

THE VICTORIAN LITTLE ATHLETICS ASSOCIATION

HOW TO HELP AT LITTLE ATHLETICS



PUTTING THE PIECES
TOGETHER...



**BECOME A
LEVEL 1
VLAA OFFICIAL**

LEVEL 3

LEVEL 2

LEVEL 1

**LEVEL 1
TEST INSIDE**



HOW TO HELP AT LITTLE ATHLETICS

'HOW TO HELP AT LITTLE ATHLETICS' has been written for the new parent or anyone who hasn't been involved with the sport before. It aims to provide basic information about all the events that make up the weekly program at most Centres.

WHERE DO YOU FIT INTO THE PICTURE?

Every parent is an important part of the Little Athletics' family. Without your help there wouldn't be anyone to conduct the events for our children. Parents, like our athletes, come in many shapes and sizes with all sorts of experience and talents that they don't even know they have.

The Victorian Little Athletics Association (VLAA) has a structured three level pathway for parents to become officials.

During the Little Athletics season you will be rostered to help out as an official (usually once every 3 or 4 weeks) or you might be asked to assist each week with your child's age group.

If you read this booklet before you go out to help on an event you will have a basic idea about how to help at an event. This knowledge will make things better and easier for you, the other officials and the athletes.

We hope that after you have had some experience you will **complete the test in the back of this book**, send it to the VLAA office and become an accredited Little Athletics' Level 1 official. **LEVEL 1**

Level 2 and 3 are more specific, concentrating on actual rules. For information on these levels ask your Centre Secretary or call the VLAA office.

HOW TO HELP AT LITTLE ATHLETICS

WHAT LITTLE ATHLETES DO and HOW YOU CAN BECOME INVOLVED IN THE ACTIVITIES

TRACK EVENTS

SPRINTS

SPRINTS are short running events, from 50 to 400 metres.

At the start of a sprint the athletes are placed in a lane, one metre behind the line.

The starter gives 3 signals:

- i) On your marks – the athlete puts the toes of one foot to the line.
- ii) Set - the athlete leans forward on the front foot.

The opposite arm is held out in front to help balance.

(Under 12 - Under 15 athletes do a crouch start.)

- iii) Gun sounds – the athletes run.

The runners must stay in their allotted lane for the whole race.



HOW TO HELP AT LITTLE ATHLETICS

YOU CAN HELP BY:

- Marshalling the athletes and placing them in their lanes.
- Timing the race.
You might use a manual stop watch or learn to use an electronic timing system.
- Judging the places – deciding which runners finish 1st, 2nd, 3rd etc.
- Marshalling the runners after the race and making sure their times are recorded.
- Recording the athletes' times.
- Doing a Starter's Course and becoming one of those important people who fire the gun.

DISTANCE RACES

DISTANCE RACES for Little Athletes are 800 metres (U9-U15) and 1500 metres (U11-U15). Some Centres have unlaned 400 metre events as distance races for Under 8 children.

The starter gives only two signals to begin a distance race:

1. On your marks.
2. Gun sounds.

The athletes can't use a crouch start and do not have to run in set lanes.

You can help by doing the same jobs as for sprint races.

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HURDLES

Hurdle races are sprints with obstacles (hurdles) placed in each lane. Hurdle sizes change with the age of the athletes. They start at 45cm in height and go up to 76 cm. Distances range from 60 metres to 300 metres. All hurdle races are run in lanes and the starter gives the same signals as for sprints.

Your Little Athlete will need some coaching and practise with low, training hurdles before they try the real thing.

YOU CAN HELP BY:

- Doing the same jobs as for sprints.
- Setting up the hurdles – most Centres have marks on the track to show where the hurdles have to go.
- Picking up hurdles that fall because they are knocked by an athlete or blown over by the wind.



HOW TO HELP AT LITTLE ATHLETICS

RELAYS

These are probably the most spectacular events our Little Athletes can do. It's one of the few opportunities they have to compete as a team. Relays always seem to bring out the best in our children. Some Centres run relays as part of their weekly program; others just train and enter teams in the Association's Region/State Relay Championships.

Relay teams consist of four runners who each run a set distance (either 100, 200 or 400 metres according to the type of relay). The children carry a baton which must be passed on to the next runner. This change must take place in a specified 20 metre change box.

If you would like to know more about relays ask your Centre Coach or contact the VLAA office for the Level 2 Officials Program.

YOU CAN HELP BY:

- Marshalling the runners and escorting them to their starting positions.
- Learning the rules and becoming a Box Judge.
- Doing the same jobs as for sprints.



