

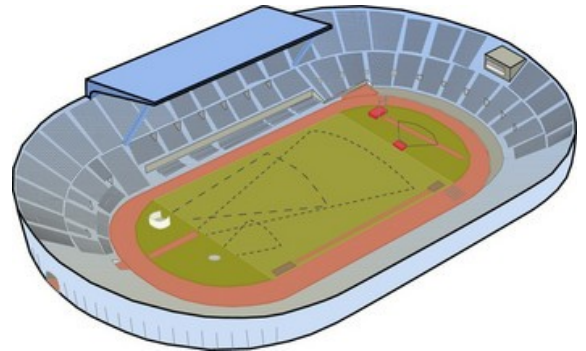
**WORDS**

- **athlete** = someone who competes in sport, a sportsman
- **baton** = a short stick that is passed from runner to runner during a race
- **championship** = competition to find out which player or team is the best
- **common** = usual, regular
- **compete** = here: to run against each other
- **competition** = an event in which athletes or teams play against each other
- **complete** = finish
- **consider** = thought to be
- **dash** = same as "sprint"
- **distance** = how far away two things are
- **endurance** = here: if you are able to run fast over a longer distance
- **finish line** = the line where the race ends
- **grassy** = covered with grass
- **lane** = an area that is marked for a runner or a swimmer in a race
- **meet** = a competition between athletes who run, do jumps etc..
- **outdoor** = in the open
- **probably** = likely
- **relay** = to run not at the same time but one after the other
- **rubber** = a material that is used to make tyres or boots
- **speed** = how fast something is
- **sprinter** = an athlete who runs very fast for only a short time
- **steady pace** = always at the same speed
- **surface** = the top layer of something
- **take turns** = to do something one after the other
- **towards** = in the direction of
- **track** = the brown oval paths that go around the field
- **victory** = when you win a battle, fight or a game

Running, jumping and throwing **competitions** are called track and field or athletics. They are **probably** the oldest form of sport and an important part of the Olympic Games.

**MEETS**

Track and field is organised as **meets** that take place mostly in an **outdoor** stadium with a track and a **grassy** field. In winter **meets** take place in **indoor** areas. Such a **meet** can last for only a few days or as long as two weeks at Olympic Games or World **Championships**.

**TRACK EVENTS**

**Track** events are races between **athletes** that take place on an oval **track** that is normally 400 metres long. It is divided into **lanes** and has a **surface** of asphalt, **rubber** or tartan.

Short **distance** racers are called **sprinters**. They start with their feet against a starting block and their hands on the **track**. When a gun is fired the race begins and the **sprinters** run as fast as they can **towards** the **finish line**, but they must always stay in their **lanes**.

Short **distance** races cover **distances** of 100, 200 and 400 metres. The 100 metre **dash** is one of the most popular events at such a track and field meeting. The world record holder is **considered** to be the fastest man on earth,

Middle **distance** races are the 800, 1 500 and sometimes the 3,000 metre races. Runners need **speed** but also **endurance**.

The 5,000 and 10,000 metre races are the longest races on the **track**. Athletes have to train a lot and run many km a day in order to **complete** such a race. They must learn to keep a **steady pace** and also must be able to have enough energy for the final metres.

The longest race is the marathon. It goes back to 490 B.C. when a Greek soldier ran all the way from Marathon to Athens (about 40 km) to tell the people about a great military **victory**. Today the marathon **distance** is 42.195 metres and it is run mostly on roads.

**Relays** are races in which teams of runners **compete** against each other. Four athletes form a team and **take turns** running around the track. They have to pass a stick, called a **baton** to their next team-mate before they reach the **finish line**. The most **common relay** races are the 4X 100 metres and the 4X400 metres.



**WORDS**

- **board** = piece of wood that is on the ground
- **chain** = small metal rings that are joined together in a line
- **chin** = the front part of your face below your mouth
- **clear** = to pass the bar without knocking it down
- **competition** = an event in which athletes or teams play against each other
- **connect** = link to
- **crossbar** = a bar that connects two standing posts
- **flexible** = something that you can bend
- **height** = how high something is
- **hurdle** = a small fence that you have to jump over during a race
- **increase** = to go up
- **leap** = jump
- **meet** = a competition between athletes who run, do jumps etc..
- **obstacle** = something that is in your way
- **plant** = here : put
- **pole vault** = a jump over a high bar using a long pole
- **sand pit** = big hole in the ground that is full of sand
- **shot put** = sport in which you throw a heavy metal ball as far as possible
- **swing** = here : to move in a circle
- **thrust** = to push something away from you very quickly
- **try** = attempt
- **triple jump** = an event in which you jump on one foot, then on the other and finally land on your own two feet
- **weigh** = how heavy something is



In a **hurdle** race athletes must jump over **obstacles** called hurdles which are about 1 metre high. Men run the 110 metre and 400 metre event, women the 100 metre and the 400 metre event.

