Athletics
Training, Health, and Fitness Guide

A quick-start resource for all levels of coaches.

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Partially sourced from: Special Olympics International Athletics Coaching Guide
HEALTH and FITNESS TALK

Suggestions for including a focus on year-round health and wellness in your sports practice.

“To be a great athlete, you need to be a healthy athlete.”

These discussions are laid out in balance, order, and accordance with Special Olympics Montana’s 8 weeks – 10 hours practice requirements. An included practice plan, which shows how these discussions can fit in a practice, is included in this same packet.

The goal of Health and Fitness Talk is to support the health, fitness, growth, and success of Special Olympics Montana competitors. It is designed to be used as a part of your practice season. The following discussions will provide competitors with the introductory knowledge to begin thought processes on:

- Identifying nutritious choices
- Balancing nutrition and portions
- Making healthy and balanced snack and meals choices
- The importance of hydration
- Identifying unhealthy beverage choices
- Understanding endurance and strength
- Understanding flexibility and balance
- Understanding the benefits and fun of exercise

If you are interested in a more in-depth Health and Fitness Program, explanations, examples, and lesson plans/guides, reach out to the Special Olympics Montana Senior Director of Innovation at 406-216-5327.

Practice Week #1 Discussion: NUTRITION: Eating right is important to your health and your sports performance. Eating right can be easy and enjoyable because there are many delicious healthy choices.

Your goal is to eat at least 5 total fruits and vegetables every day!

Tell your teammate the names of some Fruits:
- Fresh: Apples, Bananas, Berries, Grapes, Kiwi, Oranges
- Frozen Fruits
- Canned fruits (pick options with no added sugar)
- Dried fruits: Raisins, Bananas, Apricots

Tell your teammate the names of some Vegetables:
- Fresh: Asparagus, Broccoli, Carrots, Cauliflower, Green Beans, Peppers, Squash
- Lettuces and Dark Leafy Greens
- Frozen Vegetables
- Salads
- Canned Vegetables
-What fruits can you have for breakfast? Lunch?
-What vegetables can you have for lunch? Dinner?

You know fruits and vegetables are important for your health, but sometimes it can be difficult to know what other foods you should be eating. Here is a list of the other food groups and some great choices in each group that make up a healthy meal or diet.

**Grains:**
- Brown or Wild, or Unpolished Rice
- Oatmeal
- Whole Grain Bread
- Whole Grain Pasta
- Whole Grain Crackers
- Tortilla
- Flatbread

**Diary:**
- Low-fat or Skim Milk
- Low-fat Cheese
- Low-fat, unsweetened yogurt (watch the sugar!)
- Cottage Cheese

**Meats and Beans (Protein):**
- Lean Meats
- Eggs
- Fish (frozen, fresh or canned)
- Nuts
- Beans

-Tell your partner the Grains you ate yesterday. Dairy?
-Share with a teammate what protein (Meats & Beans) you had last night for dinner.

**Practice Week #2 Discussion:** BUILDING A HEALTHY PLATE: From last time, you now know what types of foods to eat. Here is how to build a healthy plate for a meal or for a snack.
- Watch the amounts of food you put on your plate (share/discuss the “Perfect Portions” diagram below).
- Save junk food like desserts, chips and sodas for special occasions.
- Make half of your plate fruits or vegetables (see diagram below).
- Fill the other half with foods like whole grains, dairy, and protein.
- Add more fruits and vegetables to your meals.
- Keep snacks healthy and small.

-Tell your teammate how to build a healthy plate.
-Name the 4 food groups that should make up a healthy meal.
Here's a fun way to remember how much to eat when you have a serving. The size of sports equipment on the left is about the same size as one serving of the foods on the right.

- 1 serving of fruit = baseball
- 1 serving of cereal = hockey puck
- 1 serving of nuts = 1 tennis ball

Make half of your plate fruits or vegetables. Fill the other half with foods like whole grains, dairy, and protein.
**Practice Week #3 Discussion:** HEALTHY SNACK IDEAS: Snacking is a great way to make sure you are full of energy. It is important to keep your snacks healthy. Here are a few ideas for tasty snacks that are packed with fruits and vegetables.