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RACE WALKING

Race walking is a technical event. It's a distance race, so athletes don't have to stay in lanes. Walking races are 1100 or 1500 metres but some Centres may have shorter events for younger children. Race walkers have to keep one foot in contact with the ground at all times and make sure that the supporting leg is straight when it is under the body.

YOU CAN HELP BY:

- Doing the same jobs as for distance races.
- Learning to walk judge by competing the Level 2 Officials Program.



HOW TO HELP AT LITTLE ATHLETICS

FIELD EVENTS

The jumps and throws that form part of a Little Athletics program are called Field Events. You might like to have a go at officiating at all of them or you may choose to become an expert on one or two.

LONG JUMP

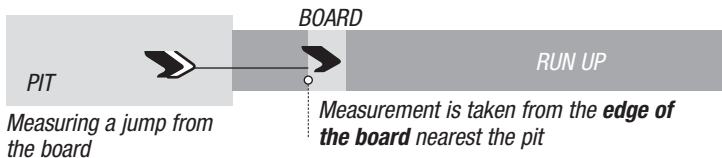
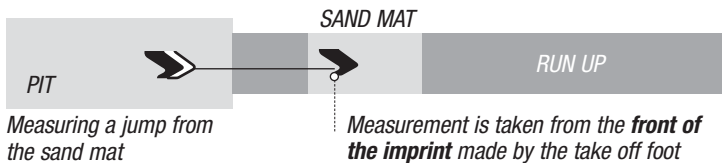
A long jump venue is made up of a run up (grass, dirt, asphalt or synthetic material) and a sand pit. The children run along the run up until they reach the take off area, then launch themselves into the air, landing in the pit. Under 6 to Under 12 children take off from a mat covered in sand. Under 13 to Under 15 athletes use a 20 cm board. Jumpers must make sure that their take off foot is on or behind the mat or board. They must land in the sand pit and walk out of the pit forward of the mark they made on landing.



HOW TO HELP AT LITTLE ATHLETICS

YOU CAN HELP BY:

- Watching that the jumper's foot doesn't go over the edge of the mat or board.
- Spiking (marking the spot where the jumper landed.)
You place a spike with a tape measure attached at the edge of the mark in the pit closest to the take off area.
- Measuring the jump. You hold the other end of the spiker's tape, pull it tightly over the take off area and read the measurement.
When a mat is used the measurement is taken from the front of the imprint made by the take off foot.
If a board is used the measurement is taken from the edge of the board nearest the pit.
- Raking the pit after each jump to remove the evidence of the last jump and make it safer for the next jumper.
- Recording the jumps and writing out result tickets.



HOW TO HELP AT LITTLE ATHLETICS

TRIPLE JUMP

This technical event is usually introduced at Under 9.

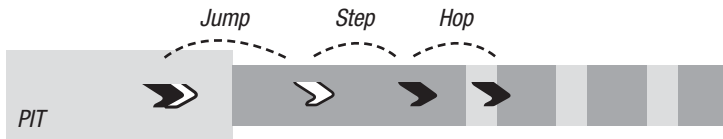
Triple Jump needs a pit and run up just like Long Jump, has the same basic rules and is measured the same way. The run up has lines marked at 1 metre intervals (usually from 5 to 9 metres) and the athlete chooses which of these lines will be his or her take off mark. For Under 9 to Under 12 children a mat is used. Under 13s to Under 15s take off from the board or a line marked on the run up.

Triple Jump has three distinct stages:

- HOP** – Take off from the mat/board on one foot.
Land on that foot.
- STEP** – Take off on that same foot. Step onto the other foot.
- JUMP** – Jump forwards and land in the pit.

YOU CAN HELP BY:

- Doing the same jobs as for Long Jump.
- Moving the mat from one mark to another.
- Checking that the athlete is actually performing a HOP, STEP, JUMP (this takes some practice).