**JUMPING EVENTS**

The jumping events at athletic **meets** are the high jump, the **pole vault**, the long jump and the **triple jump**.

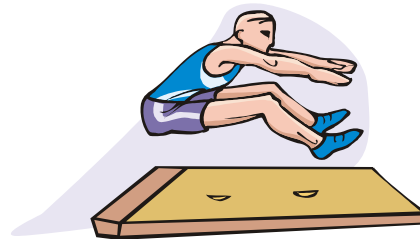
In the high jump athletes have to jump over a metal stick called a **crossbar**, without knocking it down. It is placed on two **vertical poles**. Most modern jumpers pass over the **crossbar** with their heads first.

**Pole vaulters** must jump over a much higher **crossbar**. They have long **flexible** poles that may be up to five metres long. They run towards the **crossbar** and before they get there they **plant** the pole into a small box on the ground. Then they **thrust** themselves high up into the air and try to get over the bar.



At both events you have three **tries** to get over the bar.

When you **clear** the bar its **height** is **increased** by a few cm. Whoever clears the greatest **heights** wins the **competition**.



In the long jump, the athlete runs very quickly towards a wooden **board** open the ground and then **leaps** into air and lands in a **sand pit**. In the **triple jump** the athlete jumps from one foot, lands on the same foot, jumps off again, lands on the other foot and then jumps off for the last time and lands on both feet in the **sand pit**.

**THROWING EVENTS**

There are four throwing events at track and field **meets**: the **shot put**, hammer, discus and javelin.

Shot putters belong to the strongest athletes at athletic events. They must stand in a circle in order to make their throws. The shot is a heavy metal ball that **weighs** up to 7.25 kg. It is put between **chin** and shoulders and then thrown as far as possible into the field. Women use a lighter **shot**.

The hammer is a metal ball that is **connected** to a strong **chain**. The hammer thrower **swings** the hammer around him a few times and then lets go.



**WORDS**

- **ancient** = old
- **approve** = to officially accept or say yes to something
- **century** = a time of a hundred years
- **championship** = competition to find out which player or team is the best
- **classic** = very popular and liked by many people
- **combination** = many events put together
- **consists** = is made up of
- **dash** = very short quick race
- **determine** = find out
- **discus** = heavy flat round object that you can throw
- **especially** = above all
- **footrace** = to run against others and try to be the fastest
- **found—founded** = to start something— here a club
- **gain** = build up
- **hurdle** = a small fence that you have to jump over during a race
- **pole vault** = a jump over a high bar using a long pole
- **rules** = instructions on how a game must be played
- **shot put** = sport in which you throw a heavy metal ball as far as possible
- **speed** = how fast something is
- **spin** = here :throw
- **thrust** = throw very suddenly
- **worldwide** = all over the world



The **discus** looks like a plate that athletes **spin** into the field. It is the oldest throwing event and was a **classic** contest at the Olympic Games of **ancient** Greece.

The javelin is a spear-like object that is made of wood or metal and is about 2.5 metres long. The thrower of the javelin takes a run to **gain speed** and then **thrusts** the javelin as far as he can into the field.

**ALL ROUND EVENTS**

The decathlon and the heptathlon are a **combination** of many events. It takes athletes two days to finish.

The men's decathlon **consists** of the 100 metre **dash**, the long jump, **shot put**, high jump, 400 metre **dash**, 110 metre hurdles, discus, **pole vault**, javelin and the 1,500 metre run.

The heptathlon is made up of 7 single events for women: the 100 metre **hurdle**, high jump, **shot put**, 200 metre sprint, long jump, javelin and the 800 metre run.

The athletes are given points for each event. They are added up and in the end **determine** the winner.

**HISTORY**

Over thousands of years people in many different cultures have held **footraces** and athletic contest, **especially** in **ancient** Greece.

Today's sport goes back to the 19<sup>th</sup> **century**. Amateur **footraces** were organized in England as early as 1825. Athletic clubs were **founded** in American and even national **championships** were organized.

The first modern Olympic Games gave athletes **world wide** importance. In 1912 the International Association of Athletics Federations (IAAF) was **founded**. It sets the **rules** and **approves** of all world records.

Track and field was once only for men, but today all events are open for women too.