- Apple slices dipped in peanut butter
- Low-fat unsweetened yogurt with berries
- Low-fat cottage cheese with tomatoes
- Carrots or peppers dipped in hummus
- Celery topped with peanut butter and raisins

**-What snacks do you like the most? Are these healthy snacks or junk food snacks?**

**-Tell your partner a healthy snack you could make for yourself.**

**-Are these healthy snacks (thumbs up) or junk food snacks (thumbs down)?**

- Doritos
- Banana with peanut butter
- Snickers candy bar
- A half cup of nuts
- Carrot sticks
- A cookie

**HEALTHY MEALS:** Add more fruits and vegetables to your meals. You can make any meal more nutritious with these simple suggestions.

**Breakfast**

- Have a piece of fruit with your meal.
- Vegetables like spinach, tomatoes, onions, and peppers make great toppings on omelettes.
- Dried or cut fruit make great toppings on cereal and oatmeal as well.

**Lunch**

- Top sandwiches with plenty of vegetables like lettuce, tomatoes, cucumbers, peppers, and sprouts.
- Try apples, carrots, or celery for a crunchy side.
- Add leftover or canned vegetables like peas and carrots to soups.
- Make a salad with your choice of meat, cheese, lots of vegetables, and an oil-based dressing.

**Dinner**

- Add vegetables like broccoli, squash, or peppers to pastas.
- Make a stir-fry with brown rice, your favorite lean meat or seafood, and vegetables.
- Add a side of steamed vegetables or a salad to any meal.
- Have some fruit as a healthy dessert.
-What healthy items can you add to a salad (carrots, tomatoes, sunflower seeds, etc.)?
-Do you like oatmeal? What can add to oatmeal (banana, blueberries, etc.)?
-Tell you partner how are you doing with the goal of having half your plate be fruits and vegetables.

**Practice Week #4 Discussion:** **HYDRATION:** Water is another important fuel for sports and for life. Drinking the right amount of water is important for your health and can also help your athletic performance.

**Your goal is to drink 5 bottles of water every day!** Your water bottle should be 16-20oz or 500-600ml. Drink out of a sports water bottle to track your water intake. Sports bottles are refillable and can hold 16-20oz or 500-600ml of water.

-Do you have a water bottle? Do you take it with you when you go places? Do you bring it with you to practice?
-Are you drinking water with your meals?

**SIGNS OF DEHYDRATION:** Water helps to keep your body working properly. You lose water when you go to the bathroom, sweat, exercise or even breathe. If you lose too much water without drinking more, your body won’t work as well. This is called **dehydration.**
Signs of Dehydration:
- You feel thirsty
- You are tired or sluggish
- You have a headache
- Your mouth is dry
- Your urine is dark yellow or brown

-Tell your teammate two of the signs of dehydration.
-Have you ever been dehydrated? How did you know? How did you feel?

Practice Week #5 Discussion: HEALTHY BEVERAGE CHOICES: There are many beverage options available, but some of them are healthier choices than others. This guide can help you make the best choices to stay hydrated and perform your best.

-What is your favorite thing to drink? How often do you drink it (most days, sometimes, special occasions)?
-What is the best thing to drink (water)? Why (no sugar)?

Sodas, energy drinks, and sports drinks are NOT good beverage choices.
Sodas, energy drinks, and sports drinks have extra sugar and can make you gain weight. Energy drinks and many sodas also have caffeine. Caffeine does not help you stay hydrated.

Moderate amounts of low-fat milk and 100% juice are also good choices in small amounts.
Low-fat milk and 100% fruit juice are good choices with meals. Keep serving sizes small. No more than 3 cups of milk and 1 cup of juice per day.

Water is the best choice for a beverage!
Drink water every day! If you like flavored drinks, try sparkling water or add a few pieces of fruit into your water bottle.
You might consider bringing in some beverages and having your athletes look at the number of grams of sugar in each one. The athletes could count out the number of sugar cubes represented in each drink.

