

Track & Field Study Guide

History:

The sport of track and field has its roots in human prehistory. Track and field-style events are among the oldest of all sporting competitions, as running, jumping and throwing are natural and universal forms of human physical expression. The first recorded examples of organized track and field events occurred at the Ancient Olympic Games in 776 BC in Olympia, Greece.

Track and field is a sport comprising various competitive athletic contests based on running, jumping, and throwing. The name of the sport derives from the competition venue: a stadium with an oval running track around a grass field. The throwing and jumping events generally take place in the central enclosed area.

Track Events:

100 meter dash: The shortest common outdoor running distance, run on the straight away of the track. Runners begin the race in starting blocks and usually hit top speed between 50-60 meters.

400 meter dash: On a standard outdoor running track, it is exactly one lap around the track. Runners start in staggered positions and race in separate lanes for the entire course.

4 x 100 meter Relay: A team is made up of four runners of the same sex. Each runner completes their specified distance (referred to as a leg) before handing over a baton to a teammate, who then begins their leg upon receiving the baton. There is usually a designated area where athletes must exchange the baton. Teams may be disqualified if they fail to complete the change within the area, or if the baton is dropped during the race.

100 meter Hurdles: A 100m dash with five hurdles placed at 15m intervals.

Field Events:

Long Jump: An event in which athletes combine speed, strength, and agility in an attempt to leap as far as possible from a take off point. Also known as the broad jump.

High Jump: An event in which competitors must jump over a horizontal bar placed at measured heights. Currently, the best technique is called the Fosbury flop.

Shot Put: An event involving "throwing"/"putting" (throwing in a pushing motion) a heavy spherical object — the *shot*—as far as possible.

Discus: An event in track and field athletics competition, in which an athlete throws a heavy disc—called a discus—in an attempt to mark a farther distance than his or her competitors. Here at MacArthur, our discus will be lighter (Frisbees).