We often do this by including a long run each week. This improves endurance and running economy. It is the largest component of a distance runner's training program.

Training sessions are:

- High volume, continuous running below the athlete's race pace.
- 70-80 percent of the athlete's maximum heart rate.

The athlete should be able to have a conversation while running.

Of course, we also use more intense runs to improve the athlete's aerobic energy system.

Training for marathon and half-marathon consists of a combination of the following:

1. Long runs

2. Speed work/Tempo work/ Hill training /Interval training/Fartlek training
3. Rest

Interval and Fartlek sessions can help give variety to training.

Fartlek training includes short bursts of higher paced running in a longer run. The athlete increases their pace for 200-400m. They then return to normal pace. Once recovered, the athlete repeats. The increased pace can vary through different speeds and distances. This training improves the anaerobic system and athlete's speed.

Rest is a key part of training. It must be included in every training plan. Rest days can contain light activity. This could include walking your dog or stretching. It should not be intense. If an athlete does not rest appropriately, they may get injured. This will restrict training and make it more difficult to achieve their goals.

Here are some simple training plans for marathon and half-marathon. They are for guidance only. Coaches must adapt them to meet their athletes' needs, abilities and goals.

Below you will find some sample training programs. Remember that these training programs are just examples. There is no one way to train. Athletes can prepare for middle distance and distance events in many ways. Training schedules depend on the needs of the athlete and the philosophy of a coach. The following examples are a good place to start for novice coaches.

Your athletes' ability level should dictate the training programs you prescribe. Assess each athlete's needs as an individual. You can then place athletes in similar ability groups. It may help to consider including Unified partners in training with distance athletes. If there are not many athletes competing in these events, this can help to create a team environment. It can also ensure that athletes do not train alone.

[Check out our 18 week Marathon Training plans for Novices and 21 week Training plan for Intermediate runners in the Distance Running Appendix.](#)

[Click or tap here to download the Sample 18 week Training Plan for marathons PDF.](#)

[Click or tap here to download the Sample 21 week Training Plan for marathons PDF.](#)

### Half Marathon Running Key Skills Checklist

Your Athlete Can
Perform a stand-up start
Maintain an erect posture with hips tall
Keep head level
Maintain rhythmic stride pattern
Build a strong aerobic base
Develop speed, endurance and strength
Develop anaerobic strength and endurance
Train over long distances at different speeds
Maintain a relatively flat foot strike under hips and body weight

Move continuously forward to ball of foot from flat foot strike
Maintain comfortable arm swing without twisting body
Run under control for entire race

## Overview: Half Marathon

The characteristics of the half marathon make training and racing it unique. It can be too long for a 5-10k runner. It may be too short for the marathon runner. However, it can be the perfect distance for training and racing if planned well. Marathon runners often use it as a race-pace training distance.

Typical training sessions are high volume and long intervals with a high number of repetitions. Rest time between intervals can be very short or moderate. However it never allows for full recovery. The speed and the rest period between intervals can be adapted based on the needs of the athlete. The coach must consider the athlete's training goals. Ideal running pace is between 10km and marathon pace.

## Training for Half Marathon

### COMPONENTS OF TRAINING

1. Build aerobic base.
2. Develop speed, endurance and strength.
3. Develop anaerobic strength and endurance.
4. Develop strength through tempo runs.
5. Long runs to increase stamina and running economy.
6. Short intervals - lactic acid tolerance workouts.
7. Long intervals - lactic acid tolerance sustain workouts.
8. Short recovery - long recovery.
9. Race pace workouts.
10. Running pace - training at different speeds.
11. Competing.

Most running sessions are done on the roads and/or trails instead of the track. Interval sessions are run as Fartlek training or pick-ups. There is a great emphasis on hill work and tempo runs. The main focus is to develop and improve cardiovascular strength and endurance. This will help improve running pace.

[Check out our 18 week Half Marathon Training plan for Novice Half-marathoners in the Distance Running Appendix](#)

[Click or tap here to download the Sample 18 week Training Plan for half marathons PDF.](#)

# Standing Long Jump - Key Skills Checklist

Your Athlete Can
Stand behind board/line with feet shoulder-width apart. Toes are pointed out slightly
Hold chin up and head straight
Extend arms in front of body
Bend knees and ankles. Swing arms backwards low past knees
Swing arms up and out toward landing area
Drive knees up and extend off ground. Spring forward off both feet
Bring legs under buttocks
Bring legs forward by bending at hips
Extend legs forward, leading with heels
Swing arms downward past legs
Keep feet parallel and slightly apart
Keep head forward to prevent falling backward
Extend heels forward
Land in pit or on mat, heels first
Bend knees to absorb landing

# Running Long Jump Key Skills Checklist

<b>Your Athlete Can</b>
Measure and mark approach
Perform a nine-step stride approach
Plant takeoff foot on board behind foul line
Take off from board by extending takeoff leg
Keep upper body straight and head up
<b>Step Style</b>
Drive right knee and left arm forward and upward over sand pit
Extend lead leg with takeoff leg trailing
Stride in air
Circle right arm overhead. Bring left leg forward
Reach, extending arms and upper body forward
Drop arms below legs. Bend knees upon hitting sand
Land in sand heels first, hands sweeping past hips
Roll over on toes, falling forward
<b>Hang Style</b>
Drive right knee and left arm forward and upward
Hold left leg and right arm back
Drive left leg and right arm (they are parallel)
Arch back to achieve hang position
Circle arms clockwise
Lower upper body toward thighs
Extend legs, and reach arms forward and back
Hit sand heels first and bend knees
Move upper body forward and roll over toes, falling forward

## Overview: Long Jump

Special Olympics competitions offer two long jump events:



**Standing long jump**



**Running long jump**

Running long jump is a more advanced event than the standing long jump. Long jump is an event that combines speed and spring. It can be a lot of fun. There are three components involved when coaching long jump:

- Approach
- Takeoff
- In flight (step or hang style) (Note: In flight also includes landing)

The coach should train the athlete to exit the pit beyond their mark in the landing area.

## Standing Long Jump

Standing long jump does not include a running takeoff.

The take-off board is set on the runway at the edge of the landing area.

The coach should train the athlete to exit the pit beyond their mark in the landing area

## COACHING POINTS – STANDING LONG JUMP READY POSITION

1. Stand behind board/line with feet shoulder-width apart, toes pointed out slightly.
2. Hold chin up and head straight.
3. Arms are relaxed at sides. Back is straight and body leaning slightly forward.

## COACHING POINTS – STANDING LONG JUMP TAKEOFF

1. From ready position, bend knees and ankles into a squat position. Strongly swing arms backward.
2. Strongly swing arms up and out toward landing area. At the same time both legs drive and extend off ground.
3. Take off by swinging arms forward and low past knees, then up toward landing area.
4. Exhale and spring forward off both feet at a 45° angle. Use strong ankle and leg extension to create a powerful takeoff (thrust).
5. The toes leave the ground last.



## COACHING POINTS – STANDING LONG JUMP IN-FLIGHT

1. In flight, extend body with slight arch to back; raise arms above head.
2. Bring legs under buttocks; then bring them forward by bending 90 degrees at hips.
3. Extend legs forward, leading with heels, and swing arms downward past legs.
4. Keep feet parallel and slightly apart.
5. Keep head forward to prevent falling backward; look ahead of landing.

## COACHING POINTS – STANDING LONG JUMP LANDING THE JUMP

1. Extend heels forward for extra length.
2. Land in pit or on mat, heels first, with momentum carrying you forward.
3. Bend knees to absorb the impact of the landing.
4. Exit the pit beyond their mark in the landing area.



## TOP TIPS FOR COACHING STANDING LONG JUMP (SKILL DEVELOPMENT)

1. Demonstrate ready-to-jump position to athlete.
2. Give a verbal commands (e.g. "Ready!") to the athlete to assume position.
3. Demonstrate two-leg takeoff. Emphasize taking off from both feet.
4. Pull legs up underneath trunk to go as far as possible.
5. Ask athlete to practice jumping on bouncy surfaces. (e.g. springboards/ small exercise trampoline).



6. Demonstrate proper flight technique.
7. Emphasize back-to-front motion to keep momentum going forward.
8. Ask athlete to practice jumping over a towel/two separated ropes on the ground to improve distance.
9. Emphasize moving legs and arms from back-to-front to keep athlete's momentum going forward.
10. Practice landing after jumping off a box or springboard.
11. Concentrate on falling forward after landing.
12. Play jumping games which promote standing long jump skills. Use jumping instead of running in relay games.
13. Jump over a series of spaced lines.

## Running Long Jump

### DETERMINING THE TAKEOFF LEG FOR THE RUNNING LONG JUMP

The athlete's stronger leg is usually their take-off leg.

- Ask the athlete to take three consecutive hops from a standing start using the right leg only.
- Measure the distance traveled.
- Repeat with the left leg.

The leg used to hop the furthest is usually their stronger leg.

For some athletes, there is no clear difference between legs. In this case, it is helpful to know that most right-handed people use their left leg as the take-off leg for jumps. However, if the athlete is more comfortable using the opposite leg, they should use it.

All coaching points in this section are based on a left-foot take off. If your athlete uses a right foot take off, you should switch the foot in the instruction.

### MEASURING AN ATHLETE'S APPROACH

As your athlete becomes stronger and more skilled, their approach will need adjustment. Initially, the athlete should use three strides. As they improve, they can progress through five, seven and nine strides. Elite athletes may use up to nineteen strides! The number of strides should correspond with your athlete's maximum speed when they hit the take-off board or tape.

1. Athlete stands on takeoff board and runs back along the runway. Take the number of strides (e.g. 3 or 5) that will be used on the approach. The point where the athlete stops or reaches the number of strides is marked. This initial mark will be adjusted by moving forward or backward.
2. Athlete faces take-off board from this mark.

3. Athlete does a controlled run of at least 9 strides towards the take-off board. They should reach the take-off board on their take-off foot.
4. The athlete should run through the sand in the landing pit.
5. Mark the point where the athlete's take-off foot hits take-off board.
6. Adjustments can be made forward and backward to fit individual needs.
7. When you are sure that the athlete's approach is consistent, measure and record distances for future practice and competitions.
8. Run approach again and mark the location of first and third steps of the takeoff foot. The athlete can run a consistent approach by matching his/her stride to meet these marks.

## **TOP TIPS FOR MEASURING APPROACH IN LONG JUMP**

1. Demonstrate the starting stance.
2. Emphasise the starting position of take-off foot behind the other foot. Show the take-off foot taking the first step
3. Place different colored footprints on the runway
4. Encourage athletes to practice their approach run often. This helps develop consistency.
5. Support the athlete to measure the approach themselves. This will help them to be able to identify the starting point of their approach when you are not present.

## **COACHING POINTS – THE TAKE-OFF**

1. Perform the approach run and plant the takeoff foot on board behind foul line.
2. Stretch upward immediately prior to takeoff.
3. Strongly take off from board by extending and pushing through the takeoff leg.
4. Bend the other leg. Drive the thigh up and over sand pit.
5. Keep upper body straight and head up. The athlete should be focused ahead in the sand.
6. Land in a running position on non-takeoff foot and run through the sand.

## TOP TIPS FOR COACHING THE TAKE-OFF IN LONG JUMP

1. Demonstrate single leg take-off.
2. Always take an odd number of strides in the approach.
3. Begin with a three- or five-stride approach. As the athlete's skill and strength improve, progress to nine strides.
4. Remind the athlete to always take first stride with take-off foot.
5. Practice often. Move the start point back until your athlete has a consistent approach.
6. Emphasize strong extension of take-off knee and ankle.
7. Emphasize vigorous lift and drive by opposite knee and arm.



## COACHING POINTS – IN-FLIGHT - STEP STYLE

1. From takeoff, drive right knee and left arm forward and upward over sand pit.
2. While in flight, extend the lead leg with the take-off leg trailing. The athlete should appear to be in a stride position mid-flight.
3. Circle right arm overhead and bring left leg forward. Arms and legs should now be parallel.
4. As the athlete prepares to land they should extend their arms and upper body to reach forward.
5. Drop both arms below legs and bend knees as they hit the sand.
6. Land in sand heels first, with hands sweeping past hips.
7. Roll over on toes, falling forward.



## TOP TIP FOR COACHING STEP STYLE IN-FLIGHT IN LONG JUMP

1. Demonstrate step-style flight. The right knee should lead the flight.
2. Practice pop-ups drill.
3. Increase length of approach as flight technique improves.

## COACHING POINTS – IN-FLIGHT (HANG STYLE)

1. From takeoff, drive right knee and left arm forward and upward. Hold the left leg and right arm back.
2. Drive the left leg and right arm so that they are parallel.
3. Arch the back to achieve the "hang" position.
4. Move the arms in a circle clockwise.
5. Prepare for landing by
6. Lowering the upper body toward thighs,
7. Extending legs



8. Reaching arms forward and then backward.
9. Hit sand heels first. Bend knees to absorb shock of landing. Move upper body forward and roll over toes to fall forward.



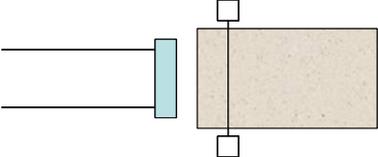
## **TOP TIPS FOR COACHING HANG STYLE IN FLIGHT FOR LONG JUMP**

1. Demonstrate hang-style technique.
2. Ask athlete to practice jumping up and arching their back.
3. Start athlete with a shorter approach and gradually increase.