4 grams of sugar = 1 sugar cube

- How does it make you feel knowing that there are 10 teaspoons of sugar in a can of Coke?
- Do sports drinks like Gatorade have sugar in them? TV ads don’t tell you that, do they?
Practice Week #6 Discussion:  **EXERCISE - Endurance & Strength:** You can become a better athlete by enjoying physical activity outside of your sports practice. There are many ways to be physically active. Certain exercises can help you improve the skills needed for your sport. **Your goal is to do at least 5 days of exercise every week!**

*Types of Exercise: ENDURANCE STRENGTH FLEXIBILITY BALANCE*

**Endurance** is the ability of your body to keep moving for long periods of time. Endurance can help you run farther distances without stopping and practice longer with fewer breaks.

**Try your favorite endurance exercise for 30 minutes, 5 days each week.**
Strength is the ability of your body to do work. Strength gives you the ability to jump higher, throw farther, and sprint faster.

Try to complete a workout for the entire body, 2-3 days each week.

- Is dancing exercise? (Yes, endurance.)
- Running, biking, and swimming are examples of what type of exercise? (Endurance)
- Push-ups and sit-ups are what kind of exercise? (Strength)
- What exercise do you do for endurance? Strength?

Practice Week #7 Discussion: EXERCISE- Flexibility & Balance:

Flexibility is the ability of your body to move easily in all directions. Being flexible makes it easier to do sports skills and helps prevent injuries to your muscles and joints!

Balance is the ability of your body to stay upright or stay in control of your movements. Balance helps you to stay in control when you are playing sports and helps you to avoid falls.
Flexibility is the ability of your body to move easily in all directions. Being flexible makes it easier to do sports skills and helps prevent injuries to your muscles and joints!

Try to complete a stretch for all body parts, 2-3 days each week!

Balance is the ability of your body to stay upright or stay in control of your movements. Balance helps you to stay in control when you are playing sports and helps you to avoid falls.

Try to complete a full body balance workout, 2-3 days each week!
Exercise is Fun!

It is easy to get in the right amount of exercise if you make it fun. Here are some tips to help you stay motivated to reach your Fit 5 goal.

Exercise with a friend or group!
- Go on a walk, run, or bike ride with a friend or family member.
- Join a group exercise class.
- Do strength training with a teammate.

Take the lead at practice!
- Ask your coach if you can lead some flexibility or strength exercises.
- Teach a friend a new sport.

Try something new!
- Try a new group exercise class.
- Walk or run a different route than you normally do.
- Learn a new strength or flexibility exercise.

Track your improvements!
- Write a goal on a piece of paper. Post the goal on your wall.
- Keep a log of your exercises so you can see your progress.

Doing exercise together is a fun way to socialize with friends and family.

- How many of you could walk with a friend after school or work? Attend an exercise or fitness class? Bike on a trail? Take a walk with your mom or dad?
- What is a new exercise you would like to try?
- Share your exercise goal with a partner.

The diagrams in this document are from the Special Olympics Fit 5 Guide.

Other resources:

- **NCHPAD.org** This website has lots of health resources for people with disabilities. They have articles, videos, and even workout plans.
- **ChooseMyPlate.org** This website has it all! Learn how many servings of each food group you need, track your eating to see if you are eating healthy, and even find links to healthy recipes.
- **EatRight.org** This website also has loads of nutrition information, healthy recipes, and even a section to find a dietitian in your area.
- **Heart.org** (click on the heading, “Getting Healthy”) The American Heart Association has great resources for leading a healthy lifestyle, including a nutrition center with tons of recipes and cooking videos for heart-healthy recipes.
- **Diabetes.org** (click on the heading, “Food & Fitness”) The American Diabetes Association has lots of great articles for people who have diabetes. There are also many diabetes friendly recipes!
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. 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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Drill</th>
<th>Purpose</th>
<th>Reps:</th>
<th>When to Use</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Skips</td>
<td>Develop quick leg action&lt;br&gt;Develop consistency in proper foot strike</td>
<td>3x30m</td>
<td>Warm Up</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Teaching Points**

1. Take hips tall position
2. Bend and drive one leg up
3. Extend leg from knee
4. Drive leg down on ball of foot.
5. Alternate legs every other skip.
6. Jog back to start
7. Repeat.

