

TRACK XPLOSION

Track 101



Preparing for a Track Meet

- **Prepare to be there for a while.** If a track meet runs on schedule, consider yourself lucky. Many things can happen to slow a meet down – false starts, trouble with the timing system, relay teams getting to the start late. And even if the meet runs smoothly, they still last a while. Plan on being there for five or six hours, and plan for every type of weather – rain, wind, sun, heat and cold. Always have a bag full of necessities: tissues, an umbrella (for rain or to block the sun), blankets, sunscreen, bug spray, money, toilet paper and a camera. Plus, a cooler with waters and Gatorades, or some other drink with some sugar in it for the kids. Plus, a bag of healthy snacks that are easy to digest, like pretzels, animal crackers, nutritious bars, even some gummy snacks for quick energy.
- **Give yourself plenty of time to arrive.** There are few things as stressful as getting stuck in traffic when your athlete has a race coming up. It is bad enough if you miss their event, but horrible if he/she does. Expect to get to the track at least 1.5 hours in advance!
- **Have your athletes pack their bag the night before.** The morning usually ends up being rushed, so if the bag is already packed, that is one less thing that must be done. Pack more than enough clothes. You just never know. Teach your athlete to pack their own bag; however, please check behind them.

Athlete Checklist

Uniform

Spikes and spike key – Be sure to change any bad pins the night before. Not at the meet!!

Running Shoes

Sweats

Rollers/Balm, if needed

Throwing Implements, if appropriate

Tape (for marks)

A Bottle of Water & a Healthy Snack

- **Tent Setup.** You need a tent and a tarp!!! A 10 x 10 instant canopy is bare minimum. Unless prohibited, tents can be setup in the bleachers or on the ground. Therefore, ensure you have a means to tie down, weight down and/or stake your tent so that the wind does not blow them away.

Note: Many meets allow tent setup before the day of the meet. You can opt to go early to lock in a space or wait until the day of the meet (much harder to find a space). If you setup early, the recommendation is to either stake down a tarp or stake down just your tent frame.

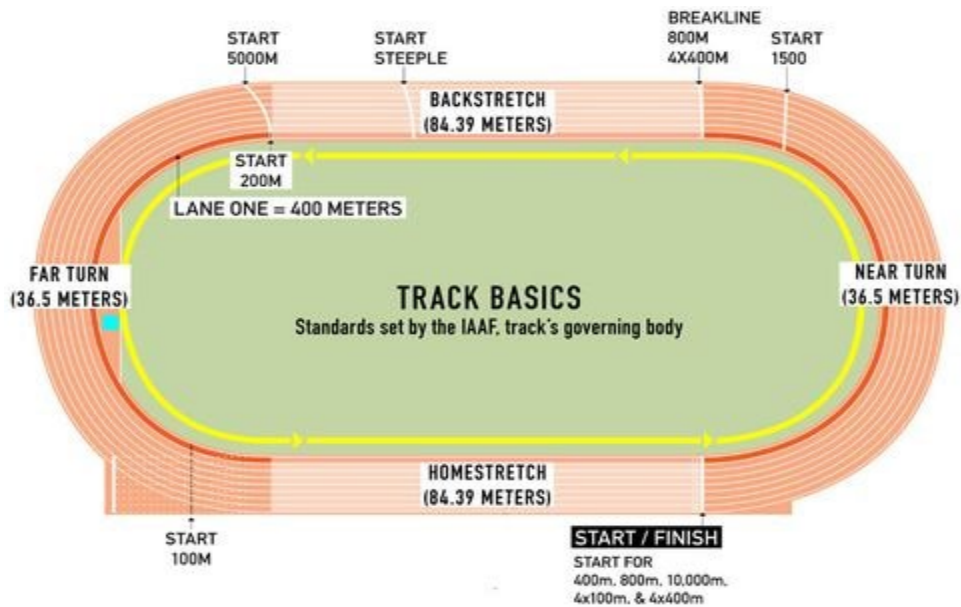
Tent Etiquette

- **DO NOT BE A SQUATTER!!** - Ask for permission before sitting under someone else's tent.
- **B.Y.O.F.** – Bring your own food. Stay out of coolers that do not belong to you.
- **ORDER** – Keep your things together. Not all over the tent.
- **PACK UP & CLEAN UP** - If you are sitting under someone else's tent, help them pack up and pick up trash.

- **Nutrition Guide.** Refence the Nutrition Guide on the Track Xplosion website for details on nutrition. In summary, athletes should have a healthy dinner, the night before a meet, high in starches. A light breakfast, with no dairy products, should be eaten. No dairy should be consumed during the meet. Snacks to consider for day of meet:
 - Power bars
 - Dried Fruit
 - Trail Mix
 - Granola Bars
 - Fruit
 - Carrots
 - Peanut butter sandwiches
 - Peanut butter crackers
 - Bagels

Water is the most appropriate drink before, during and after a meet.

The Track



Note: One lap on the inside lane of a conventional track is 400 meters.

Order of Events

The order of events will vary by track meet and can change during a meet.