## TRAINING TO IMPROVE TECHNIQUE – LONG JUMP

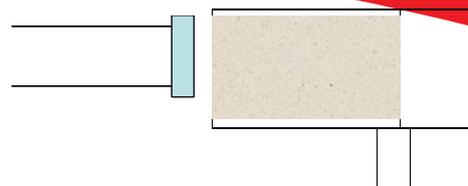
Observation	Correction by Coach	Drill/Test
Athlete stutter-steps and takes off on the wrong foot and looks down at board.	Verify run-up and start point. Practice doing run the exact same way each time.	Do run-up on track with controlled acceleration.
Athlete is not getting any height in the jump (stays close to ground).	Increase drive. Make sure upper body is not angled forward. Look up at take-off and use extension of legs.	Bounding and jumping drills. Strengthen core muscles
Athlete lands upright	Increase forward reach and momentum. Increase height so legs can be repositioned	Strengthen core muscles. Bounding. Two-footed jumps

## LONG JUMP DRILLS

Drill	Pop-Ups	Purpose	Develop hitch kick and arm action in the air Develop Height on jump
Reps:	10-12 jumps per set	When to Use	Beginning of Training Session or Beginner jumpers
<b>Teaching Points</b>			
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Place hurdle or string or light rope across pit about five feet from takeoff board.</li> <li>Take Hips Tall position and begin short approach (five or seven strides).</li> <li>Run toward pit with moderate, controlled speed.</li> <li>Hit board driving up and out over marker.</li> <li>Perform hitch kick and arm action in air and land into pit.</li> </ol>			
<b>Points of Emphasis</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Athlete can take off at mark closer to pit if needed</li> <li>Athlete can step onto low box to help create height</li> <li>Maintain tall body posture in position</li> </ul>			

Drill	Forward Height	Purpose	Develop height on jump Develop tall body position during jump
Reps:	10-12 jumps	When to Use	Beginner jumpers
<b>Teaching Points</b>			
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1. Place string or light rope across pit about 10 feet from takeoff board.
2. Take Hips Tall position, begin short approach.
3. Run toward pit with moderate, controlled speed.
4. Hit board, driving up and out beyond marker.
5. Perform hitch kick or hang using arm action in air, and land into pit.
- 6.



#### Points of Emphasis

- Maintain tall body position in flight

<b>Drill</b>	Cross the Brook	<b>Purpose</b>	Develops jumping and falling forward Develop tall body position during jump
<b>Reps:</b>	10-12 Jumps	<b>When to Use</b>	Beginner jumpers or Technique work
<b>Teaching Points</b>			
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Place two ropes on ground about shoulder-width apart, forming a "brook."</li> <li>2. Jump from one side of the brook to the other.</li> <li>3. Space ropes farther apart to work on hopping distance.</li> </ol>			
<b>Points of Emphasis</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Powerful drive from legs</li> </ul>			

<b>Drill</b>	Circle Jumping	<b>Purpose</b>	Develop powerful, explosive leg action
<b>Reps:</b>	10-12 Jumps	<b>When to Use</b>	Beginner jumpers or Technique work
<b>Teaching Points</b>			
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Place a series of hoops, etc., on ground.</li> <li>2. Hop or bound from hoop to hoop.</li> <li>3. Initially place hoops close to each other, then set them progressively farther apart to demand long reaching strides and explosive leg action. Pylons can also be used for athletes to land beside if athletes may land/step on hoops.</li> <li>4. Use a forward and upward swing of the arms to help each jump.</li> </ol>			
<b>Points of Emphasis</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Good Arm Action</li> </ul>			

<b>Drill</b>	Plyometric Hops/Bounds (over low obstacles)	<b>Purpose</b>	Develop powerful, explosive leg action Develop Spring in legs
<b>Reps:</b>	2 x 5 obstacles	<b>When to Use</b>	Technique work
<b>Teaching Points</b>			

1. Create and place five obstacles one meter apart.
2. Hop or bound over the obstacles.
3. Land and immediately hop or bound over next obstacle.
4. Use arms to obtain height and distance over obstacles.

#### **Points of Emphasis**

- Good Arm Action
- Strong Knee Drive

## **TOP TIPS FOR COACHING LONG JUMP (SKILL DEVELOPMENT)**

1. Demonstrate the starting stance.
2. Emphasize that the take-off foot starts behind the other foot and takes the first step of the approach.
3. Place different colored footprints or hula hoops to step in on the runway to guide the approach.
4. Encourage athletes to regularly practice their run up to develop a consistent approach.
5. Athletes should have good, controlled speed on the approach.
6. Emphasize strong extension of take-off knee and ankle at take-off.
7. Emphasize vigorous lift and drive by opposite knee and arm at take-off.
8. Increase length of approach as flight technique improves.
9. Emphasize height reached by the feet during flight.
10. Remind athletes to land heels first.
11. Athlete should practice falling forward after landing.
12. Train athletes to exit the landing pit beyond their mark in the landing area.

## **TOP TIPS FOR LONG JUMP AT COMPETITION**

1. Practice visual imagery. Ask the athlete picture him/herself running down the runway and hitting the take-off board without a foul. Then they should visualize themselves flying through the air up and out into the pit.
2. Remind your athletes to sprint down the runway, accelerating as they approach the take-off board.

# High Jump - Key Skills Checklist

<b>Your Athlete Can</b>
<b>Flop Style</b>
Measure and mark approach start
Take a three- five-, seven- or nine-step stride approach
Swing non-takeoff leg up toward opposite shoulder.
Swing both arms from a low back position to high front position in front of body
Take off on one foot using strong leg extension of knee and ankle
Turn right shoulder away from bar
Arch back and drop shoulders
Look at right shoulder and pull knees toward chest
Land in pit on back
<b>Scissor Style</b>
Measure and mark approach
Take a three- or seven-step stride approach
Swing both arms back on penultimate step
Swing both arms forcefully above shoulders on takeoff
Take off on one foot
Lift leg closest to bar, up and over bar
Follow with opposite leg to complete scissor
Land in pit on buttocks

## Overview: High Jump

High jump is an event that combines power and speed. Please read the Equipment section of this guide for important safety information. Athletes should wear spikes on grass or in wet conditions to avoid slipping.

There are two types of jumps:

1. Fosbury Flop
2. Scissor Kick

The Fosbury Flop is the more popular technique. In this jump the athlete does a backward rotation during flight. The Scissor Kick is a more basic jump. The athlete lifts legs one after another over the bar, remaining facing the same direction. Athletes can perform either technique. However they must jump off one foot only.

All coaching points in this section are based on a left-footed takeoff, with a right side approach. Simply swap the leg if the athlete prefers a right-footed take off.

## **FOSBURY FLOP STYLE HIGH JUMP**



The Fosbury Flop style high jump consists of the following steps/approaches.

You should progress through these steps as the athlete develops his/her style. Some athletes may use up to 13 strides.

1. Establish takeoff foot

2. Flop Style, straight three-step approach
3. Flop Style, five-step curved approach
4. Flop Style, seven-step curved approach
5. Flop Style, nine-step curved approach

## **COACHING POINTS – ESTABLISHING TAKE-OFF FOOT**

1. Jump over a rope held by two people.
2. Raise rope higher as height is cleared.
3. As the rope gets higher, dominant leg will become obvious and identify takeoff foot.
4. The athlete **MUST** make their jump from one foot, not two. Somersaults are not permitted.

## **COACHING POINTS – FOSBURY FLOP STYLE - STRAIGHT THREE-STEP APPROACH**

1. Athlete should stand next to crossbar one arm's length away and quarter of bar's length from right standard. This is an approximate takeoff point to be used.
2. Athlete walks backward three steps at a 45-degree angle from bar. This is the spot for starting stance.
3. Coach marks the spot of third step.
4. Athlete faces pit with feet together. Take first step with left foot and run toward pit.
5. As the third step is taken, swing bent right leg up toward left standard. Swing both arms from below the hips to above shoulders in front of body.
6. Jump into air, taking off on one foot.
7. Athlete should arch their back and drop their shoulders. They should look at their right shoulder and pull knees toward the chest.
8. Land in pit on back.

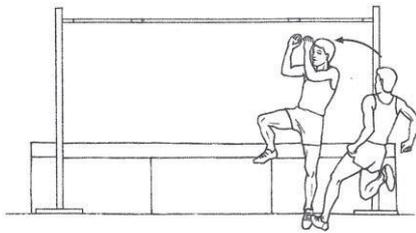
## **COACHING POINTS – FOSBURY FLOP STYLE, FIVE-STEP CURVED APPROACH**

1. Locate the spot where the athlete will start the approach. Measure 305 meters to the right of the right crossbar standard. Mark this spot.
2. Now measure 6-9 meters away from the pit. This is the athlete's approximate start location, facing the pit. (Note: This location might have to be adjusted for each athlete).
3. Athlete takes a tall hips position and begins five-stride approach with left foot.
4. The approach pattern will look like an upside down "J."
5. On fifth step with left foot, swing the bent right leg up toward left shoulder. Swing both arms from a low back position to high front position in front of body.
6. Take off from left foot, using a strong leg extension of knee and ankle.
7. Turn right shoulder away from bar, rotating counterclockwise.
8. Land on back and roll off the pit.

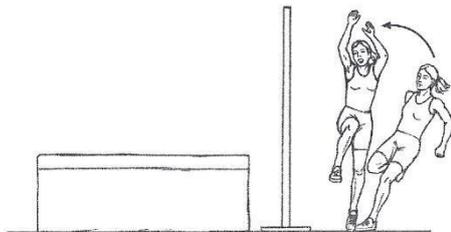
## COACHING POINTS – FOSBURY FLOP STYLE, SEVEN-STEP CURVED APPROACH

1. From the five-step approach, take two more strides away from pit. Adjust as necessary.
2. Athlete takes a hips tall position and begin seven-stride approach with left foot.
3. The first two steps will be straight, last five will be curved.
4. On the seventh step, plant left foot and make jump.
5. From this point, jump mechanics are same as five-step approach.

### **CORRECT FORWARD LEAN INTO CURVE**



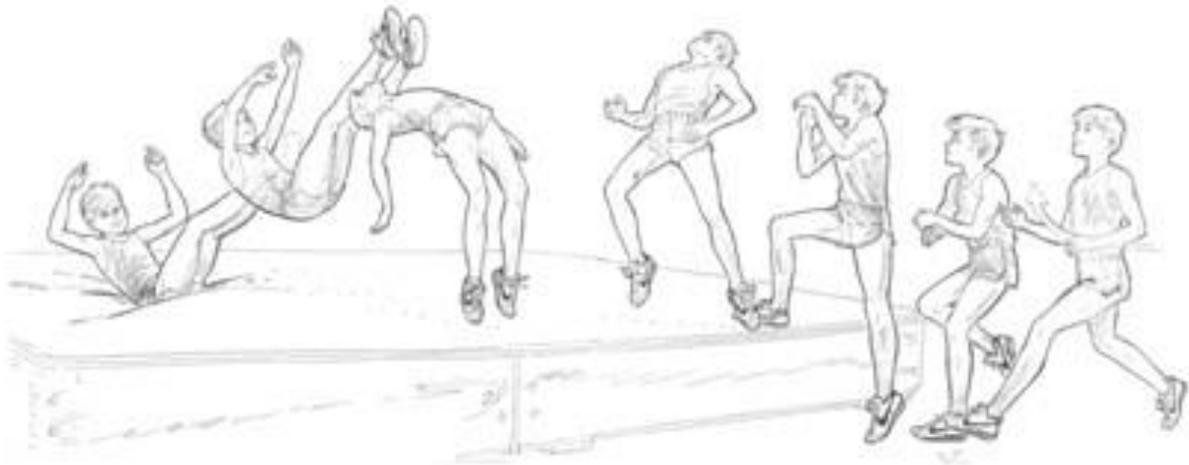
### **INCORRECT FORWARD LEAN AWAY FROM CURVE**



## COACHING POINTS – HIGH JUMP - FOSBURY FLOP STYLE, NINE-STEP CURVED APPROACH

1. From seven-step approach, take two more strides away from pit. Adjust as necessary.
2. Athlete takes a hips tall position and begins nine-stride approach with left foot.
3. Run straight toward pit; on fifth step, start the curve.
4. Place two check marks on the ground. One for starting stance and one at second stride of left foot, where curve starts.
5. On the ninth step, plant left foot, and make jump.

6. From this point, jump mechanics are same as five- and seven-step approaches.



## TOP TIPS FOR COACHING THE FOSBURY FLOP IN HIGH JUMP (SKILL DEVELOPMENT)

1. As athlete takes third step on left (take-off) foot, they drive the right knee is forcefully towards the left shoulder.
2. When in the air, the athlete should think of doing a sit-up and bring the knees to the chest.
3. Place markers at the start point and where the curve starts.

## SCISSOR STYLE HIGH JUMP

The scissor style high jump consists of the following steps/approaches. You should progress through these steps as the athlete develops his/her style

- Establishing Approach
- Three-step Approach
- Seven-step Approach

## COACHING POINTS –SCISSOR STYLE - ESTABLISHING THE APPROACH

1. Stand next to the pit, with or without bar.
2. Run back three steps from takeoff point at a 45-degree angle from pit.
3. Run toward pit. Starting with left foot and take three steps.
4. Take off on left foot.

## COACHING POINTS –SCISSOR STYLE - THREE-STEP APPROACH

1. Place bar just higher than pit.
2. Take same three-step approach as above.
3. Take first step on left foot.
4. Take second step on right foot and swing both arms back.
5. Take third step on left foot and forcefully swing both arms above shoulders.
6. Lift right leg (closest to bar) up and over bar
7. Left leg follows to complete scissor.
8. Athlete lands in pit on buttocks.

## COACHING POINTS –SCISSOR STYLE - SEVEN-STEP APPROACH

1. Stand parallel to the cross bar.
2. Move one arm's length and away and a quarter of the bar's length inside the right standard.  
Use this take-off point to develop a consistent approach.
3. From this point, take seven steps away at a 45-degree angle to the right of the pit. This is the location of the starting stance.
4. Face the pit. Take the first step with the left foot, run straight to the pit, and accelerate with every step.
5. On the seventh step, athlete should plant their left foot at the take-off point. Jump into the air.
6. Keep arms and legs up with head held straight.
7. Land in pit on buttocks.
8. Roll to the rear of pit and get off.

## TOP TIPS FOR COACHING SCISSOR STYLE HIGH JUMP (SKILL DEVELOPMENT)

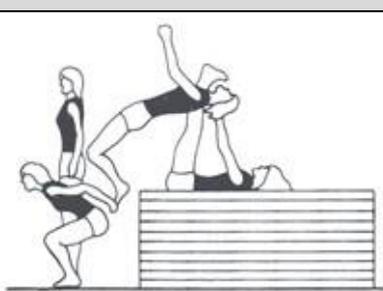
1. Emphasize driving knee of right leg. Leg will be horizontal to ground.
2. Athlete should keep their head up and upper body upright.
3. Mark start point.