**Points of Emphasis**

- Heel drive to buttocks
### Drill: Quick Step Running

**Purpose**: Develop quick leg action over distance

**Reps**: 3 x 30m

**When to Use**: Warm Up

**Teaching Points**

1. Take hips tall position
2. Run in place, bringing heels up and under buttocks.
3. Run forward using medium length strides
4. Use low knee lift.
6. Hold head level, slightly forward.
7. Keep relaxed arm action.
8. Maintain a smooth pace throughout run.
9. Walking lunges back to the start point.
10. Repeat.

**Points of Emphasis**

- Lead with knee then extend leg
- Foot is flexed
- Leg drive down is very fast

### Drill: Fast Leg Drill

**Purpose**: Develop quick foot and leg action

**Reps**: 3 x 10-15 seconds

**When to Use**: Warm Up

**Teaching Points**

1. Take hips tall position.
2. Quickly alternate driving knees up.

**Points of Emphasis**

- Quickness in legs and arms
- Little ground time.

### Drill: Knee Claps

**Purpose**: Develop straight forward running position

**Reps**: 3x30m

**When to Use**: Warm Up

**Teaching Points**

1. Take hips tall position.
2. Hand raised chest high. Palms open, facing down with elbows bent.
3. Drive knee to palm with quick leg action.
4. Alternate legs
5. Walking lunges back to starting point.

**Points of Emphasis**

- Use short steps – little distance covered with each step
- Maintain slight lean forward.
- Do not lean back when driving knee to chest.

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**TRAINING TO IMPROVE TECHNIQUE - SPRINTING**

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

**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
TRAINING TO IMPROVE TECHNIQUE - MIDDLE DISTANCE RUNNING

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

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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Drill</th>
<th>Russian Workout</th>
<th>Purpose</th>
<th>Teaching Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Reps: | 5 (increasing to 15 over time) | Develop Speed Endurance | 1. Run 5x200m at ¾ race pace.  
2. Rest 45 seconds between each 200m.  
3. After five repetitions, rest three minutes.  
4. Repeat. |

Points of Emphasis

- Athlete developing speed endurance
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.

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

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 stagger 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.
Overview: Long Jump
Special Olympics competitions offer two long jump events:

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 45º 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.

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. Emphasis 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 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.
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

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

### LONG JUMP DRILLS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Drill</th>
<th>Purpose</th>
<th>Teaching Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Pop-Ups       | Develop hitch kick and arm action in the air  
Develop Height on jump    | 1. Place hurdle or string or light rope across pit about five feet from takeoff board.  
2. Take Hips Tall position and begin short approach (five or seven strides).  
3. Run toward pit with moderate, controlled speed.  
4. Hit board driving up and out over marker.  
5. Perform hitch kick and arm action in air and land into pit.  
Points of Emphasis  
• Athlete can take off at mark closer to pit if needed  
• Athlete can step onto low box to help create height  
• Maintain tall body posture in position |
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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Drill</th>
<th>Purpose</th>
<th>Reps:</th>
<th>When to Use</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cross the Brook</td>
<td>Develop jumping and falling forward</td>
<td>10-12 Jumps</td>
<td>Beginner jumpers or Technique work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Develop tall body position during jump</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Teaching Points

- Place two ropes on ground about shoulder-width apart, forming a “brook.”
- Jump from one side of the brook to the other.
- Space ropes farther apart to work on hopping distance.

Points of Emphasis

- Powerful drive from legs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Drill</th>
<th>Purpose</th>
<th>Reps:</th>
<th>When to Use</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Circle Jumping</td>
<td>Develop powerful, explosive leg action</td>
<td>10-12 Jumps</td>
<td>Beginner jumpers or Technique work</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Teaching Points

- Place a series of hoops, etc., on ground.
- Hop or bound from hoop to hoop.
- 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.
- Use a forward and upward swing of the arms to help each jump.

