



## TRACK & FIELD WEEKLY COACHING GUIDE

### RUNNING FORM

Week 1	Standing Crouch Position
Week 2	45 Degree Lean at Start
Week 3	Running Tall, Quiet Form
Week 4	Arm Pump, "Smile to Pocket"
Week 5	High Knees

### RUNNING LONG JUMP / STANDING LONG JUMP

Week 1	"Tall" Posture	Wide Stance - parallel feet
Week 2	6-8 Step Approach	Rock Rhythm - bend knees / swing arms
Week 3	Knee Lift	Take Off - forcefully swing arms forward
Week 4	Take Off Accuracy	Jump off both feet & high knee tuck
Week 5	Maximum Controllable Speed	Fully extend

### HIGH JUMP

Week 1	Running the J - "J-shaped" approach
Week 2	Jump and roll out
Week 3	8 Step approach (accelerate, bound, take-off)
Week 4	Take-off (placement of take-off foot and knee drive)
Week 5	Use of arms - wide to narrow action

### BASEBALL THROW

Week 1	Grip
Week 2	Stance
Week 3	Windup
Week 4	Follow-Through
Week 5	Run-Up

### SHOT PUT

Week 1	Difference between push and throw
Week 2	Proper hold and hand position (in fingers not in palm)
Week 3	Place in neck and elbow out
Week 4	Stance (side on, legs wider than shoulder)
Week 5	Release (high elbow, chicken wing, lean back, point to sky, high five to the sky)

## WARM-UP ROUTINE

- Benefits:
  - Warms the body in preparation for meets and practice
  - Enables a more productive workout
  - Reduces risk of injury
  - Provides time for team building
- Suggested Activities/Drills:
  - Take a lap around the track or infield
  - Complete a series of “runner’s drills” – 30-50 meters
    - A skips
    - Butt kicks
    - High knees
    - Karaoke / Grapevine
    - Striders (start slow, gradually build up to full speed, then coast to a stop)
  - Static Stretches
    - Head, hip, and arm circles
    - Toe touches
    - Calf, hamstring, and quad stretches
    - Butterfly stretches
    - Hurdler stretches

## RUNNING FORM / TECHNIQUE

- Suggested Focus Areas/Activities/Drills:
  - Practice starts (either standing start or 3-point stance)
    - Focus on form and quick/aggressive first step and powerful arms
    - First 2-3 steps should be at a 45-degree lean
  - Running “Tall” and good form
    - No bending/twisting at waist
    - Quiet head – no side-to-side movements – look straight ahead
    - High, powerful knees
    - Arms pumping at 90-degree angle; “smile to pocket” – no cross-body movements
    - Landing and pushing off balls of feet, especially for short sprints
    - Relaxed body, still shoulders
  - Practice running in own lane, especially for younger grades
  - Run straightaways and curves (lean into curves and run on the inside of the lane)
  - Practice relay hand-offs and baton handling drills

NOTE: Consider timing the athletes when running race distances in practice (and at meets, if possible). This will help them have a baseline of how fast they’re going and will encourage them to push themselves to improve week over week.

## LONG JUMP

### *RUNNING LONG JUMP*

- Suggested Focus Areas/Activities/Drills:
  - Determine “Take-Off” leg
    - Have athlete take 3-5 step approach to kicking soccer ball
    - The plant leg is usually the “take-off leg”
    - The kicking leg is usually the “quick leg”
  - Technique
    - 6-8 step approach – discourage longer approaches so they aren’t burning energy
    - First step forward is with the “quick leg”
    - Max controlled speed – about 90% of full speed
    - Solid “tall” posture (no waist bend or head movement)

- Take-off
  - Bend knee of take-off leg slightly
  - Push off aggressively and with lots of power
  - Lift knee of “quick leg” aggressively for height
  - Use both arms and swing forward
  - Fall forward in pit
- Run 6-8 steps back from take off board so athletes know where to start their approach
- Practice “run throughs” so athletes are consistently hitting the same spot on the take-off board
- Practice “pop ups” – similar to run throughs but jump off “take off leg” with a high knee drive from “quick leg” (no full jump)
- Have athletes visualize a spot in the pit to try to jump to

### ***STANDING LONG JUMP***

- Suggested Focus Areas/Activities/Drills:
  - Standing at the concrete edge, athletes should stand with feet about shoulder width apart
  - Bend knees and move arms up and down 3 times (this should be a fluid motion)
  - EXPLODE from BOTH feet – extend both arms forward, bring knees up towards chest and then forward to land on both feet
  - Have athletes visualize a spot in the pit to try to jump to

### **HIGH JUMP**

- Suggested Focus Areas/Activities/Drills:
  - Run in circles in front of high jump mat – helps athletes get comfortable with the angles and approach
  - Progress to running in a “U” shape towards and in front of the mat (you can do this from both sides so athletes can determine which side they’ll eventually want to start from)
  - Practice jumps and rotations (not the full approach and jump)
    - Athletes stand in front of mat (facing away from it) – jump up and land on back and then roll backwards on the mat. This helps them get used to being in a backward position and comfortable landing on the mat before even taking their first jump.
  - Practice run and approach to the pit (approximately 6-8 steps away from mat in a J shape) – athletes can flop to the mat (no bar is needed for this exercise)
  - Eventually progress to putting up the bungee and have athletes attempt jumps

NOTE: Be patient with introducing the bar. This will help develop confidence and proper technique first.