## TRAINING TO IMPROVE TECHNIQUE – HIGH JUMP

Observation	Correction by Coach	Drill/Test
Athletes fall forward into bar.	Ensure last strides are far enough away so athlete can lean body backward prior to takeoff.	Practice run-up; ensure that foot is planted properly and lean is backward.

Athlete's seat knocks bar down.	Hips need to be raised to clear bar. Head is back. Thrust needs to occur from takeoff leg.	Jump over bar from standing with hips going up and over. Bounding
Athlete turns back before jumping over.	Ensure run-up curve is not too tight and lean is slightly into the curve.	Practice run-up; ensure takeoff foot is planted properly
Athlete slows down before takeoff.	Increase confidence. Ensure athlete is not running too far in approach.	Practice run-up and takeoff without bar, with elastic, then with the bar

## HIGH JUMP DRILLS

<b>Drill</b>	<b>Flop into Pit w/out Bar</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	Develop back-bend sensation of flop technique Develop comfort in jumping backward into highjump pit
<b>Reps:</b>	10-20 jumps; decrease as comfort level increases	<b>When to Use</b>	Beginner high jumpers Early in practice session
<b>Teaching Points</b>			
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stand with back to pit in Hips Tall position.</li> <li>Bend at hips while driving arms back.</li> <li>Jump up, driving arms up over head.</li> <li>Dive, bending back into pit.</li> <li>Arms/feet are extended up toward sky.</li> </ol>			
<b>Points of Emphasis</b>			
<input type="checkbox"/> Jump - don't just fall back			

<b>Drill</b>	<b>Flop into Pit with Bar</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	Develop back-bend sensation of flop technique Develop comfort in jumping backward into highjump pit
<b>Reps:</b>	10-20 jumps; decrease as comfort level increases	<b>When to Use</b>	Beginner high jumpers Early in practice session
<b>Teaching Points</b>			

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Stand with back to pit in Hips Tall position.</li> <li>2. Bend at hips while driving arms back.</li> <li>3. Jump up, driving arms up over head.</li> <li>4. Flop over bar, bending back into pit, landing on back.</li> <li>5. Arms/feet are extended up toward sky.</li> </ol>	
<b>Points of Emphasis</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Need burst of power on takeoff</li> <li>• Emphasize thrusting hips and arching back</li> </ul>	

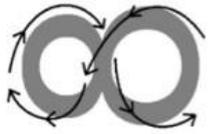
<b>Drill</b>	<b>High Knee Marching</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	Develop push off ball of foot Develop knee driving up action
<b>Reps:</b>	3 x 30m	<b>When to Use</b>	Warm-up
<b>Teaching Points</b>			
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Drive thigh of the leading leg up to the horizontal.</li> <li>2. Drive up onto ball of supporting foot.</li> <li>3. Work arms, and drive knee upward as powerfully as possible.</li> </ol>			
<b>Points of Emphasis</b>			
<input type="checkbox"/> Consistency in push-drive action of knee and thigh			

<b>Drill</b>	<b>High Knee Running</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	Develop push off ball of foot Develop knee driving up action while running
<b>Reps:</b>	3 x 30m	<b>When to Use</b>	Warm-up
<b>Teaching Points</b>			
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Run slowly, raising thigh of the lead leg up to the horizontal.</li> <li>2. Drive up onto the balls of feet entire time.</li> </ol>			
<b>Points of Emphasis</b>			
<input type="checkbox"/> Consistency in push-drive action of knee and thigh			

<b>Drill</b>	<b>Jump to head a suspended ball</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	Increase vertical jumping capacity
<b>Reps:</b>	10, decrease as ability and season progress	<b>When to Use</b>	Early in season

<b>Teaching Points</b>	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Suspend a ball 30-60cm above athlete's head.</li> <li>2. Using a three- to five-stride run-up, jump up off the takeoff foot, and hit ball with head.</li> </ol>	
<b>Points of Emphasis</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explosive drive off of ball of foot</li> <li>• Bounding off ground sensation</li> </ul>	

<b>Drill</b>	<b>Curve Sprinting</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	Develop inward lean sensation of "J" approach Develop controlled, fast sprinting during approach
<b>Reps:</b>	10 x 30m	<b>When to Use</b>	Warm-up, early in season
<b>Teaching Points</b>			
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Sprint from 100-meter finish line into curve on track.</li> <li>2. Run through curve.</li> <li>3. Jog back and repeat.</li> </ol>			
<b>Points of Emphasis</b>			
<input type="checkbox"/> Emphasize inward lean maintaining upper body control			

<b>Drill</b>	<b>Curve Sprinting</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	Develop inward lean sensation of "J" approach Develop controlled, fast sprinting during approach
<b>Reps:</b>	10-12 full figure-8 circles	<b>When to Use</b>	Warm-up, early in season
<b>Teaching Points</b>			
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Sprint in a figure-8 shape</li> <li>2. Curve to left, then to the right, and lean toward inside of curve while sprinting</li> </ol>			
<b>Points of Emphasis</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Emphasize inward lean maintaining upper body control</li> </ul>			

<b>Drill</b>	<b>Pop-ups without Crossbar</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	Develop consistent plant, takeoff and arm coordination
<b>Reps:</b>	5x; may decrease as skill level increases	<b>When to Use</b>	Early in practice session Fine-tune technique or mechanics of jump
<b>Teaching Points</b>			
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Take a three- or five-step approach to practice plant, takeoff and arm action.</li> <li>2. See how high the athlete can pop up on each plant.</li> </ol>			
<b>Points of Emphasis</b>			

- Solid plant of takeoff foot
- Explosive takeoff and drive of knee and thigh
- Good lean, looking back over shoulder
- Not riding the bar – bar clearance

<b>Drill</b>	<b>Five-step curve practice</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	Develop consistency in approach Develop rhythm in running the curve
<b>Reps:</b>	5-10 reps	<b>When to Use</b>	Early in practice session Fine-tune technique or mechanics of jump
<b>Teaching Points</b>			
1. Keep crossbar low. 2. Work on curve, plant and takeoff.			
<b>Points of Emphasis</b>			
☐ Concentrate on arms and hips as athlete goes up and over bar			

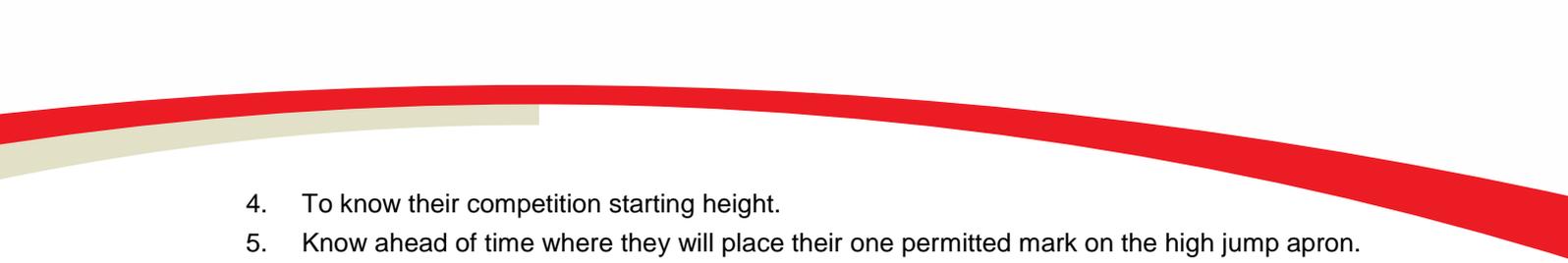
## TOP TIPS FOR COACHING HIGH JUMP (SKILL DEVELOPMENT)

1. Ensure the athlete takes off with only one foot.
2. Stress the importance of speed of approach, especially last three steps.
3. Note where the athlete plants the take-off foot. Athlete should take off about one arm's length from crossbar. The left foot should point toward the left standard.
4. Make sure arms are used in jump. Knees must be kept up while going over bar and the head looks at the left standard.
5. Use footprints or tape to mark approach.
6. If athlete's approach does not feel right to them, ask them to run parallel to the crossbar.
7. Make sure athlete accelerates on approach and leans toward inside of curve.
8. Have a mini high jump competition at practice.
9. Start without a crossbar. Slowly progress to using string, elastic ribbon in place of a bar. Gradually progress to the bar as confidence is developed.
10. Emphasize the need to accelerate with each step. Avoid short and choppy steps.
11. Emphasize that hips go upward over bar.

## TOP TIPS FOR HIGH JUMP AT COMPETITION

Remind your athlete:

1. To use visual imagery. Athlete should picture themselves going over the crossbar.
2. To practice planting take-off foot in the correct spot.
3. To be aware of the jumping order so that they are ready when called.

- 
4. To know their competition starting height.
  5. Know ahead of time where they will place their one permitted mark on the high jump apron.
  6. To obey the time restriction on a jump. The athlete is allowed 90 seconds from the time their name is called to start their jump.
  7. The plane of the crossbar cannot be broken. This counts as a foul jump.

## Shot Put Key Skills Checklist

<b>Your Athlete Can</b>
Hold shot in throwing hand. Spread fingers around shot
Balance shot with thumb and little finger
Place shot against neck, below ear, with palm turned out
Keep elbow away from body
<b>Standing Put</b>
Stand with feet just wider than shoulder width near toe board. Face perpendicular to toe board
Keep shoulders parallel to direction of throw
Step back and bend back leg, keeping back straight
Turn upper body 90 degrees away from direction of put
Drive hips and chest counterclockwise toward direction of put
Extend throwing arm and keep thumb down. Snap wrist and fingers outward, releasing shot.
<b>Sliding Put</b>
Stand in middle of ring. Face perpendicular to toe board.
Lower upper body. Flex back leg to quarter squat.
Lift front foot and extend forward. Slide body toward front of circle.
Keep back leg flexed, with body perpendicular to throw's direction.
Rotate back leg and extend body upward. Force hips in throw's direction
Thrust chest forward and extend both legs
Transfer weight to left leg
Extend right arm and push shot with fingertips
Extend throwing arm and keep thumb down. Snap wrist and fingers outward, releasing shot.
<b>Gliding Put</b>
Stand at rear of circle. Face away from toe board.
Place power foot in front. Have ball of other foot on throwing surface.
Hop backward. Turn both feet 90° counterclockwise until parallel to toe board.
Land on both feet simultaneously.
Rotate and raise trunk upward. Begin turning feet 90° toward throw's direction.
Transfer weight from right to left foot. Pivot both feet and knees toward direction of put.
Keep right elbow away from body, extend right arm
Extend throwing arm and keep thumb down. Snap wrist and fingers outward, releasing shot.

### Overview: Shot Put

**Shot Put requires the athlete to put the shot as far as possible. A combination of strength, power and speed will propel the shot further. The ability to accelerate the shot faster depends on the amount of force (speed) the athlete can apply, using strength and power.**

There are three primary styles of putting the shot:

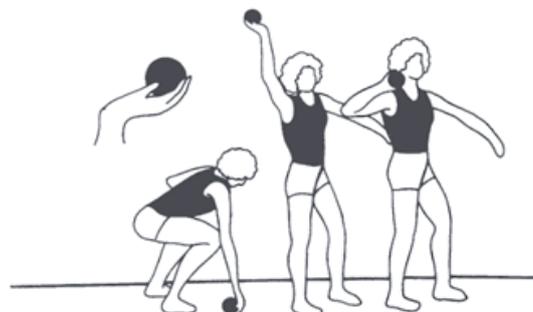
- Standing put
- Slide
- Gliding put

Warm-up is very important for shot put to prevent injury. The same general warm up advice applies as for all events. However, coaches should take special care ensure the athletes' wrists and hands are well warmed up.

Gripping the shot put is the same for all athletes. The following coaching points are made for a right-handed put.

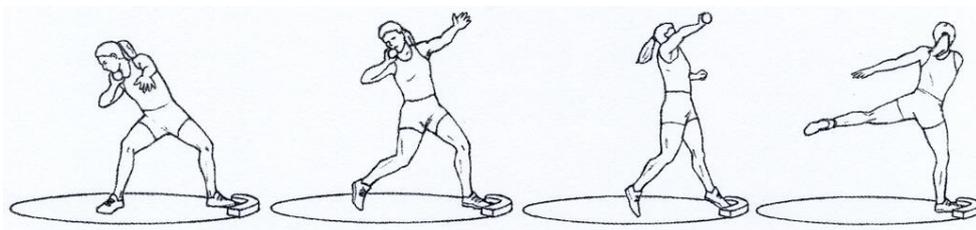
## Coaching Points - Gripping the Shot Put & Ready Position

1. Hold shot with both hands.
2. Place shot in throwing (right) hand and spread fingers around shot.
3. Do not rest or allow the shot to drop into palm of hand
4. Place thumb and little finger wider apart for balance and support.
5. Raise shot above head, wrist flexed backward.
6. Shot is supported by thumb and little finger on sides. The majority of weight is on other fingers.
7. Bring arm down, place shot against neck, below ear, with palm turned out.
8. Elbow is away from body and must stay behind the shot.
9. Apply pressure against neck to support shot.
10. Shot must not fall below the level of the shoulder or be behind the shoulder during the put.



## Coaching Points – Standing Put

1. Take ready position. Take a wide stance near the toe board. Stand perpendicular to the direction of throw. The left shoulder at front of the ring.
2. Shoulders are parallel to direction of throw.
3. Left arm (non-throwing arm) is relaxed and extended in front of body.
4. Step back and bend right leg, keeping back straight.
5. Turn upper body 90 degrees away from direction of put.
6. Body weight is over bent right leg.
7. Drive hips and chest counter-clockwise toward direction of put.
8. Extend right arm and snap fingers, releasing shot.



## Coaching Points – Sliding Put

1. Take ready position. Take a wide stance near the toe board. Stand perpendicular to the direction of throw. The left shoulder at front of the ring.
2. Lower upper body and flex right leg to quarter squat.

3. Lift left foot and extend it forward, sliding body toward front of circle.
4. Right leg remains flexed. Body is perpendicular to direction of throw.
5. Rotate right leg. Extend body upward to force hips around to direction of put.
6. Thrust chest forward and extend both legs.
7. Transfer weight to left leg and emphasize a strong leg push.
8. Extend right arm and push shot with fingertips.
9. Release shot, right arm extending in direction of put.