Points of Emphasis

- Good Arm Action

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Drill</th>
<th>Purpose</th>
<th>Reps:</th>
<th>When to Use</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Plyometric</td>
<td>Develop powerful, explosive leg action</td>
<td>2 x 5 obstacles</td>
<td>Technique work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hops/Bounds</td>
<td>Develop Spring in legs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(over low obstacles)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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.
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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Drill</th>
<th>Purpose</th>
<th>Reps:</th>
<th>When to Use</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>UNDERHAND TOSS</td>
<td>Warm the body up properly for any shot put practice or competition</td>
<td>10 throws</td>
<td>Warm-up, in throwing ring</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Teaching Points**

1. Stand facing landing area.
2. Hold shot in front of body with both hands.
3. Bend knees and throw shot up and out, away from body, using an underhand toss.

**Points of Emphasis**

- Good extension of arms and legs
- Deep squat, with explosive drive up through hips

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Drill</th>
<th>Purpose</th>
<th>Reps:</th>
<th>When to Use</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CHEST PASS</td>
<td>Warm the body up properly for any shot put practice or competition</td>
<td>5-10 throws</td>
<td>Warm-up, in throwing ring</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Teaching Points**

1. Stand facing landing area.
2. Hold shot with both hands with fingers behind shot.
3. Push shot out like a basketball chest pass.

**Points of Emphasis**

- Good arm extension

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Drill</th>
<th>Purpose</th>
<th>Reps:</th>
<th>When to Use</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GLIDE TO MEDICINE BALL</td>
<td>Develop efficiency in extending leg toward the toe board</td>
<td>5-10 glides</td>
<td>Integrate into entire technique as soon as possible.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Teaching Points**

1. Place medicine ball at center of throwing circle.
2. Take forward straddle position, facing back of throwing circle, with shot in throwing position.
3. Bend the throwing-side knee, transferring weight over knee.
4. Non-throwing leg is relaxed and extended; arm is out to the side.
5. Drive non-throwing leg toward body.
6. Push and glide back toward medicine ball with non-throwing foot.

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Drill</th>
<th>Purpose</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PUTTING FOR DISTANCE</td>
<td>Develop complete putting action</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Develop explosive power in putting action</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reps: 5-10 throws</td>
<td>When to Use</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Once technique work begins.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Teaching Points**
1. Push ball from as far back behind body to as far forward as possible.
2. Drive up onto toes and push forward with body.
3. Release ball so that arms are fully extended in front of body and above head.

**Points of Emphasis**
- Use whole body in this action, not just arms.
- Complete arm extension
- Weight behind body

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Drill</th>
<th>Purpose</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PUTTING FOR HEIGHT AND DISTANCE</td>
<td>Develop complete putting action</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Develop explosive power in putting action</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reps: 5-10 throws</td>
<td>When to Use</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Once technique work begins.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Teaching Points**
1. Stretch a rope between two high jump standards, 2M above ground.
2. Stand behind rope and put ball over rope.
3. If successful, take two steps back away from rope and repeat.

**Points of Emphasis**
- Use whole body in this action, not just arms.
- Complete arm extension
- Weight behind body

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Drill</th>
<th>Purpose</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GLIDE DRILL</td>
<td>Warm the body up properly for any shot put practice or competition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Develop powerful and explosive glide action</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reps: 5-10 glides</td>
<td>When to Use</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Warm-up, in throwing ring</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Teaching Points**
1. Stand with feet parallel in back of circle.
2. Using a normal glide, drive backward off left foot.
3. Land in power position.
4. Rotate hips and feet on drive back.
5. Keep shoulders square to back of circle, opening up left foot and hip

**Points of Emphasis**
- Quick driving action to power position
- Good rotation of hips and feet to power position

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Drill</th>
<th>Purpose</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>WEIGHT TRANSFER – STANDING THROW</td>
<td>Develop effective use of the legs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reps: 5-10 throws</td>
<td>When to Use</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Limited use – integrate into entire technique as soon as possible</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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

**Drill**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Drill</th>
<th>Purpose</th>
<th>When to Use</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PUSH-THROW WITH THE BALL</td>
<td>Develop putting arm action</td>
<td>Early in season – technique work.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Teaching Points**
1. Throw tennis ball against wall with a pushing or putting action.
2. Use body to make throw and extend legs.
3. Push ball with fingertips.
4. Catch ball on rebound from wall and repeat.