### **BASEBALL THROW**

- Suggested Focus Areas/Activities/Drills:
  - Teach Grip
    - Ball should rest in the fingers; minimize contact with palm
    - Middle three fingers are positioned behind the ball while thumb and pinkie support the outside of ball
  - Focus on Stance (if throwing from standing position)
    - Feet shoulder width apart
    - Body quarter turn away from the target
    - Feet should be straight ahead or slightly toward the target
  - Windup
    - Non-throwing arm extends forward
    - Throwing arm extended back as far as possible
    - Palm of throwing hand should face upward on last part of windup
  - Follow Through
    - Throwing arm extends fully across the body while the athlete bends at waist

- Add a “Run Up”
  - To increase distance, many athletes will add a one or two step approach to their throw
  - Essentially, all of the skills described are the same, they happen more quickly
  - The additional motion created by the “run-up” adds complexity to the throw. All of the above happen more quickly
  - A common consequence is that the hips do not open up fully which limits the distance of the throw
  - The other common consequence of the “run-up” is the extended follow-through caused by the forward momentum. Be sure the athletes give themselves additional space in the throwing area so they do not scratch.

NOTE: Focus on proper throwing mechanics before introducing the “run up”

## **SHOT PUT (4 POUND SHOT)**

- Suggested Focus Areas/Activities/Drills:
  - Teach proper hold – fingers, not palm so the shot doesn’t slip out (the shot needs to be touching the neck so it doesn’t become a throw)
  - High elbow – helps keep as a push not a throw
  - Teach proper stance – turn to the side, legs wide (helps with balance and power)
  - Release – point to the sky with opposite arm (helps with angle of release to gain more distance), then push and follow through with a “high five to the sky” (also helps with angle of release)
  - Practice technique with a bean bag – this can even be done with a partner
  - Practice adding power by bending down lower and twisting before pushing
  - Encourage kids to say or yell “PUSH” when they release the shot

NOTE: Ensure safety! There should be plenty of space between throwers and others. Also, we will not teach the “shuffle” at this stage.

## **RELAY EXCHANGES**

### ***4x100 METER RELAY***

- Suggested Focus Areas/Activities/Drills:
  - Introduce basics of baton passing technique – demonstrate in a stationary position first
    - Emphasize holding baton at the bottom (not at the top or middle)
  - Practice basic baton pass (stationary)
    - Athletes line up in a single file line at arm’s length apart
    - The person at the rear is given the baton
    - Practice passing the baton down the line (turn around and repeat)
  - Practice in the “exchange zone” on the track (marked with triangles in each lane)
    - Determine which hand the incoming and outgoing runner will use
    - Incoming runner starts about 20M behind exchange zone
    - Outgoing runner stands about 5 walking paces inside the exchange zone, looking back over their shoulder
    - Incoming runner runs at speed toward outgoing runner. As soon as they reach the exchange zone, the outgoing runner turns and runs at speed with their receiving hand **extended**.
    - Incoming runner places the baton in outgoing runners hand before the end of the exchange zone.

NOTE: Both runners should be IN MOTION during exchange.

### ***50M SHUTTLE RELAY***

- Suggested Focus Areas/Activities/Drills:
  - All runners use a normal running action while carrying the baton (don’t run with arm extended)
  - Runners carry the baton at the bottom end

- To pass the baton, the incoming runner holds the baton vertically with an extended arm when nearing the receiving runner
- The incoming runner approached slightly to the side of the receiving runner to avoid collisions or having to slow down
- The receiving runner waits for the incoming runner with their feet in a standing start “set” position with their hand extended to accept the baton
- The baton is received with the arm extended at chest height (not in front of face)

## **SPEED, STRENGTH, & AGILITY**

- Suggested Activities/Drills:
  - Do a series of repeats (i.e. do 4 50 meter sprints to work on speed)
  - Incorporate running games to work on agility, speed, and endurance
    - Sharks and minnows
    - Red light, Green light
    - Tortoise and the Hare (formerly known as “Indian Run”)
    - Duck, Duck, Goose
    - Run stadium stairs or hills
  - Use short agility hurdles or agility ladder
  - Do conditioning exercises
    - Squats
    - Lunges
    - Calf raises
    - Wall sits
    - Sit ups
    - Pushups
    - Jumping Jacks
    - Burpees
    - Plyo jumps

**\*\*\*\*\*Please feel free to incorporate your own ideas. Get creative and have FUN!\*\*\*\*\***

Coordinators and VPs are here to help you make coaching easy and fun for the kids so please come to us if you need assistance!