## Coaching Points – Gliding Put

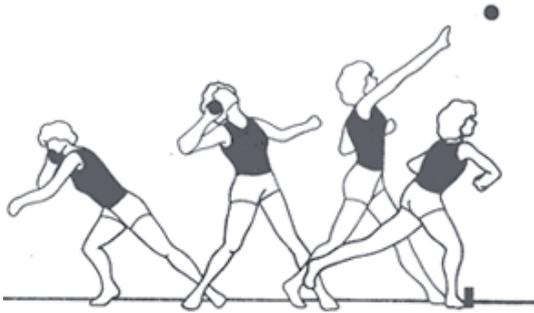
1. Take ready position. Stand at rear of circle, facing away from the direction of put. Keep weight is on right leg.
2. Place ball of left foot on throwing surface.
3. Hop backward powerfully. Turn both feet 90 degrees parallel to toe board. Note: The right leg provides most of the gliding force.
4. Glide in a balanced position from the back to the center of the circle.
5. Land on both feet simultaneously.
6. Rotate and raise trunk upward. Feet should begin to turn 90 degrees toward direction of put.
7. Transfer weight from right to left foot. Pivot both feet and knees toward direction of put.
8. Keep left toe close to throwing surface during extension, and ground the foot quickly.
9. Drive to toe board with left foot. Do not hop.
10. Keep right elbow away from body. Extend right arm forcefully.
11. Keeping thumb down, put the shot and forcefully snap the wrist and fingers outward.
12. Extend beyond toe board to improve release point.



## Coaching Points – Advanced Skill Reverse Shot Put (Weight Transfer)

This technique does not include a “reverse” movement. This is a technique for advancement athlete where the athlete is able to “follow-through” after the shot is put and rotate their body to gain additional power. This power can translate into a greater distance. The Reverse shot put is a rotational movement.

1. After shot is put, right arm continues past body to the left.
2. Left arm continues back around body.
3. Switch feet - right foot moves toward toe board, and left foot moves to the back.
4. All of weight is on right leg.
5. The athlete should finish the throw facing the opposite side of the circle and should take care not to watch the shot as it is released. Watching the shot may cause their momentum to carry their body and foot over the front of the circle resulting in a foul throw.



## Coaching Points – Finishing the Throw

After an athlete has fully complete their put, it is important they exit the throwing circle correctly.

1. Athlete should be stable and balanced before moving out of the circle.
2. Athlete should exit to the rear (back half) of the circle.

## Wheelchair Shot Put Key Skills Checklist

<b>Your Athlete Can</b>
Sit upright in chair. Buttocks are against chair and feet on foot supports.
Hold shot in throwing hand. Spread fingers around shot.
Balance shot with thumb and little finger.
Place shot against neck, below ear, with palm turned out.
Keep elbow away from body, pointing it back away from body.
Grab left armrest with left hand for balance.
Extend throwing arm and keep thumb down. Snap wrist and fingers outward, releasing shot.

## Coaching Points – Wheelchair Shot Put

1. Set front wheels of chair behind toe board of the ring. Lock back wheels.
2. Sit upright in chair with buttocks against chair and the feet on foot supports.
3. Grip shot in right hand. Do not let the shot drop into the palm of the hand.
4. Place shot against the side of neck, not under chin.
5. Keep right elbow to the right side, pointing back away from body.
6. Grab left armrest with left hand for balance if required or hold at eye level.
7. Extend right arm forcefully.
8. Lower left shoulder, raise right shoulder.
9. Keeping thumb down, put shot, snapping wrist and fingers outward.

## Training to Improve Technique – Shot Put

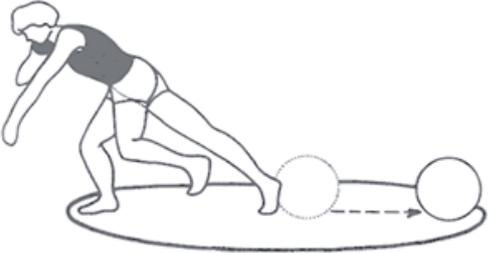
<b>OBSERVATION</b>	<b>CORRECTION BY COACH</b>	<b>DRILL/TEST</b>
Throwing the shot instead of “putting” it	Throwing elbow may have dropped below the shoulder. Shot may not be cradled directly under chin	Correct hand/arm/elbow positioning, keeping elbow high. Practice in standing put stance
Shot is not going upward when put	Use legs when thrusting; make sure upward direction is being followed with the body	Use a target to “put over” in the air (coach should hold a long stick/bar).
Put has no thrust from fingers	Hold shot properly (pads of fingers and thumb). Do not let shot drop into palm of hand	Strengthen thumb and fingers. Practice without shot
No distance/power in put	Lift upward simultaneously with legs and back, making sure legs are “thrusting” and all parts are occurring in the right sequence	Break skill down. Practice without shot or use lightweight shot

## Training Drills for Shot Put

Note that drills may use shot puts or use a soccer ball, basketball or light medicine ball for drills involving throwing. Throwing can be from behind the head, between the legs or around the side of the body. It is important to assess your athletes' skill levels correctly and ensure the safety of athletes and others while performing drills.

<b>Drill</b>	<b>UNDERHAND TOSS</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	Warm the body up properly for any shot put practice or competition
<b>Reps:</b>	10 throws	<b>When to Use</b>	Warm-up, in throwing ring
<b>Teaching Points</b>			
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Stand facing landing area.</li> <li>2. Hold shot in front of body with both hands.</li> <li>3. Bend knees and throw shot up and out, away from body, using an underhand toss.</li> </ol>			
<b>Points of Emphasis</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Good extension of arms and legs</li> <li>• Deep squat, with explosive drive up through hips</li> </ul>			

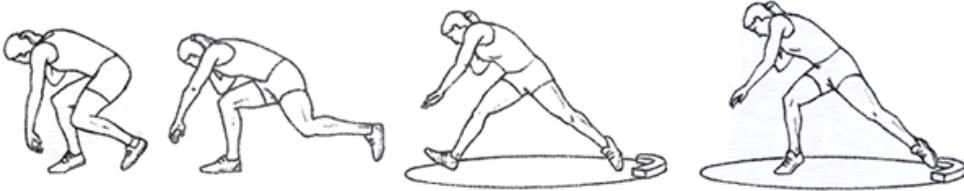
<b>Drill</b>	<b>CHEST PASS</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	Warm the body up properly for any shot put practice or competition
<b>Reps:</b>	5-10 throws	<b>When to Use</b>	Warm-up, in throwing ring
<b>Teaching Points</b>			
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Stand facing landing area.</li> <li>2. Hold shot with both hands with fingers behind shot.</li> <li>3. Push shot out like a basketball chest pass.</li> </ol>			
<b>Points of Emphasis</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Good arm extension</li> </ul>			

<b>Drill</b>	<b>GLIDE TO MEDICINE BALL</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	Develop efficiency in extending leg toward the toe board
<b>Reps:</b>	5-10 glides	<b>When to Use</b>	Integrate into entire technique as soon as possible.
<b>Teaching Points</b>			
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Place medicine ball at center of throwing circle.</li> <li>2. Take forward straddle position, facing back of throwing circle, with shot in throwing position.</li> <li>3. Bend the throwing-side knee, transferring weight over knee.</li> <li>4. Non-throwing leg is relaxed and extended; arm is out to the side.</li> <li>5. Drive non-throwing leg toward body.</li> <li>6. Push and glide back toward medicine ball with non-throwing foot.</li> </ol>			
<b>Points of Emphasis</b>			

- Low efficient leg extension – ball is pushed directly forward
- Focus only on leg action and weight transfer.

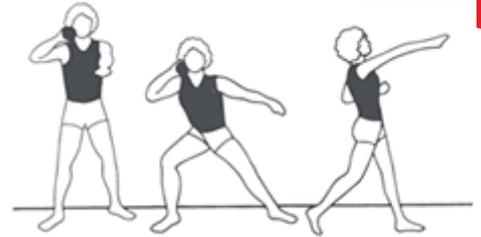
<b>Drill</b>	<b>PUTTING FOR DISTANCE</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	Develop complete putting action Develop explosive power in putting action
<b>Reps:</b>	5-10 throws	<b>When to Use</b>	Once technique work begins.
<b>Teaching Points</b>			
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Push ball from as far back behind body to as far forward as possible.</li> <li>2. Drive up onto toes and push forward with body.</li> <li>3. Release ball so that arms are fully extended in front of body and above head.</li> </ol>			
<b>Points of Emphasis</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use whole body in this action, not just arms.</li> <li>• Complete arm extension</li> <li>• Weight behind body</li> </ul>			

<b>Drill</b>	<b>PUTTING FOR HEIGHT AND DISTANCE</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	Develop complete putting action Develop explosive power in putting action
<b>Reps:</b>	5-10 throws	<b>When to Use</b>	Once technique work begins.
<b>Teaching Points</b>			
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Stretch a rope between two high jump standards, 2M above ground.</li> <li>2. Stand behind rope and put ball over rope.</li> <li>3. If successful, take two steps back away from rope and repeat.</li> </ol>			
<b>Points of Emphasis</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use whole body in this action, not just arms.</li> <li>• Complete arm extension</li> <li>• Weight behind body</li> </ul>			

<b>Drill</b>	<b>GLIDE DRILL</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	Warm the body up properly for any shot put practice or competition Develop powerful and explosive glide action
<b>Reps:</b>	5-10 glides	<b>When to Use</b>	Warm-up, in throwing ring
<b>Teaching Points</b>			
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Stand with feet parallel in back of circle.</li> <li>2. Using a normal glide, drive backward off left foot.</li> <li>3. Land in power position.</li> <li>4. Rotate hips and feet on drive back.</li> <li>5. Keep shoulders square to back of circle, opening up left foot and hip</li> </ol>			
<b>Points of Emphasis</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quick driving action to power position</li> <li>• Good rotation of hips and feet to power position</li> </ul>			

<b>Drill</b>	<b>WEIGHT TRANSFER – STANDING THROW</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	Develop effective use of the legs
<b>Reps:</b>	5-10 throws	<b>When to Use</b>	Limited use – integrate into entire technique as soon as possible
<b>Teaching Points</b>			

1. Take straddle position with shot in throwing position.
2. Bend the throwing-side knee, transferring weight over foot.
3. Non-throwing leg is relaxed and extended; arm is out to the side.
4. Shoulders are parallel to ground.
5. Drive weight up and out from throwing side.
6. Rotate hips, transferring weight behind shot release.
7. Thrower is facing direction of throw upon release of shot put.



#### Points of Emphasis

- Hip rotation progressively increases with proper weight transfer
- Focus only on leg action and weight transfer

<b>Drill</b>	<b>PUSH-THROW WITH THE BALL</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	Develop putting arm action Develop coordinated body leg movement
<b>Reps:</b>	10-20 throws	<b>When to Use</b>	Early in season – technique work.
<b>Teaching Points</b>			
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Throw tennis ball against wall with a pushing or putting action.</li> <li>2. Use body to make throw and extend legs.</li> <li>3. Push ball with fingertips.</li> <li>4. Catch ball on rebound from wall and repeat.</li> </ol>			
<b>Points of Emphasis</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Putting ball, not throwing ball.</li> <li>• Getting body weight behind put</li> <li>• Extending legs</li> </ul>			

<b>Drill</b>	<b>PUSH-PUT THE BALL WITH PARTNER</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	Develop putting arm action Develop coordinated body and leg movement
<b>Reps:</b>	10-20 throws	<b>When to Use</b>	Early in season. Technique work
<b>Teaching Points</b>			
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Partners stand facing each other, 2-3 meters apart.</li> <li>2. Push ball to partner with one- or two-handed push pass.</li> <li>3. Step toward partner with left leg if throwing with right arm.</li> <li>4. Keep elbow of throwing arm at shoulder height.</li> </ol>			
<b>Points of Emphasis</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Putting ball, not throwing ball</li> <li>• Do not use a real shot</li> <li>• Get body weight behind the put</li> <li>• Extend legs</li> </ul>			

## Top Tips for Coaching Shot Put (Skill Development)

1. Demonstrate the correct way to enter and exit ring.
2. The athlete should always enter and exit the ring from the rear of the throwing circle.
3. Break down putting into parts. Practice each part.
4. Elbow must stay behind the shot.
5. Athlete should keep right elbow at shoulder level during put.
6. Move hips forward. Keep chest high and square to direction of put.
7. Extend the legs during put.
8. Extend the arms powerfully, pushing shot off fingertips. Finish with a snap of the wrist
9. Finish put with right arm extended in front of body, hand above head level.

10. Athlete should keep balance the entire time in the throwing circle
11. Practice without a shot, with a softball, and finally with the shot.
12. Put begins with extension of legs.
13. Complete the putting motion fully, before looking at the distance.
14. The athlete's chin and chest are straight and up.
15. As technique improves, left arm gets more involved in putting action.
16. Keep shot next to neck before the put, to avoid throwing shot.

## **Top Tips for Coaching Wheelchair Shotput (Skill Development)**

1. Emphasize sitting up straight in wheelchair
2. Practice without a shot. Progress to a light softball and finally shot put. Progress based on athlete's skill level and strength.
3. Maintain a strong erect posture during the putting action

## **Top Tips for Shot Put at Competition**

Remind your athletes to:

1. Use their legs. Explode from the bent position up towards the sky.
2. Put their body weight behind the put.
3. Bend their knees and drop buttocks back towards middle of the ring. This will help stop them from falling forward and fouling.

