

Teaching the Long Jump

By: Travis J. Geopfert, The University of Arkansas

1. Build a Base

Things to do

Running- Modified versions of sprint workouts.
Lifting- Olympic Lifts, Core Strength, Eccentric Strength.
Plyometrics- Teach how to bound. Bounding Routine

What to Watch

Good mechanics, running relaxed, hips up.
Correct technique! Develop abs, low back.
Good posture, hips up, knee-drive, "H&H".

2. Long Jump Drills

Things to do

Bounding Routine. Develops explosive reaction.
Continuos pop-ups.
Penultimate set-up. Push-pull-plant.
Penultimate set up off of ramp or box.
Penultimate set up w/ split landing.
Standing long jumps. Working on active landing.
Penultimate set up off ramp w/ landing.
Rhythm Runs. Full approach on track w/o board.
Short approach pop-ups.
Short approach full jumps.
Full approach pop-ups.

What to Watch

On grass, active foot contact, keep speed.
Need correct timing of catching hips on rise.
Settle hips, catch hips on rise, erect torso.
Hold drive knee, head and chest up.
Hold drive knee extra long, eyes up.
Knees and chest together, pull rear to heels.
Correct set up, drive knee, active landing.
Gradual relaxed acceleration pattern.
Rhythm, erect torso, quick last step.
Drive knee, don't go to landing too soon.
Great drill! Teaches rhythm, control speed.

3. Developing an Approach

Things to do

Blind 5-step approach. Correct foot forward.
Gradual acceleration. Count.....Step 1.....Step 2.....Step 3..etc.
5 step to runway.
Blind 7-8 step approach. Same as 5, now add steps.
7-8 step to runway.

What to Watch

Start same spot, use chalk mark 5th step.
Relaxed running, rhythm, progressively fast.
Same rhythm, looks smooth, controlled.
Max controllable speed, hips tall, Rhythm.
Stay under control!!!!!! Set up take-off.

4. Bringing it all together.

- A. Athlete must be in good physical condition. It's important to strengthen ligaments, tendons, and muscles so the athlete can endure the whole season.
- B. Teach athlete how to bound. Stay on level grass or softer surface as much as possible.
- C. Slightly more focus on developing speed in the long jumper, as opposed to the triple jumper.
- D. Constantly, do different penultimate set-up drills. Focus on catching hips on rise and finishing the take-off.
- E. Develop a relaxed consistent 5- step approach.
- F. Continue to develop 5 step full jumps until you feel athlete can handle more speed.
- G. Through this whole process athlete can be working on rhythm of full 7-8 step approach.
- H. When you feel comfortable with 5-step full jumps you can now progress to full approach.
- I. Remember the full 7-8 step approach is extension of 5-step approach only adding more steps and speed at the end.
- J. I feel that the approach is 90% of the long jump. Do many full approach rhythm runs and full approach pop-ups. This can be boring, but it teaches athlete what speed he/she can control. It also allows the athlete to work on the long jump without beating themselves up by taking full jumps all the time. I rarely have athletes take full jumps in practice.
- K. **Points of Emphasis:** Use only maximum controllable speed in the approach. Focus on maintaining horizontal velocity. The horizontal velocity is the greatest determining factor of length in the jump. However, too much speed is pointless until the athlete is strong enough and technically sound enough to handle it. As a coach I try and put the emphasis on what the athlete does correctly and progressively eliminate the weaknesses. I feel this can help to keep the athlete from getting frustrated with the event. It can be difficult. Thank you for your time and if you have any questions, comments or concerns please do not hesitate to contact me. Thanks again!