**Points of Emphasis**
- Putting ball, not throwing ball.
- Getting body weight behind put
- Extending legs

**Drill**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Drill</th>
<th>Purpose</th>
<th>When to Use</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PUSH-PUT THE BALL WITH PARTNER</td>
<td>Develop putting arm action</td>
<td>Early in season. Technique work</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Teaching Points**
1. Partners stand facing each other, 2-3 meters apart.
2. Push ball to partner with one- or two-handed push pass.
3. Step toward partner with left leg if throwing with right arm.
4. Keep elbow of throwing arm at shoulder height.

**Points of Emphasis**
- Putting ball, not throwing ball
- Do not use a real shot
- Get body weight behind the put
- Extend legs

---

**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.
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.
Softball Throw Key Skills Checklist

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YOUR ATHLETE CAN</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Standing Throw</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Place thumb under ball. The index, middle and ring finger should be on top. The little finger should be on the side.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stand 1.5 strides behind foul line. Left shoulder facing throw's direction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keep feet parallel with toes pointing forward. Legs should be a little wider than shoulder-width apart.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raise right arm with elbow pointing back. Hold ball behind the head</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bend left arm and hold it in front of chest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Push off right foot. Take one step with left foot toward direction of throw</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transfer body weight from the right leg to the left leg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bring right arm up and forward, leading with elbow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extend right arm, snap wrist and release ball off fingertips</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Follow with throwing arm, down and across body</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| **Wheelchair Softball Throw** |
| 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.
## Observation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Observation</th>
<th>Correction by Coach</th>
<th>Drill/Test</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Incorrect Grip – Grips too tightly</td>
<td>Wriggle the mini-javelin in the athletes hand to loosen grip</td>
<td>Release the mini-javelin and re-grip using correct technique</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Incorrect Grip – Grips in a fist</td>
<td>Re-arrange the fingers to correct position.</td>
<td>Release the mini-javelin and re-grip using correct technique</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holds the mini-javelin using only the fingertips.</td>
<td>Demonstrate the correct method of gripping the mini-javelin.</td>
<td>Release the mini-javelin and re-grip using correct technique</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pointing the mini-javelin in the wrong direction</td>
<td>Remind athletes to keep javelin pointed in the direction that they want the javelin to go or to “point the javelin at the target”.</td>
<td>Direct athletes in the right direction. Ask the athlete to point to where they need to throw the javelin.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low, round arm throwing action</td>
<td>Teach athlete to deliver the javelin over their shoulder like a tennis serve</td>
<td>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).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Training Drills for Mini-Javelin

### Drill | Stretching | Purpose | When to Use |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reps:</td>
<td>Refer each exercise</td>
<td>To stretch major muscles in the shoulders, torso and arms.</td>
<td>Warm Up</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Teaching Points**

1. 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.  
   - 2 sets of 5 reps
2. Holding the broomstick, the athlete completes a rowing/paddling action.  
   - 2 sets of 10 reps
3. 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.  
   - 2 sets of 5secs
4. 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.  
   - 2 sets of 3 secs on each arm alternating
5. Windmills – swing arms at the side of the body in full circles at the same time and then alternatively. Forwards and backwards  
   - 2 sets of 10 swings on each arm

**Points of Emphasis**

- Start slowly and increase speed as the athlete warms up

### Drill | Throwing Vortex toys/small balls | Purpose | When to Use |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reps:</td>
<td>2 sets of 5 throws</td>
<td>Warm up throwing arm; develop good technique during warm-up</td>
<td>During Warm up or early in the season</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Teaching Points**
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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Drill</th>
<th>Purpose</th>
<th>Reps:</th>
<th>When to Use</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unders</td>
<td>Develop speed and strength</td>
<td>2 sets of 5 reps</td>
<td>During Warm up or early in the season</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Teaching Points**
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.