## Softball Throw Key Skills Checklist

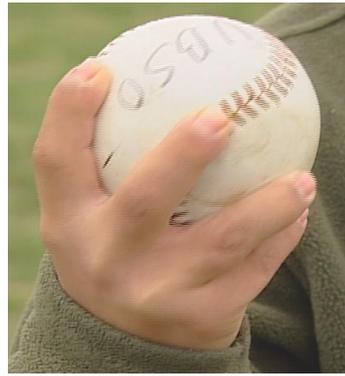
<b>YOUR ATHLETE CAN</b>
<b>Standing Throw</b>
Place thumb under ball. The index, middle and ring finger should be on top. The little finger should be on the side.
Stand 1.5 strides behind foul line. Left shoulder facing throw's direction
Keep feet parallel with toes pointing forward. Legs should be a little wider than shoulder-width apart.
Raise right arm with elbow pointing back. Hold ball behind the head
Bend left arm and hold it in front of chest
Push off right foot. Take one step with left foot toward direction of throw
Transfer body weight from the right leg to the left leg
Bring right arm up and forward, leading with elbow
Extend right arm, snap wrist and release ball off fingertips
Follow with throwing arm, down and across body
<b>Wheelchair Softball Throw</b>
Sit upright in chair with buttocks against chair and feet on foot supports
Place thumb under the ball, with index, middle and ring finger on top, and little finger on side.
Bend and lift right elbow 90 degrees away from body. Bring ball behind head.
Hold left arm above eye level. Lean back slightly in chair with a small arch in back
Push left arm to right, pulling it back down to left.
Raise right shoulder and drop left shoulder. Keep right elbow up and away from body
Bring right arm up and forward, leading with elbow
Extend right arm sharply and high over right leg. Snap wrist and release ball off fingers
Follow through with throwing arm down and across body

### Overview: Softball Throw

Throwing events in Special Olympics athletics are fun and exciting. Softball throw is a unique event in Special Olympics. It is a development event for athletes with lower ability level. In time, some athletes will progress on to traditional throwing events such as shot put or mini-javelin.

#### Coaching Points - Gripping the Softball & Ready Position

1. Pick up softball with the throwing (dominant) hand.
2. Place the thumb under the ball. Ensure the index, middle and ring finger are on top. The little finger should be on the side. The coach may need to adapt this grip according to the size of the athlete's hand.
3. Apply pressure by squeezing fingers to keep ball in the hand.



## Coaching Points - Standing Overhand Softball Throw

1. Stand 1.5 strides behind foul line. The left shoulder faces the direction of the throw. Feet are parallel and a little wider than shoulder width and toes point forward.
2. Raise right arm, with elbow pointing back and holding ball behind head.
3. Bend left arm. Hold it in front of the chest.
4. Push off right foot. Take one step with left foot in direction of throw.
5. Transfer body weight from right leg to left leg.
6. Bring the right arm up and forward, leading with the elbow.
7. Forcefully extend right arm. Snap the wrist and release the ball off fingertips.
8. Follow through, down and across body.
9. Official Special Olympics Athletics rules require an overhand throw, similar to American baseball.



## Coaching Points – Wheelchair Softball Throw Ready Position

1. Set front wheels of chair just behind the foul line. Lock back wheels.
2. Sit upright in chair. Ensure buttocks are against back of the chair. Place

feet either on the ground or on the foot supports.

3. Properly grip the softball.
4. Bend right elbow to 90 degrees, lift it away from body, and bring ball behind the head. The hand is behind the elbow.
5. Hold left arm above eye level. Lean back slightly in chair with a small arch in back.

## **Coaching Points – Wheelchair Softball Overhand Throw**

1. Take ready position. Throw ball by pushing left arm to the right. Then pull it back down to left.
2. Raise right shoulder as the left shoulder drops. Keep right elbow up and away from the body.
3. Bring right arm up and forward. Lead with elbow.
4. Extend right arm sharply, high over right leg. Snap wrist and release ball off fingers.
5. The right arm follows through, down and across body.

## **Tip Tips for Coaching Softball Throw (Skill Development)**

1. Demonstrate how to grip softball.
2. Demonstrate proper throwing position.
3. Manually place athlete's fingers on ball.
4. Athletes with small hands may place all four fingers on top and the thumb to one side, and hold the ball in the palm of the throwing hand.
5. Stand behind athlete and move his/her arm through throwing motion.
6. Practice throwing motion without a ball first, then with ball.
7. Practice throwing over a barrier, like a high jump standard with the crossbar.
8. Emphasize holding up throwing arm and throwing overhand.
9. Make sure left shoulder is lower than right and back is arched when releasing the ball. This allows the athlete to apply maximum force to throw.
10. Practice with athlete taking one step before throwing.
11. Place marks on ground to help the athlete step with correct foot.

## **TOP TIPS FOR SOFTBALL THROW AT COMPETITION**

1. Conduct a practice competition. Teach your athletes about roles at competition. One athlete plays the official and others assist in marking the distance of the throw.
2. Remind your athletes to:
  - a. Listen for the official to call their names.

- b. Enter and exit throwing area from the back line.
- c. Stand at the back of the throwing area.

## Mini-Javelin Key Skills Checklist

<b>YOUR ATHLETE CAN</b>
Hold mini-javelin in throwing hand with fingers in correct position.
Hold mini-javelin resting in the palm of their hand.
Hold mini-javelin with relaxed, straight arm, behind and higher than the shoulder.
<b>Standing Throw</b>
Stand facing the front with one arm extended high behind thrower.
Assume a correct foot position - back foot is at 45°. Front foot facing forward.
Execute correct pre-release movement - From bent knee position, push hip through to front. Use left arm to block.
Pull mini-javelin through, leading with shoulder and elbow and execute throw.
Release mini-javelin.
<b>One-step Throw</b>
Stand 1.5 step behind the foul-line.
Stand sideways with head facing front and hips and shoulders facing the side.
Keep the right foot facing front with knees relaxed.
Step forward and keep hand above shoulder height.
Throw mini-javelin over the top of the head.
Complete follow through
<b>Full Approach</b>
Take the correct start position for a 5 step throw.
Attempt the cross over run.
Stop at the foul line.
Keep hand above shoulder height.
Throw mini-javelin over the top of the head.
Complete follow through

## Overview: Mini Javelin

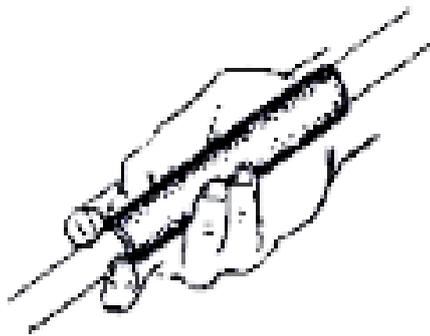
Mini-javelin is a field event where the athlete is required to “pull” a mini-javelin as far as possible using technique, power and speed.

### Coaching Points: The Grip

#### Grip

There are 3 types of grip for the min-javelin.

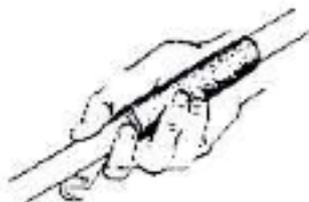
1. **V-Grip:** The min-javelin is held across the palm with the top of the grip resting between the index and the third finger either side of the grip. With this grip, the thrower places the javelin between their index finger and middle finger.



2. **American Grip:** The index finger typically grips right around the edge of the binding. The thumb can actually grab the edge of the binding opposite to the index finger as well and the other fingers simply wrap onto the binding.



3. **Finnish Grip:** Place the mini-javelin in your hand, you'll notice that the min-javelin comfortably sits in the groove of your hand and that middle finger naturally lands on the binding edge.



Using the middle finger to grip the min-javelin is also popular because the middle finger is dramatically stronger than all the other fingers.

### Coaching Points - Standing Throw

1. The athlete stands with both feet shoulder width apart
2. Athlete stands behind the foul line facing the front.
3. Throwing arm extended high and behind athlete. Back foot is at 45°, front foot facing forward
4. Mini-javelin is held high with a straight but relaxed arm. The point of the mini-javelin is at ear height.
5. With knees slightly bent, rock back onto back foot.
6. Athlete turns their hip through to the front, pivoting on the front foot.
7. Use left arm to block at shoulder height
8. Pull mini-javelin through, leading with shoulder and elbow
9. Release mini-javelin.

## **Coaching Points - One-Step Throw**

1. Stand sideways 1 ½ steps behind the foul line. Head faces the front, hips and shoulders face to the side.
2. Right foot facing the front, knees are relaxed.
3. Step forward, planting the left heel. Push through the right foot, pivoting on the ball of the foot.
4. Rotate hips to the front. Shoulder, arms and throwing hand should follow.
5. Bring the right arm forward, elbow high and close to the head.
6. Keep hand above shoulder height. Throw mini-javelin over the top of their head
7. Complete follow through.

## **Coaching Points - Full Approach (5 step)**

1. Assume the correct start position for a 5 step throw.
2. Step crossing right foot over left foot. Step and skip and step on left foot
3. Plant the left heel, and push through the right foot. Pivot on the ball of the right foot.
4. Rotate hips to the front. Shoulder, arms and throwing hand should follow.
5. Bring the right arm forward, elbow high and close to the head.
6. Keep hand above shoulder height. Throw mini-javelin over the top of their head
7. Complete follow through.

## TRAINING TO IMPROVE TECHNIQUE – MINI-JAVELIN

OBSERVATION	CORRECTION BY COACH	DRILL/TEST
Incorrect Grip – Grips too tightly	Wriggle the mini-javelin in the athletes hand to loosen grip	Release the mini-javelin and re-grip using correct technique
Incorrect Grip – Grips in a fist	Re-arrange the fingers to correct position.	Release the mini-javelin and re-grip using correct technique
Holds the mini-javelin using only the fingertips.	Demonstrate the correct method of gripping the mini-javelin.	Release the mini-javelin and re-grip using correct technique
Pointing the mini-javelin in the wrong direction	Remind athletes to keep javelin pointed in the direction that they want the javelin to go or to “point the javelin at the target”.	Direct athletes in the right direction. Ask the athlete to point to where they need to throw the javelin.
Low, round arm throwing action	Teach athlete to deliver the javelin over their shoulder like a tennis serve	Mimic the javelin throwing action: instruct athletes to drag their fingers like a paintbrush forwards and backwards over their throwing arm shoulder, like they are painting a long beam above their head. (Try this action yourself).

## TRAINING DRILLS FOR MINI-JAVELIN

<b>Drill</b>	Stretching	<b>Purpose</b>	To stretch major muscles in the shoulders, torso and arms.
<b>Reps:</b>	Refer each exercise	<b>When to Use</b>	Warm Up
<b>Teaching Points</b>			
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>With a wide two handed grip and straight arms, pass the broomstick over their head and back again. Ensure hands are at the correct width so the athlete doesn't bend their arms. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2 sets of 5 reps</li> </ul> </li> <li>Holding the broomstick, the athlete completes a rowing/paddling action. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2 sets of 10 reps</li> </ul> </li> <li>Standing in front of a wall with the athlete standing one step back from the wall, raise their arms high and place their hands on the wall. They should lean into the wall and feel the stretch in the shoulders and torso. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2 sets of 5secs</li> </ul> </li> <li>Similar to the position above, get the athlete to use one arm at a time and step the same leg as their arm back (e.g. right arm and right leg) and stretch the full side of their body. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2 sets of 3 secs on each arm alternating</li> </ul> </li> <li>Windmills – swing arms at the side of the body in full circles at the same time and then alternatively. Forwards and backwards <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2 sets of 10 swings on each arm</li> </ul> </li> </ol>			
<b>Points of Emphasis</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Start slowly and increase speed as the athlete warms up</li> </ul>			

<b>Drill</b>	Throwing Vortex toys/small balls	<b>Purpose</b>	Warm up throwing arm; develop good technique during warm-up
<b>Reps:</b>	2 sets of 5 throws	<b>When to Use</b>	During Warm up or early in the season
<b>Teaching Points</b>			

1. Stand on the foul line.
2. Athlete throws the Vortex toy/small ball.

**Points of Emphasis**

- Focus on using the throwing action used for mini-javelin
- Focus on quality of technique
- Introduce targets closer to foul line if athletes are throwing too vigorously.
- Gradually move targets further away as athletes become more accurate.
- Use a Standing, 1 Step, 3 Step or 5 Step through as appropriate for each athlete.

<b>Drill</b>	Unders	<b>Purpose</b>	Develop speed and strength
<b>Reps:</b>	2 sets of 5 reps	<b>When to Use</b>	During Warm up or early in the season
<b>Teaching Points</b>			
4. Begin with the ball overhead.			
5. Quickly bend so the ball is between the knees.			
6. Then throw it forward (underarm) in an arching manner as far as possible.			
<b>Points of Emphasis</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Start with a light ball and slowly increase weight of ball as the athlete gets stronger</li> <li>• A medicine ball may be used when athlete is strong enough</li> </ul>			

<b>Drill</b>	Russian Twist	<b>Purpose</b>	Develop speed and strength in torso for throwing momentum
<b>Reps:</b>	2 sets of 10 reps	<b>When to Use</b>	During Warm up or early in the season
<b>Teaching Points</b>			
1. Start with a ball at belly button height with arms slightly bent.			
2. Begin by moving the weight to one side			
3. Swing the ball across the front of their body and shift the weight completely from one side to the other on each twist.			
<b>Points of Emphasis</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Move continuously and smoothly from right to left.</li> <li>• Use lighter balls to start with and increase the weight as the athlete gets stronger.</li> </ul>			

<b>Drill</b>	Target Throws	<b>Purpose</b>	Develop throwing accuracy Learn stepping technique
<b>Reps:</b>	10 target throws	<b>When to Use</b>	During Warm up or early in the season
<b>Teaching Points</b>			
1. Start with the mini-javelin at eye level and throw at targets			
2. Start with close targets and gradually move targets further away			
<b>Points of Emphasis</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Progress to starting with feet staggered</li> <li>• Progress to starting with left foot next to right foot and move it to delivery position</li> <li>• Start with left foot behind right and move it to delivery position</li> </ul>			

<b>Drill</b>	Medicine ball standing throw	<b>Purpose</b>	Increase strength and power of throwing action
<b>Reps:</b>	2 sets of 5 reps – increase as strength/endurance improves	<b>When to Use</b>	During Warm up or early in the season
<b>Teaching Points</b>			
1. Stands at a line with feet side by side and slightly apart.			
2. Face the direction the ball is to be thrown.			
3. Holding the ball in two hand, the athlete brings the ball back over and behind their head.			
4. Throw the ball as vigorously and as far as possible.			
<b>Points of Emphasis</b>			

- If the athlete does a standing throw, do not encourage them to step forward unless they are progressing to a 1 step throw.
- If athlete does a 1-5 step throw, encourage them to step forward as a natural progression and to maximize the throw distance.

