

ATHLETE TRACK & FIELD SAFETY

Although without the same potential of injury that can be received in such sports as football, rugby or boxing, Track & field can be dangerous sport and athletes running and jumping at full speed have the potential to collide with other people/ objects and cause potentially serious injuries.

Similarly, field events like the shot, discus, and javelin are a throwback to weapons of war used by the Ancient Greeks and, as such, have the potential to hurt and even kill if used inappropriately.

With this in mind UK Athletics has produced a short safety guide for athletes which we recommend is communicated to all athletes and track users and managed by clubs, coaches and officials.



GENERAL SAFETY TIPS FOR ALL ATHLETES

- Always look both directions before crossing the track or any runways.
- Do not walk across the infield where field events are being thrown. Be extremely careful when anywhere near the shot, discus, or javelin areas. Only those athletes working out or competing in these events should be in these areas.
- If you are participating in field events you should be aware that all throws implements are potentially dangerous and observe the safety guidelines set out by your coach at all times.
- Do not go onto the field unless your event group is working out there. This means that you should go around the outside of the track to get from one side to the other.
- Athletes must check their equipment every time, prior to a start, jump or throw.
- Athletes must not allow equipment and attire to lie around, or allow it to be without supervision, particularly on the infield.
- Athletes must always be polite to Officials and other Athletes during competition to avoid ill-tempered and conflict situations.

ON THE TRACK



- Wear appropriate clothing and shoes and remove or protect jewellery
- Warm up in the outer lanes and maintain good lane discipline by always staying in one lane while warming up.
- Leave the inside lanes clear for distance runners.
- Observe local 'fast lane' arrangements
- Treat changing lanes as if you are changing a busy road
- During your session, if you run up behind a runner, shout "track" so they know to move to the outer lane and out of your way.
- Do not cut in front of people while they are running. This can lead to injury to you and the other runners involved.
- On completion of your run/rep/session move out of the inside lanes
- Always be considerate of the needs of other track users
- Do not hold discussions on the track.
- Do not use headphones as you will not be able to hear verbal instructions and safety warnings and could compromise both your own safety and that of others.
- Check for other runners before you cross the track. Athletes can travel at great speeds and cannot stop instantly if you step out in front of them
- Never leave your bags/equipment lying around on or near the track.
- The infield is generally the only area designated for throws training so get into a habit of not crossing the infield to get from one side of the track to the other - even when throwing is not taking place.
- Run through the finish line. Do not dive or stumble across the finish line.
- If injured, move as quickly as possible to an area of safety away from the track and infield

HURDLES

- Wear appropriate clothing and shoes and remove or protect jewellery
- Ensure that you are using hurdles appropriate to your age/ability – check with your coach if unsure



LONG/TRIPLE AND HIGH JUMP

- Wear appropriate clothing and shoes and remove or protect jewellery
- Check that run up/fan areas are dry and clear of foreign objects
- Always check before you cross the runway/fan
- Never leave anything on the runway/fan
- Place markers to the side of the runway
- Do not 'dive' onto high jump landing beds whilst they are being assembled.
- Never attempt Fosbury Flop style High jump, except onto a suitable landing area, under the direction of a competent coach

POLE VAULT

- If you have a fibre-glass vaulting pole check that it is always protected with a proper pole 'bung'
- Do not use a fibre-glass pole if there is an old fashioned box with a vertical back
- Avoid dropping the pole after your vault (arrange for people to catch it if possible)
- Do not leave poles lying around for people to step/trip on
- Always use a pole appropriate to your age, weight and strength - A pole bending more than 90° is being overstressed.

THROWS – GENERAL

- The infield area of an athletics track is generally used for throws events
- You must always throw under the supervision of a competent person unless throwing from a restricted access throws area where documented risk assessment deems this acceptable (NEW)
- You must never turn your back to the throwing area while in the infield.
- Look and ensure that the throwing area and surrounding areas is clear before throwing
- You must never throw implements towards people or towards solid objects in the inner field
- During throws sessions, your discipline is very important. All throws implements can cause serious injury if not used properly
- Throwers must always warn everybody in sight before throwing an implement especially if the person is not facing the throwing area
- Only venture onto the throws infield if you are specifically instructed to do by your coach and, even then, always check that the area is clear and that no other events are in progress
- Never cross infield throws areas when long throws are in progress (training or event)
- Discus/Hammer - Never stand in the cage with a thrower
- Wait for your turn from behind the cage
- Throws should only be attempted from the circle, under instruction from a coach
- Do not walk across the sector when discus/hammer (training or event) is in progress.
- Discus, Shot, Hammer – Check that the throwing circles are dry and clear of foreign objects
- Never throw discus and hammer in bad light / fog



JAVELIN

- You must always throw under the supervision of a competent person unless throwing from a restricted access throws area where documented risk assessment deems this acceptable (NEW)
- Check that the run up is dry and clear of foreign objects
- Check that your throwing implements are in good condition and appropriate to your age and ability
- Never throw towards anyone.... Look to ensure that the landing area is clear before throwing
- Never stand in front of a thrower
- Never collect your javelin until all other athletes have thrown and you have been instructed to collect by your coach ...if in doubt ASK
- If you are instructed to collect your javelin:
 - Always walk (never run)
 - Approach your javelin from the side
 - Always push the javelin into a vertical position, then pull it vertically from the ground to remove
 - Always carry a Javelin in a vertical position, pointing towards the ground and in front of your body
- Never throw your javelin back towards your throwing position
- Never throw your javelin in bad light / fog