Important Note: The 4x400 is normally the last event of every track meeting.

Clerk of Course

The **CLERK** is the person who will tell your athlete what **LANE** they start running in and what **HEAT** they are to run in.

- Lanes: A section of the track where an athlete starts or runs his entire race.
- Heats: A heat is a grouping of athletes with similar times competing in the same running event.

Field events will normally check in at their event and not the clerking tent.

Important Note:

- **Parents are responsible** for ensuring their athletes get to check in and picked up from the finish line (little kids).
- **Keep note of the heat and lane that your athlete ran in just in case there is a problem with timing!**

Event Calls

You **MUST** pay attention at the meet. There is an announcer calling out what events need to be checking in. There are supposed to be THREE (3) calls per event:

- 1st Call – Athlete must start to get ready to go to the clerking location
- 2nd Call – Athlete should go check in with the CLERK or already be in the area where the clerk is stationed.
- 3rd Call – This means it is your last chance to check in because the event is about to start.

Example Call: 1st call 9-10 Boys 400m run.

Notes:

- Calls can be hard to hear due to poor P.A. Systems. Also, sometimes calls are skipped or missed by the announcer (ex. 1st call to 3rd call or no call to 3rd call)
- **Pay attention to the GROUPME!** We will post the calls that we hear! If you hear a call and it has not been posted, feel free to put on the group me.

Remember that running events have priority over the field events. If an athlete has a running event at the same time as a field event, the athlete should check-in at the field event and then checkout to go run in the running event. Immediately after the running event is finished, they should go back to complete the field event.

Commands

- **2-Command start:** Runners take your mark, followed by the gun.
- **3-Command start:** Runners to your mark, set, followed by the gun.

Track Events

- Running Events
 - Sprints: 100 meters, 200 meters, 400 meters
 - Middle Distance: 800 meters, 1,500 meters
 - Distance: 3,000 meters, 2,000 meters Steeplechase
 - Hurdles: 80 meter hurdles, 100 meter hurdles (women), 110 meter hurdles (men), 200 meter hurdles, 400 meter hurdles
 - Relays: 4 x 100 meters relay, 4 x 400 meters relay, 4 x 800 meters relay
 - Walks: 1,500 meter race walk, 3,000 meter race walk
- Jumps
 - Long Jump
 - High Jump
 - Triple Jump
 - Pole Vault
- Throws
 - Shot Put
 - Javelin (Standard, Turbo/Mini, Aero)
 - Discus

- Multi-Events
 - Triathlon [9 – 10]: Shot Put (6lb), High Jump, 200m (Girls) / 400m (Boys)
 - Pentathlon [11 – 12]: 80m Hurdles, Shot Put (6lb), High Jump, Long Jump, 800m (Girls) / 1500m (Boys)
 - Pentathlon [13 – 14]: 100m Hurdles, Shot Put (6lb - Girls) / (4kg - Boys), High Jump, Long Jump, 800m (Girls) / 1500m (Boys)
 - Heptathlon (Girls) [15 – 18]: 100m Hurdles, High Jump, Shot Put (4kg), 200m, Long Jump, Javelin (600g), 800m
 - Decathlon (Boys) [15 – 18]: 100m, Long Jump, Shot Put (12lb), High Jump, 400m, 100m Hurdles, Discus (1.6kg), Pole Vault, Javelin (800g), 1500m

Note: Every event will not be offered at every meet. Also, events may be limited to specific age groups.

Weather

Track meets will be contested in heat and rain, so plan accordingly. Please listen for instructions from meet management in the case of inclement weather (i.e., thunder, lightning.) If a rain delay requires you to leave the stadium, please pay attention for additional guidance and potential return times. **Pay attention to GROUPEME.**

Glossary

- Personal Record (PR) – athlete’s best ever performance in a given event.
- Discus - a throwing event in track and field where a metal disk is thrown for distance.
- Shot put - a field throwing event where a heavy, metal ball is thrown for distance.
- Javelin – a throwing event where a long spear like object is thrown for distance.
- High Jump - a track and field jumping event. Athletes must clear a high bar without knocking it over by jumping.
- Long Jump / Triple Jump - jumping event where athletes compete for the longest jump in distance.
- Pole Vault – a jumping event where a long pole is used to clear a high bar without knocking it over.
- Relay race - a race involving multiple runners (typically 4) where each runner runs a leg of the race handing off a baton to the next runner.
- Sprint - a short running race where acceleration and top speed are important
- Mark - a mark is the measured distance of a valid throw or jump in a field event; this term can also be used in relationship to times but is most often used as a call to let others know a jump or throw is allowable and should be measured.
- False Start - leaving the starting line before the gun sounds
- Baton/Stick - a tube that is passed from one relay race member to another. The runner holding the baton is the current runner for that team in the race. They are typically about 1 foot long and 1.5 inches in diameter.
- Starter – the person who starts the races with either a call, whistle blast or gun blast.
- Rolling Schedule – events are run one after the other without time restraints or reference to a set time.