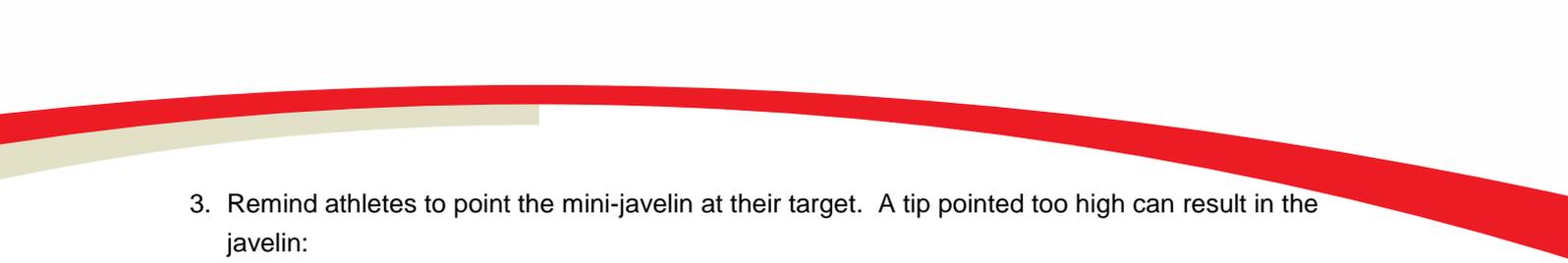
<b>Drill</b>	Throwing Exercises	<b>Purpose</b>	To increase strength and throwing power
<b>Reps:</b>	2 sets of 10 reps	<b>When to Use</b>	During Warm up or early in the season
<b>Teaching Points</b>			
1. Stand or sit a 1-2m from a wall. 2. Throw the ball overhead against the wall using 2 hands			
<b>Points of Emphasis</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use a basketball or football and increase weight of ball (e.g. medicine ball) as athlete improves.</li> <li>• Increase distance as athlete becomes stronger.</li> <li>• Variation: Throw ball to a partner.</li> </ul>			

<b>Drill</b>	Jumping Exercises	<b>Purpose</b>	To increase speed
<b>Reps:</b>	10 reps	<b>When to Use</b>	During Warm up or early in the season
<b>Teaching Points</b>			
1. Jump into hoola-hoops at various distances apart. 2. Jump sideways over cones. 3. Practice squat style jumping into the long jump pit.			
<b>Points of Emphasis</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use various methods of jumping.</li> <li>• Gradually increase distances and heights of challenges.</li> </ul>			

<b>Drill</b>	Learning 3 Step and 5 Step Throws	<b>Purpose</b>	To develop coordinated 3-5 step throw To learn and practice crossover step
<b>Reps:</b>	5 reps of each step as it mastered	<b>When to Use</b>	During Warm up or early in the season
<b>Teaching Points – Progressions/Variations</b>			
1. Sideways movement drills with a jog return 2. Side shuffle with no arms 3. Side shuffle with no arms, springing off their toes 4. Side shuffle with no arms, length of stride increased 5. Repeat using arms in a sweeping circular action 6. Crossover step 7. Crossover step, with hip turn 8. Crossover step, with high knee action 9. Crossover step with arm action			
<b>Points of Emphasis</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Running crossover steps will take some time and some athletes may not manage it. It is a skill to be able to go faster while running in a side on position.</li> <li>• Gradually increase the difficulty of the exercises as the athlete becomes more confident and competent.</li> </ul>			

## Top Tips for Coaching Mini-Javelin (Skill Development)

1. To help athletes take the correct grip, the coach holds the mini-javelin vertically. The athlete slides first finger and thumb down the shaft until they hit the binding. Close all the other fingers around the grip and pick the javelin up.
2. Athletes may have difficulty with deciding which grip is best for them if they have never thrown it before. Experiment with all three options to determine the best option for the athlete. Coach should demonstrate the correct positioning of the fingers.

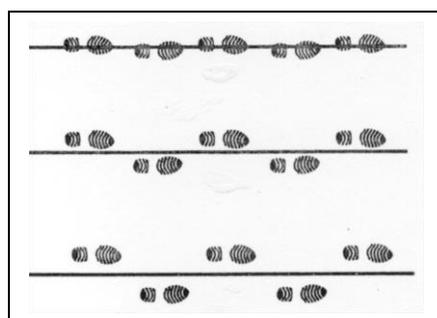
- 
3. Remind athletes to point the mini-javelin at their target. A tip pointed too high can result in the javelin:
    - Cartwheeling end-over-end
    - Landing flat or tail-first (i.e. a foul throw)
    - Taking too steep a flight path, causing it to nose-dive
  4. Hold the javelin away from the body
    - Instruct the athletes to keep the tip of the javelin close to their temple or their eye. If they are wearing a cap you can tell them to hold the point of the javelin on the peak of their cap.
  5. Stopping or slowing during the run up can reduce the distance an athlete throws. If your athlete does this, practice with a shorter run up (e.g. 3-5 steps). Focus on building and keeping up speed on the runway. Speed must be transferred into the throw. A short, continuous run up is better than a long one with stops.
  6. Teach athletes that the javelin should be pulled over the shoulder in one continuous, smooth action. This can be learnt without a javelin or with other implements e.g. softballs, cricket balls, etc.
  7. Teach athletes that after releasing the javelin, their hand should “follow” the implement and then continue down and across their body. The javelin needs to be thrown with speed and force. If the athlete does not follow through, the javelin will appear to be “lobbed”.

# Race Walking Key Skills Checklist

Your Athlete Can
From start, push off with rear foot. Step forward with front foot
Swing arms vigorously to stimulate quick foot movement.
Power body forward by lifting heel and pushing off with toes
Place feet in a straight line with toes pointed directly forward
Rotate hips forward and in with each stride
Drop and roll hips while twisting back and forth
Bend the knee as leg is swung forward
Straighten knee all the way back, pulling ground as the heel touches it
Use toes and calf muscles to push body forward
Increase drive off toes by rolling over and off them
Walk with head up, torso erect and centered over hips
Hold hands with fingers bent, relaxed and loose
Swing arms across chest as they move back and forth
Maintain upright position with neck and shoulders relaxed
Use relaxed hip movements as speed increases
Race walk under control for entire race
Perform proper heel-toe movement

## Overview: Race Walking

Walking is defined as propelling oneself forward while keeping at least one foot in contact with the ground. The skill of race walking is complex. It requires a lot of practice and endurance. Athletes must use quick steps. The heel of the lead foot must touch the ground before the toes of the support foot leave the ground. During a race walking event, the athlete must always have one foot in contact with the ground. During the stride, the leg must be straight for a moment. The supporting leg must be straight in a vertically upright position. A walker may be disqualified if they do not have continuous contact with the ground.



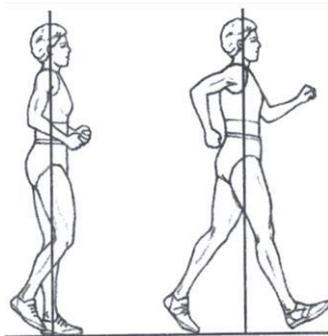
Correct foot placement

Incorrect foot placement. Shows insufficient hip rotation or lack of flexibility

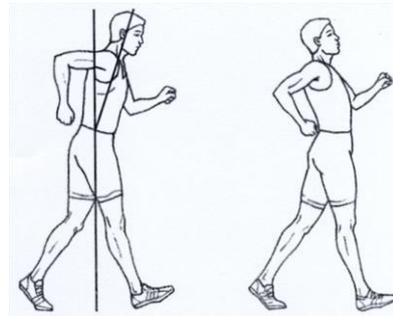
## COACHING POINTS – BEGIN WALKING MOTION AND ACCELERATION

1. Take a stand start position. Push off with rear foot and front foot simultaneously. Step forward with rear foot.
2. Swing arms vigorously to stimulate quick foot movement.
3. Power body forward by lifting the heel and pushing off with toes.
4. Walk forward, swinging bent arms in opposition to legs.
5. The heel of the lead foot must touch the ground just before the toe of the trailing foot leaves the ground in heel-toe movement. Feet are placed one in front of the other.
6. Hold hands so the fingers relaxed and loose.
7. Walk with the head up. Keep the torso erect and centered over the hips.

### CORRECT FORM



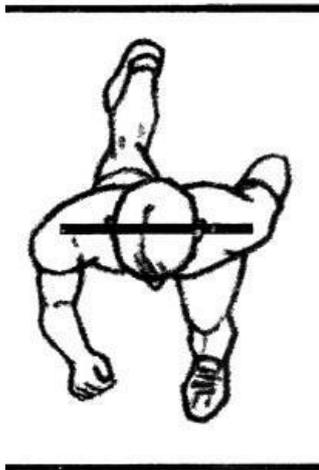
### INCORRECT FORM



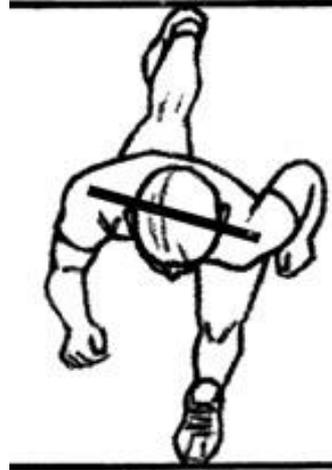
## COACHING POINTS - MAINTAINING MOMENTUM IN RACE WALKING

1. Let toe and calf muscle push body forward with feet landing in a straight line.
2. Let the hips rotate forward and in with each stride.
3. Hold arms at 90 degrees. Swing arms vigorously forward and back.
4. Let arms swing across your chest as they move back and forth. Forearms should be parallel to the ground, and arm swing originates from shoulders.
5. Maintain an upright position. Neck and shoulders are relaxed.
6. Hips drop and roll while twisting back and forth. This allows your legs to move faster and easier and gives you a longer stride.
7. The knee bends and swings forward taking the step. This allows toes to clear ground.
8. The advancing leg must be straightened at heel strike. It must remain straight until it is in the vertical position.
9. Toes and calf muscles are used to push the body forward. Feet land in approximately straight line with toes pointed forward.

10. Increase drive off toes by rolling over and off them.
11. Use relaxed hip movements as speed increases.
12. Race walk at highest speed possible while maintaining the correct form.
13. Complete race with a strong finish.



**Good hip rotation**



**Too much hip rotation**

## TRAINING TO IMPROVE TECHNIQUE – RACE WALKING

OBSERVATION	CORRECTION BY COACH	DRILL/TEST
Hips are moving side to side, not forward/backward	Improve hip mobility. Increase understanding of correct motion (or increase awareness of the error)	Break steps down to demonstrate correct direction hips need to move
Arms move too vigorously up and down and cross body	Swing arms forward and backward (like pistons), flexed at elbows. Do not cross arms over the body	Practice standing; guide proper technique
Rear foot leaves the ground before leading foot touches the ground	Get foot down quicker. Remember grabbing motion into ground with foot	Slow down/reduce speed

## TRAINING DRILLS FOR RACE WALKING

Drill	Race Walking Drill	Purpose	
			Develop pacing Develop capacity to surge
<b>Reps:</b>	3 x 300m of increasing – decreasing patterns	<b>When to Use</b>	Beginning of skill work
<b>Teaching Points</b>			
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Start at slow pace</li> <li>2. Blow whistle after about 50m to indicate increase in speed.</li> </ol>			
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3. Blow whistle again after another 50m to indicate another increase in speed.</li> <li>4. Blow whistle 2x to indicate decrease in speed.</li> </ol>			
<b>Points of Emphasis</b>			
Maintain proper form			

## TOP TIPS FOR COACHING RACE WALKING (SKILL DEVELOPMENT)

1. Demonstrate each component of this event:
  - Starting the race.
  - Walking: keeping at least one foot in contact with the ground.
  - Making contact with the heel at a point just in front of the body's center of gravity.
2. Race walk 100m:
  - In smooth and easy strides. Keep continuous contact with the ground.
  - With no lateral swinging of the trunk or hips.
  - With the arms bent 90 degrees at elbows.
  - At various speeds. Maintain proper form and pace.
  - At a high speed. Concentrate on arm and leg drive and proper form.
3. Race walk 200m with no backward lean or forward sway.
4. Use arms to control speed.
5. Ask the athlete to feel the strong push off the toe of the back foot. Ask them to concentrate on using strong pushes off the back foot to increase stride lengths while race walking 100-200m.
6. Emphasize using bent arms to increase the power of each leg drive.
7. Practice the arm swing while standing still.
8. Teach the athlete to stay in his or her own lane.
9. Roll up onto and off the toes of the back foot to increase drive. Note that the back foot becomes nearly vertical at high speeds.
10. Note that as the feet pass each other, the hip of the swinging leg reaches its lowest point and the other hip reaches its highest point.
11. Tell the athlete to think of walking "more easily" when walking faster.
12. Place feet directly in front of each other. Try not to allow feet to turn outward.
13. Keep head up, looking at the finish line.

# Wheelchair Racing Key Skills Checklist

<b>Your Athlete Can</b>
Sit in back of seat. Buttocks are pressed against lower part of chair back
Lean upper body forward. Keep shoulders ahead of hips
Hold knees and feet together and centered in chair
Grasp wheels or handrails at 11 o'clock position
Keep head slightly forward
Push wheels or handrails forward from 11 o'clock to 4 o'clock position. Then release hands from wheels
Keep moving arms and hands in a circular motion. Move past 6 and 9 o'clock positions and recover to 11 o'clock position.
Keep body and head still during stroke and recovery

## Overview: Wheelchair Racing

Wheelchair Racing events in Special Olympics are available for athletes using manual and motorized wheelchairs.

The following events may be offered at Special Olympics competitions:

Manual		Motorized
10m	100m	30m Slalom
25m	200m	50m Slalom
30m Slalom	400m	25m Obstacle Race
4x25m Shuttle Relay		

Manual wheelchair and Motorized wheelchairs are not permitted in the same events. Athletes must be able to complete their event independently. This means that coaches may not provide assistance during the race.