**Points of Emphasis**
- Start with a light ball and slowly increase weight of ball as the athlete gets stronger
- A medicine ball may be used when athlete is strong enough

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Drill</th>
<th>Purpose</th>
<th>Reps:</th>
<th>When to Use</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Russian Twist</td>
<td>Develop speed and strength in torso for throwing momentum</td>
<td>2 sets of 10 reps</td>
<td>During Warm up or early in the season</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Teaching Points**
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.

**Points of Emphasis**
- Move continuously and smoothly from right to left.
- Use lighter balls to start with and increase the weight as the athlete gets stronger.

<table>
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<th>When to Use</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Target Throws</td>
<td>Develop throwing accuracy</td>
<td>10 target throws</td>
<td>During Warm up or early in the season</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Teaching Points**
1. Start with the mini-javelin at eye level and throw at targets
2. Start with close targets and gradually move targets further away

**Points of Emphasis**
- Progress to starting with feet staggered
- Progress to starting with left foot next to right foot and move it to delivery position
- Start with left foot behind right and move it to delivery position

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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Medicine ball standing throw</td>
<td>Increase strength and power of throwing action</td>
<td>2 sets of 5 reps – increase as strength/endurance improves</td>
<td>During Warm up or early in the season</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Teaching Points**
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.

**Points of Emphasis**
- 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.

### Throwing Exercises

**Drill** | Throwing Exercises  
**Reps:** 2 sets of 10 reps  
**Purpose** | To increase strength and throwing power  
**When to Use** | During Warm up or early in the season

#### Teaching Points
1. Stand or sit a 1-2m from a wall.
2. Throw the ball overhead against the wall using 2 hands

#### Points of Emphasis
- Use a basketball or football and increase weight of ball (e.g. medicine ball) as athlete improves.
- Increase distance as athlete becomes stronger.
- Variation: Throw ball to a partner.

### Jumping Exercises

**Drill** | Jumping Exercises  
**Reps:** 10 reps  
**Purpose** | To increase speed  
**When to Use** | During Warm up or early in the season

#### Teaching Points
1. Jump into hoola-hoops at various distances apart.
2. Jump sideways over cones.
3. Practice squat style jumping into the long jump pit.

#### Points of Emphasis
- Use various methods of jumping.
- Gradually increase distances and heights of challenges.

### Learning 3 Step and 5 Step Throws

**Drill** | Learning 3 Step and 5 Step Throws  
**Reps:** 5 reps of each step as it mastered  
**Purpose** | To develop coordinated 3-5 step throw  
To learn and practice crossover step  
**When to Use** | During Warm up or early in the season

#### Teaching Points – Progressions/Variations
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

#### Points of Emphasis
- 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.
- Gradually increase the difficulty of the exercises as the athlete becomes more confident and competent.

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**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 following through, the javelin will appear to be “lobbed”.

Training Plan with Health and Fitness Elements

Elements of a safe and successful practice

- Check area for safety hazards
- Warmup
- Stretching
- Skills practice
- HYDRATE!!!
- Competitive/fun session
- Cool down
- Health and fitness discussion
- Wrap-up and conclusion
- *Elements can be added and subtracted, as desired*

1.25 hour practice plan example

- 8:30-8:40 – Coach arrives and checks area for safety hazards.
- 8:45-8:50 – Walking or jogging to warm-up muscles.
- 8:50-9:00 – Stretching
- 9:00-9:15 – Skills practice
- 9:15-9:20 – Water break
- 9:20-9:30 – Skill practice
- 9:30-9:40 – Competitive/fun session
- 9:40-9:45 – Cool down
- 9:45-10:00 – Health and Fitness Discussion, Wrap-up, and conclusion