

# LAPS

Little Athletics  
Program for Schools



# Australian Little Athletics

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### Design, artwork and layout

Nicole Duffey

### Photography

Phillipe Penel

Stephen Chu

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Darren Wensor

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# Introduction

As the primary provider of modified track and field activities for children under the age of 15 years, Australian Little Athletics is pleased to present this comprehensive teaching resource.

This resource aims to be the definitive reference for teaching athletics in Australian primary schools. It aims to be practical and user-friendly, containing simple information outlining age-appropriate working technique models, teaching progressions, lesson plans, games, assessment ideas, and competition guidelines.

The resource is divided into six sections:

**SECTION 1: THE EVENTS**

A resource to provide teachers with a brief and basic overview of each event relevant to the primary school system.

**SECTION 2: THE LESSON PLANS**

A collection of twenty-seven ready-to-implement lesson plans for teachers.

**SECTION 3: GREAT IDEAS FOR GROUP GAMES**

A collection of games for conducting warm up activities and event skill training.

**SECTION 4: ASSESSMENT SECTION**

A resource of ideas about how to assess children who are participating in an athletics unit.

**SECTION 5: COMPETITIONS**

A guide for organising and conducting athletics competitions.

**SECTION 6: APPENDICES**

A collection of useful information relating to athletics.



# THE EVENTS

A resource to provide teachers with a brief overview of each event relevant to the primary school system.



# Australian Little Athletics

## The Events

**A resource providing  
teachers with a brief and basic overview  
of each event relevant to the primary school system**

This resource has been created by Darren Wensor on behalf of Australian Little Athletics.

Graphic design by Nicole Duffey.

Photos of skill sequences courtesy of Phillippe Penel.

This resource is not intended to be a definitive analysis about conducting warm up activities and events skill training and professional advice should be taken before any course of action is pursued. The authors and publishers are not responsible for the results of any action on the basis of information in this publication nor for any error or omission in or from it.



This section aims to provide teachers with a brief and basic overview of each event relevant to the primary school system.

Athletics is often seen by many as a very technical sport to teach. The following pages attempt to demystify the sport by providing the "bare bones" facts and the most important information that a teacher needs to successfully teach an athletics unit in a class situation with confidence and authority. Use the section as an introduction to the sport or as quick revision prior to taking a class outside. The following information is dealt with for each event:



## THE WORKING MODEL:

What is the simplest movement pattern that will allow a child to complete an event within the rules and with some success?

The working models featured aim to create an understanding of the key features of a target technique suitable for the primary school aged child. The working model for each event presented in the following pages deals with suggested basic teaching points to be used when instructing children in primary schools. This is not to be confused with a technical model, often featured in books and videos, which is far more specific and more suitable to performers at higher levels.

An intricate technical knowledge of each event is not needed to successfully teach athletics skills to young people. Familiarization with the working model provides the teacher with enough information to sufficiently introduce events to young athletes.



## COMMON FAULTS:

What are the common errors that beginners will invariably exhibit when they are in the early stages of learning how to perform athletics skills?

The information contained under this heading on the following pages aims to assist teachers with the detection and correction of the most common faults that young people demonstrate.

Most of the faults that young people exhibit are predictable and generally opposite to the features of a good working model. Understanding common faults makes it easier to understand the target technique.



## BASIC RULES:

What are the basic rules that teachers need to know so that they can properly teach the events?

Under this heading, the rules most basic to the correct execution of the skills and participation in the event are listed. Only the "Priority A" rules for teachers are listed here. More specific rules that officials at formal competitions are required to know are dealt with in a later section.



# Standing Start

The standing start is the most appropriate technique for young novice athletes to use at the beginning of a race.



The features of a basic standing start are:



"On your marks"

One foot is placed forward - behind, not on the line - pointed directly down the track.

The other foot is placed back (about one foot space); pointed directly down the track, the heel is lifted.

The feet are approximately shoulder-width apart.

"Set" (Not "Get Set")

Bend forward at the hips and knees.

The opposite arm and leg are forward.

Vision is at the ground, about one metre in front of the feet.

"Go"

Drive the arms and legs.

Step through with the back foot first.





# Standing Start

YOUNG ATHLETES OFTEN:

- Point one or both feet to the side ("Speed skater").
- Place their feet too far apart.
- Go straight into a "set" position when called to "on your marks".
- Look at the starter.
- Put the same arm and leg forward.
- Lift their front foot, or step back with their back foot on "Go".



The starting commands are: "On your marks"; "Set" (not "Get Set"); followed by the starting gun (or other appropriate signal).

- The children must be steady before the starter gives the next command or fires the starting gun.