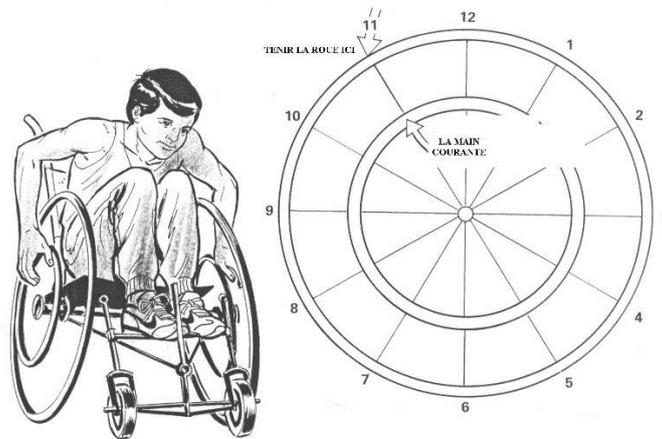
## COACHING POINTS – WHEELCHAIR RACING (READY-TO-RACE POSITION)

1. Athletes must remain seated on the cushion or seat of the wheelchair.
2. Lean upper body forward so shoulders are ahead of hips.
3. Hold knees and feet together in the center of the chair.

4. Grasp wheels or handrails at 11 o'clock position, i.e. just behind highest point of wheel (12 o'clock position). Thumbs should be inside and fingers outside.
5. Keep head slightly forward and focus several meters ahead.

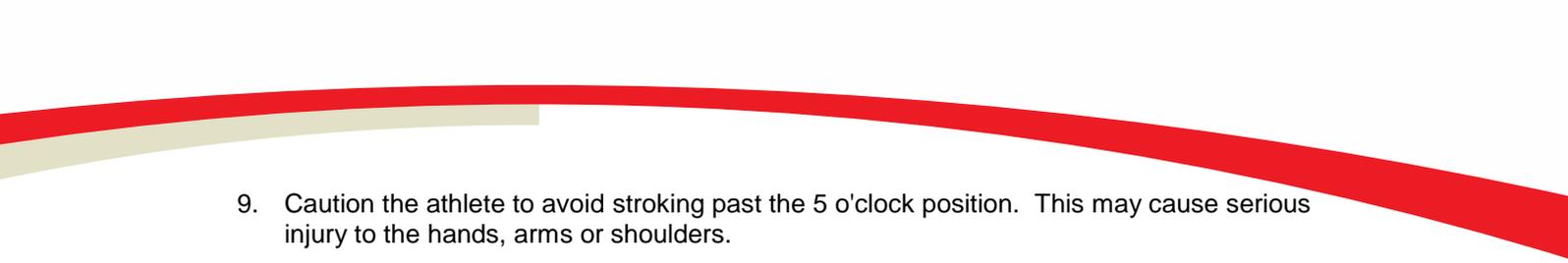
## COACHING POINTS – WHEELCHAIR RACING (FORWARD STROKE AND RECOVERY)

1. Take ready-to-race position. Push the wheels or handrails forward from 11 o'clock to the 4 o'clock position. Release hands from wheels.
2. Keep moving arms and hands in a circular motion. (i.e., past 6 and 9 o'clock positions, and recover to the 11 o'clock position). Repeat
3. Keep body and head still during stroke and recovery.



## TOP TIPS FOR COACHING WHEELCHAIR RACING (SKILL DEVELOPMENT)

1. Demonstrate the ready position.
2. Prompt athlete to reposition an arm, hand, leg if needed. Do this by touching it, or reposition it in the correct position. Always ask your athlete's permission before you make physical contact.
3. For athletes with balance difficulties, position feet upward against chair. Raise knees to the chest.
4. Explain the stroke by showing a wheel and clock positions for hands.
5. Remind the athlete to:
  - Keep body, trunk and head still.
  - Move only the arms and hands.
  - Upper body movement slows the chair's momentum. (e.g. bouncing/rocking back and forth)
6. Explain that the strongest part of a stroke should be from the 12 o'clock to the four o'clock position.
7. Run practice competitions. Practice reacting to the sound of the start pistol/command.
8. Concentrate on getting both hands to stroke and recover in unison. Emphasize equal strength so the chair's motion is smooth and efficient.

- 
9. Caution the athlete to avoid stroking past the 5 o'clock position. This may cause serious injury to the hands, arms or shoulders.
  10. Special Note for Wheelchair athletes with arm paralysis. They may pull their chairs forward or push their chairs backward with their feet. Athletes who push their chairs backwards must start with all wheels behind the start line. They must wear helmets.

# Pentathlon Key Skills Checklist

Your Athlete Can
Perform a stand-up or block start
Maintain a very erect posture with hips tall
Push off the track with balls of feet
Drive knees up parallel to track
Maintain high heel recovery as drive foot leaves ground
Maintain tall posture with slight forward body lean. Lean is from ground, not from waist
Swing arms forward and back without rotating shoulders
Keep feet flexed, toes up
Sprint under control for entire race
Measure and mark a long jump approach
Perform a nine-step stride approach
Plant takeoff foot on board behind foul line
Take off from board by extending takeoff leg
Keep upper body straight and head up
Perform a complete and legal step or hang-style running long jump
Measure and mark a high jump approach
Take a stride approach or a flop- or scissor-style high jump approach
Perform a complete and legal flop- or scissor-style high jump
Perform multiple events in one day
Transfer focus from one event to the next event
Demonstrate good overall conditioning, speed, flexibility, strength and endurance

## Overview: The Pentathlon

The pentathlon has five individual track and field events. They are:

1. 100m
2. Long jump
3. Shot put
4. High jump
5. 400m

This is order in which the events will be run at competition.

If your athlete performs 3-4 of these events well, you may consider discussing the pentathlon with them. Pentathletes must have speed, strength, endurance and flexibility. In addition, they must be

skilled at performing each of the events. Training and preparing for the five events of the pentathlon also requires commitment, motivation and concentration.

In pentathlon, times and distances are converted into points. Tables of scores ranging from 1 to 1200 points per event are found in the Special Olympics Athletics Rules. The athlete who scores the greatest combined number of points in all five events wins. Place standings in each of the five events have no bearing on the final outcome.

Athletes competing in the long jump/shot put get three attempts to register a legal jump/throw. If the athlete fouls all three attempts, he/she scores zero for that event. Many athletes will therefore compete to get a safe and legal score on the first attempt. Their next two attempts are used to improve their score.

## TRAINING FOR THE PENTATHLON

Conditioning is extremely important in pentathlon. The coach's initial focus should be on improving all around conditioning:

- Speed
- Strength
- Endurance
- Flexibility

**Speed Training is vital.** Speed is directly related to performance in 3 events (100m, 400m and long jump). This means that improvements in speed can have a large impact on points scored.

**Technique Training is kept simple.** Identify common skills in events. Small improvements in technique can improve competition performance. This can make a big change in the points score at competition.

**Strength Training has two roles.** Traditional strength training improves the general muscular strength of the body. Plyometrics/other dynamic exercises focus on the functional strength of muscles. They improve strength in performing movements related to the sport or event, such as hops and bounds.

**Rest and Recovery are very important.** Training for 5 events places big demands on the body. When we include competition, the pentathlete does a lot of work. Rest and recovery are as important as any training session. They will help to avoid injuries and burnout.

Every athlete will have stronger and weaker events. Coaches should also aim to develop athletes' skills in their weaker events.

Once the athlete is well conditioned, and the events are balanced as far as scoring is concerned, the focus shifts to the jumping events and the 100m. These events provide the greater share of points. The training components for the pentathlon follow.

## PRESEASON PREPARATION PERIOD

### Specific Event Training

- Train for each event as you would for an individual competition. Refer to the relevant sections of this guide for more information.
- Drills should promote conditioning for specific parts of the body.
- Practice technique for each events.
- Focus on endurance first and speed second.

## Strength Training

- Emphasize general strength first.
- Next, increase the focus on developing explosive power for jumps and shot put.

## COMPETITION PERIOD

### Specific Event Training

- Training is more specific and detailed.
- Focus on correcting technique errors.
- Vary the distance in speed training
- Distance of runs should be relatively short and intense and less frequent
- Focus on speed.

### Strength Training

- Focus on strength maintenance.

## TOP TIPS FOR COACHING PENTATHLON (SKILL DEVELOPMENT)

1. Focus on training for speed.
2. Jumping and throwing exercises are two main keys of conditioning
3. Examine your athlete's performance levels against the scoring tables. Identify where small improvements can yield the most points. Consider the conditioning and technique work that can produce these improvements.
4. Plan training in line with the order of events in a pentathlon competition.
5. Remember! Athletes competing in the long jump/shot put get three attempts to register a legal jump/throw. If the athlete fouls all three attempts, he/she scores zero for that event. Consider working with your athlete to ensure a safe and legal score on the first attempt. Their next two attempts can be used to improve their score.

## TOP TIPS FOR PENTATHLON AT COMPETITION

Coaches play an important role in the preparation for competitions. All the time spent in practice will be wasted if the coach and athletes do not address the following important issues.

### 1. Good Mental Approach

- a) It is important to perform well in all events.
- b) Remember, a low score in one event may not mean a poor overall result.
- c) Focus on the event taking place. Athletes should not think about the next event. They should not focus on the last event. Each athlete should have their full concentration on the current event.
- d) Relax between events. It will help you to be mentally ready for the next event.

## **2. Be Prepared for the Weather**

- a) Athletes may be exposed to the elements for 2-3 hours at competition.
- b) Have warm clothing if needed. Protect athletes from the sun, rain, etc.
- c) Athletes should stay out of the sun when not competing or between events.

## **3. Know High Jump Starting Height**

- a) Start with a height you know the athlete can clear.

## **4. Track Competitors' Point Totals**

- a) It can help to give your athlete their score/position prior to the last event (400m). You can also tell them how fast they will have to run to reach a given final score/place.

## **5. Replace Fluids**

- a) Athletes must ensure they consume enough fluids to avoid dehydration. Athletes may also need to eat. Bring healthy snacks to the competition. Refer to Special Olympics Fit 5 Nutrition Guidelines for more information <http://resources.specialolympics.org/fit-5/#.WLFyZfLpU-k>

## **6. Keep the Competition Fun**

- a) If the athlete has trained well, the competition may seem easy. Make sure the focus is on personal performance, not final placings.

# Distance Running Appendix

## 800M – 8-WEEK TRAINING PROGRAM

This workout should be adjusted to match athlete's fitness and skill level. From week 4 onwards, add a 4<sup>th</sup> day and race weekly. This race can be a local event, an official SO event or you can even create a monthly race at training sessions. The important thing is that your athletes get to practice running their event at race pace.

You should ensure every session begins with a warm-up and ends with a cool-down. Refer to our Warm Up and Cool Down Guide on the resources webpage for more information.

<b>WEEK 1</b>		
<b>Day 1</b>	<b>Day 2</b>	<b>Day 3</b>
Quick turn drills 8x200m at 50% Focus: Run tall, quick turn Rest: Jog 400m	Quick turn drills 6x300m at 50% Focus: Run tall, quick turn Rest: Jog 400m	Quick turn drills 2x400m at 50% Rest: Jog 400m 1x800m at 50%
<b>WEEK 2</b>		
<b>Day 1</b>	<b>Day 2</b>	<b>Day 3</b>
Quick turn drills 1000m at 50% Rest: Jog 800m 1200m at 50%	Quick turn drills 4x400m at 75% Rest: Jog 400m 6x300m at 75% Rest: Jog 400m	Quick turn drills 800m at best effort
<b>WEEK 3</b>		
<b>Day 1</b>	<b>Day 2</b>	<b>Day 3</b>
Quick turn drills 2 miles distance run on road, alternate 3 minutes run/30 seconds walk	Quick turn drills 4x400m at goal pace Rest: Jog 400m 800m jog 4x400m at goal pace Rest: Jog 400m	Quick turn drills 1200m at 75% Rest: Jog 800m 1000m at 50% Rest: Jog 800m 4x200m at goal pace Rest: Jog 400m
<b>WEEK 4 - ADD A DAY 4 AND RACE!</b>		
Same as Week 3,		
<b>WEEK 5 - ADD A DAY 4 AND RACE!</b>		
<b>DAY 1</b>	<b>DAY 2</b>	<b>DAY 3</b>
QUICK TURN DRILLS 3 miles distance run on road, alternate 4 minutes run/1 minute walk	QUICK TURN DRILLS 30 SECONDS – RUN AS FAR AS POSSIBLE REST: 90 SECONDS 60 seconds – run as far as possible Rest: 2½ minutes 90 seconds – run as far as possible Rest: 4 minutes	QUICK TURN DRILLS 4x400m at goal pace Rest: Jog 400m 4x400m at goal pace
<b>WEEK 6 - ADD A DAY 4 AND RACE!</b>		
<b>DAY 1</b>	<b>DAY 2</b>	<b>DAY 3</b>
4 miles run on road, easy steady pace. Last 3 miles, alternate between 2 minutes hard running	QUICK TURN DRILLS 4x400m at goal pace Rest: Jog 400m 2x300m at fast as possible	QUICK TURN DRILLS 200m at goal pace, 200m jog 300m at goal pace, 300m jog 400m at goal pace, 400m jog

and 5 minutes medium effort running	Rest: 8 minutes	200m at goal pace
<b>WEEK 7 – ADD A DAY 4 AND RACE!</b>		
SAME AS WEEK 5		
<b>WEEK 8 – DAY 4 - COMPETE IN CHAMPIONSHIP EVENT</b>		
<b>DAY 1</b>	<b>DAY 2</b>	<b>DAY 3</b>
6X400M AT GOAL PACE, FAST Rest: Jog 4 minutes	4X400M AT GOAL PACE, FAST Rest: Jog 4 minutes	2X400M GOAL PACE, FAST Rest: Jog 4 minutes

## 3KM – 8-WEEK TRAINING PROGRAM

Warm Up: Begin each steady state run by walking the first two minutes, then running 10 minutes easy.

Cool down: Jog for five minutes. Follow this by 6x100m strides.

Week 1			
Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4
2M at EE (Ae)	2.5M at E (Ae)	2 miles at 75% E (Ae)	2.5M at E (Ae)
Week 2			
Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4
3M at Ae	5x800m at ME Rest: 3min jog (An, Ae)	4x400m at 75%E Rest: 400m jog between efforts Jog 800m 5x400m at 75% E Rest: 400 jog between efforts	10 min hard run at 75% 400m pace from Day 3
Week 3			
Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4
4M at Ae	2x1600m at 10km pace 5 min rest between efforts	3M at Marathon pace	3.5M at RE (Ae)
Week 4			
Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4
3x1200m at 10km pace Rest: 4 mins (Ae)	4M at RE (Ae)	2x1600m at 10km pace Rest: 5 min jog between effort (Ae, An)	3M at Marathon pace (Ae)
Week 5			
Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4
4M at RE (Ae)	5x200m at 3km pace Rest: 200m jog between efforts (An)	4M at RE pace (Ae)	1M run for time (ME)
Week 6			
Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4
4x400m at 3km pace Rest: Jog 400m between efforts Jog 800m Repeat (An)	3.5M at RE (Ae)	1M at E 800m jog 4x400m at 3km pace Rest: 400m jog between efforts (Ae, An)	3km Race/Time Trial at ME
Week 7			
Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4
4M at RE 6 times during run, increase to 3km pace for 30s (Ae)	400m Hip Flexibility 2M walk for time	4M at RE 6 times during run, increase to 3km pace for 30s (Ae)	400m total flexibility 4x800m at 5km pace 4 min jog between efforts 4 sets of 10 curl sit-ups

Week 8			
Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4
3M at RE 4 times during run, increase to 3km pace for 30s (Ae)	10 mins at RE 4x400m at 3km pace Rest: Jog 400m between efforts (An)	10 mins Easy 3x400m at 3km pace Rest: Jog 400m between efforts (Ae, An)	Championship Race at ME (An)

## 5KM & 10KM 12 WEEK TRAINING PROGRAM

Don't forget your warm up and cool down! Check out our Warm Up and Cool Down guide for more information.

Warm Up: Begin each session with 10-12 mins of light to moderate intensity activity. For example, walk briskly for two minutes, then increase to a light jog for 10 minutes. You can include some dynamic stretching.

Cool Down: Each session should finish with a cool down of 5 minutes jogging. Don't forget to stretch before and after the session.

Week 1			
Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4
3.5 M at E	3M at E	3.5M at ME (Ae)	5x800m @ ME (Ae, An) Recovery: 3 min jog between reps
Week 2			
Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4
4M at E	4 x 1200m at E Recovery: 3:30 mins jog between reps	4M at ME (Ae)	10 min run for distance (Ae, An) Measure to meter and calculate pace per 1600m
Week 3			
Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4
4.5M at E (Ae)	2 x (4x400m) at (An) 400m jog between each 400m Jog 800m between sets	3M at RE	2M time trial at ME
Week 4			
Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4
4M at RE (Ae)	3x1200m at 10km pace (Ae) Rest: Jog 800m between efforts	4.5M at RE (Ae)	2x(4x400m) at 5km pace (An) 400m jog between each 400m Jog 800m between sets
Week 5			
Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4
4x200m at 5km pace Jog 2 x 800m	3M hills at ME (Ae) Run up hard, easy down	4M at RE	5km Race/Time Trial at ME
Week 6			
Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4
1M at RE 2M at E 1M RE (Ae, An)	Run in hills at ME (Ae) Run up hard, easy down	2x200m at 5km pace Jog 200m between efforts Jog 800m 4x200m at 10km pace Jog 200m between efforts Jog 800m REPEAT (An)	3km Race/Time Trial at ME
Week 7 and Week 8			

Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4
4 x 400m at 5km pace Jog 400m between efforts Jog 800m 4x200m (2 sets) Jog 200m between efforts Jog 400m between sets	3M at RE (Ae)	20 mins at RE 20 mins at E (Ae, An)	10km run at ME
<b>Week 9</b>			
Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4
4x400m at 5km pace Jog 400m between efforts Jog 800m 4x200m (2sets) Jog 200m between efforts Jog 400m between sets	4M at RE (Ae)	3M hills (Ae)	3x1M at 10km pace Rest: Jog 5min
<b>Week 10 (Repeat Week 7)</b>			
<b>Week 11</b>			
Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4
5x800m Run 1 <sup>st</sup> 400m at 5km pace Run 2 <sup>nd</sup> 400m at 10km pace Rest: Jog 3mins (Ae, An)	6x1000m at 10km pace Rest: Jog 3 mins	2M Easy 4x400m at 5km pace Jog 200m between efforts	10km Race at ME
<b>Week 12</b>			
Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4
2M Easy 6x400m at 5km pace Jog 400m between efforts	2M Easy 5x400m at 5km pace Rest: Jog 3 mins (Ae, An)	2M Easy 4x400m at 5km pace Jog 3min between efforts	Championship Race at ME

## MARATHON TRAINING PLAN – 18-WEEK SCHEDULE

<b>Principles</b>	Novice and first-time marathon athletes
<b>Minimum competency</b>	Athlete should be able to run 10 km before starting marathon training
<b>Initial weeks</b>	Smaller steps to build endurance
<b>Middle weeks</b>	Adding a rest week when runs are getting longer

Each day the session has a different focus

<b>Monday</b>	Up-tempo runs or hill repeats of moderate incline about 250 meters long
<b>Tuesday</b>	Rest or cross-training with a moderate activity such as swimming or walking (little running motion)
<b>Wednesday</b>	Up-tempo runs or hill repeats of moderate incline about 250 meters long
<b>Thursday</b>	Easy recovery run
<b>Friday</b>	High repeats/low weights; just toning, not building bulk
<b>Saturday</b>	Long slow run (65 to 75% of marathon pace – for example, for 4:30 marathon, 7- to 8-minute/km pace)
<b>Sunday</b>	Recovery

Week	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
1	44 min	Rest / Cross-train	44 min	44 min	Weights	12 km	Rest Day
2	3 x hill training	Rest / Cross-train	55 min	55 min	Weights	12 km	Rest Day
3	55 min	Rest / Cross-train	4 x hill training	55 min	Weights	16 km	Rest Day
4	55 min	Rest / Cross-train	55 min	66 min	Weights	18 km	Rest Day
5	4 x hill training	Rest / Cross-train	66 min	66 min	Weights	20 km	Rest Day
6	66 min	Rest / Cross-train	5 x hill training	55 min	Weights	23 km	Rest Day
7	66 min	Rest / Cross-train	66 min	66 min	Weights	18 km	Rest Day
8	5 x hill training	Rest / Cross-train	77 min	77 min	Weights	25 km	Rest Day
9	77 min	Rest / Cross-train	6 x hill training	55 min	Weights	28 km	Rest Day
10	66 min	Rest / Cross-train	77 min	77 min	Weights	23 km	Rest Day
11	6 x hill training	Rest / Cross-train	77 min	77 min	Weights	32 km	Rest Day
12	66 min	Rest / Cross-train	6 x hill training	55 min	Weights	25 km	Rest Day
13	55 min	Rest / Cross-train	66 min	66 min	Weights	34 km	Rest Day
14	5 x hill training	Rest / Cross-train	66 min	66 min	Weights	25 km	Rest Day
15	55 min	Rest / Cross-train	55 min	66 min	Weights	36 km	Rest Day
16	55 min	Rest / Cross-train	5 x hill training	55 min	Weights	21 km	Rest Day
17	4 x hill training	Rest / Cross-train	55 min	55 min	Weights	16 km	Rest Day
18	44 min	Rest / Cross-train	55 min	Rest	Weights	3 km	Race Day

## MARATHON TRAINING PLAN – 21-WEEK SCHEDULE

**Principles:** Intermediate athlete who needs more rest days but has some harder workouts in the week.

<b>Phase 1 (Week 1-4)</b>	26 to 32 miles per week Long runs: 10/11/12/13M per week 70 to 90 mins hilly course per week Easy runs
<b>Phase 2 (Weeks 5-8)</b>	30 to 38 miles per week Long runs: 14 to 17 miles every other week 5-7 x 1200meter at 8k pace, 5 min jog between 80 to 110 mins on a hilly course per week
<b>Phase 3 (Weeks 9-18)</b>	40 miles per week 3 easy weeks of 25 miles Long runs: 18-25 miles every 2 to 3 weeks 12 x 400m at 2-mile pace (walk 200m; 4 minutes rest after 6 x 400m)

	2-3 5-13-mile runs (including 1 run at or near marathon pace every other week) Races every 2 to 3 weeks that serve as fast speed work Easy runs to the mileage up to 40 miles
<b>Phase 4 (Week 19-21)</b>	"Pre-race" phase No hills

M = miles

<b>Week</b>	<b>Monday</b>	<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>Thursday</b>	<b>Friday</b>	<b>Saturday</b>	<b>Sunday</b>	<b>Total Mileage</b>
1	5M	Rest Day	10M	5M	Rest Day	70min hill	Rest Day	26
2	5M	Rest Day	11M	5M	Rest Day	70min hill	Rest Day	27
3	5M	Rest Day	12M	4M	Rest Day	80min hill	Rest Day	29
4	5M	Rest Day	13M	4M	Rest Day	80min hill	Rest Day	30
5	9M	Rest Day	5x1200m	8M	Rest Day	100min hill	Rest Day	32
6	80min hill	Rest Day	6x1200m	4M	Rest Day	15M	Rest Day	34
7	9M	Rest Day	6x1200m	8M	Rest Day	100min hill	Rest Day	33
8	80min hill	Rest Day	7x1200m	4M	Rest Day	17M	Rest Day	37
9	10M	Rest Day	12x400m	4M	9M	Rest Day	12M	41
10	Rest Day	9M	4x1M	Rest Day	7M	19M	Rest Day	41
11	3M	Rest Day	12x400m	4M	Rest Day	6x1M	4M	26 easy
12	9M	Rest Day	6M at marathon pace	Rest Day	6M	21M	Rest Day	42
13	4M	Rest Day	8x1M	Rest Day	3M	5k race	Rest Day	25 easy
14	6M at marathon pace	Rest Day	9x1M	Rest Day	7M	Rest Day	16M	40
15	Rest Day	7M at marathon pace	6M	Rest Day	4M	25M	Rest Day	40
16	12x400meters	Rest Day	6M	6M	Rest Day	5k race	Rest Day	25 easy
17	7M	Rest Day	10x1M	4M	7M	Rest Day	11M at marathon pace	41
18	Rest Day	9M	Rest Day	7M	Rest Day	20M	Rest Day	41
19	3M	7M	5x1M	Rest Day	3M	12M at marathon pace	Rest Day	30
20	6M	Rest Day	5x1M	Rest Day	5M	10M	Rest Day	26
*21*	6M	Rest Day	3M at marathon pace	Rest Day	2M	Rest Day	Marathon	11 + Marathon

# HALF-MARATHON TRAINING PLAN – 18-WEEK SCHEDULE

**Principles:** Novice and first-time half-marathon athletes

**Focus on:** Building endurance.

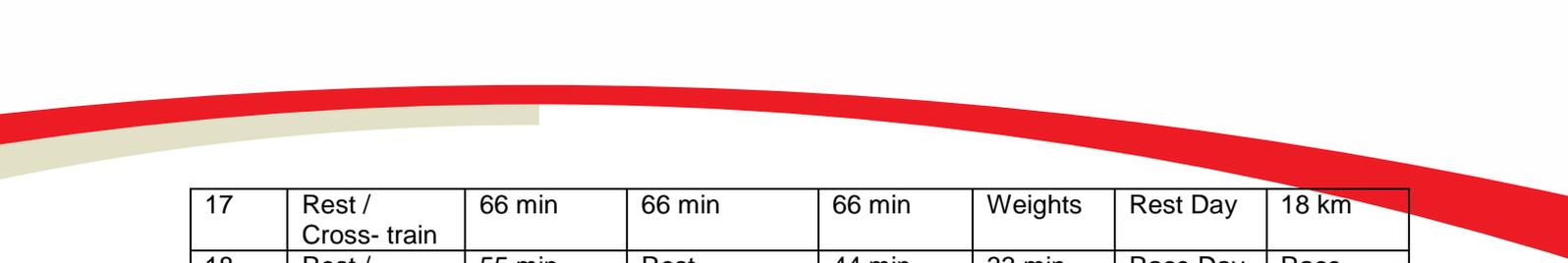
Shorter timed runs during the week so athlete does not have to worry about distance;

Sunday run ensures distances are being covered.

Each day the session has a different focus

<b>Monday</b>	Rest or cross training with a moderate activity such as swimming or walking (little running motion)
<b>Tuesday</b>	Up-tempo runs or hill repeats of moderate incline about 250 meters long
<b>Wednesday</b>	Tempo pace during the middle of run
<b>Thursday</b>	Easy recovery run
<b>Friday</b>	High repeats/low weights; just toning, not building bulk
<b>Saturday</b>	Recovery
<b>Sunday</b>	Long slow run (65 to 75% of half-marathon pace – for example, for 2:15 half-marathon.,7 to 8 minute km pace)

Week	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
1	Rest / Cross-train	33 min	33 min	33 min	Weights	Rest Day	4 km run
2	Rest / Cross-train	33 min	33 min	33 min	Weights	Rest Day	6 km run
3	Rest / Cross-train	3 x hill training	44 min	44 min	Weights	Rest Day	6 km run
4	Rest / Cross-train	44 min	3 x hill training	44 min	Weights	Rest Day	8 km run
5	Rest / Cross-train	44 min	44 min	44 min	Weights	Rest Day	8 km run
6	Rest / Cross-train	3 x hill training	44 min	44 min	Weights	Rest Day	10 km run
7	Rest / Cross-train	55 min	3 x hill training	55 min	Weights	Rest Day	10 km run
8	Rest / Cross-train	55 min	55 min	55 min	Weights	Rest Day	12 km run
9	Rest / Cross-train	3 x hill training	55 min	55 min	Weights	Rest Day	12 km run
10	Rest / Cross-train	66 min	3 x hill training	55 min	Weights	Rest Day	14 km run
11	Rest / Cross-train	66 min	66 min	66 min	Weights	Rest Day	14 km run
12	Rest / Cross-train	3 x hill training	66 min	66 min	Weights	Rest Day	16 km run
13	Rest / Cross-train	66 min	3 x hill training	66 min	Weights	Rest Day	16 km run
14	Rest / Cross-train	66 min	66 min	66 min	Weights	Rest Day	18 km run
15	Rest / Cross-train	3 x hill training	77 min	44 min	Weights	Rest Day	18 km run
16	Rest / Cross- train	77 min	3 x hill training	77 min	Weights	Rest Day	20 km run



17	Rest / Cross- train	66 min	66 min	66 min	Weights	Rest Day	18 km
18	Rest / Cross- train	55 min	Rest	44 min	33 min	Race Day	Race