Note the hop, step, jump

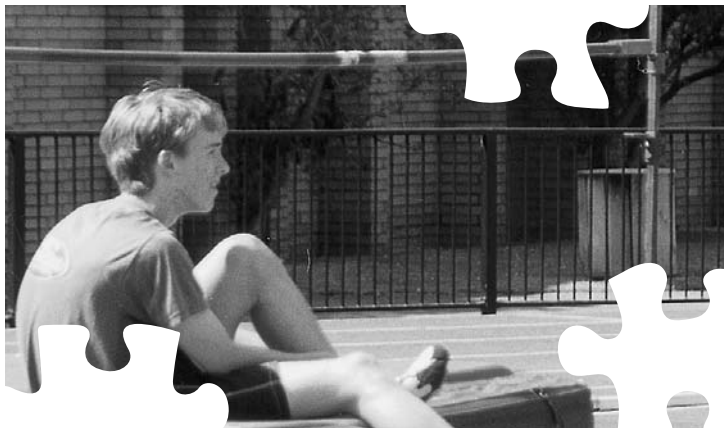
HOW TO HELP AT LITTLE ATHLETICS

HIGH JUMP

High Jump equipment consists of a landing mat or bag, two uprights, a bar and a measuring stick. The jumper must run up, take off from one foot, clear the bar and land on the bag without knocking the bar off the stand. Each jumper usually has three chances to clear a height. If they achieve it first or second time they wait until the bar is raised before having another jump.

YOU CAN HELP BY:

- Picking the bar up if a jumper knocks it off.
- Raising the bar after all participants have finished at a particular height.
- Recording the childrens' performance.



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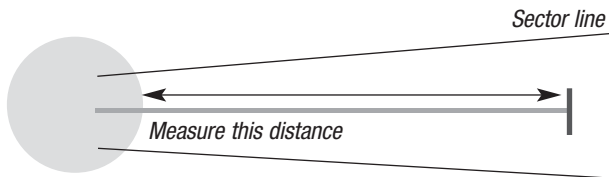
SHOT PUT

A Shot Put venue consists of a ring and a landing area (sector). The shot is a metal ball. Its weight and size varies according to the age of the participant.

The child stands in the ring with the shot balanced on his/her fingers and held close to the ear under the jaw bone. The shot is pushed forward so that it lands in the sector. The arm must not be pulled backwards or dropped downwards – this would give the delivery an illegal throwing motion. The child must wait until the shot has landed

YOU CAN HELP BY:

- Spiking – marking where the shot lands. It must land inside the sector lines.
- Pulling the tape through the centre of the ring so that the put can be measured.
- Measuring – reading the distance from the inner edge of the ring to the place the shot landed.
- Retrieving the shot and returning it to the ring.
- Learning how to judge a fair put so you can judge the event.
- Recording results and writing tickets.



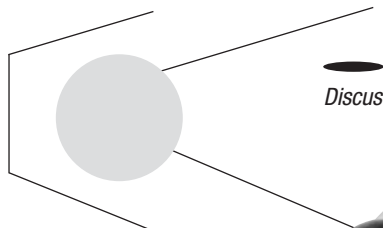
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DISCUS

A discus is a rubber or wooden disc which is thrown from a ring and must land inside a marked sector. The discus is usually thrown one handed, using a backward swing to build up momentum before launching it into the sector. For safety reasons the discus ring is surrounded by a cage. All officials and other throwers should be outside the cage when someone is throwing. Discus rules are much the same as for Shot Put.

YOU CAN HELP BY:

- Spiking
- Pulling the tape through the centre of the ring.
- Measuring the throw.
- Retrieving the discus.
- Recording the results and writing tickets.
- Supervising the children for their next throw.



HOW TO HELP AT LITTLE ATHLETICS

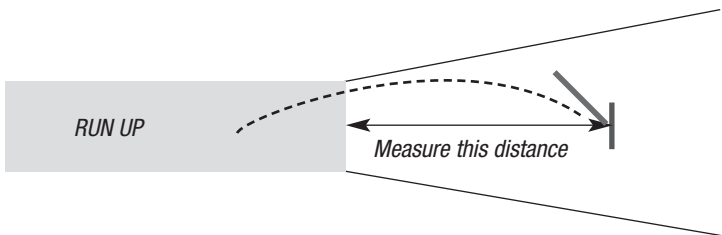
JAVELIN

Most Little Athletes don't start Javelin until Under 11.

Javelin needs a run up, something like that used for Long Jump. The thrower holds the javelin in one hand and runs along the run up towards the line. He/she then pulls the implement back, turns side on and throws it into the sector. The javelin must land tip first inside the sector. The javelin doesn't have to remain standing. Throwers must not go forward across the front run up line. A javelin throw is spiked in the same way as discus. The tape is pulled through to a spot marked on the run up and the distance is read from the inside of the run up line. As the javelin is a dangerous, spear like implement all athletes and officials should keep well away from the run up and sector.

YOU CAN HELP BY:

- Doing the same jobs as for discus.
- Watching that the thrower doesn't cross over the run up line.



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ON TRACK

Is your Centre an On Track Centre?

On Track allows beginning children (U6, U7, U8) a chance to develop skills in a sequential program. 'On Trackers' work in small groups, use modified equipment and have lots of activity.

On Track is run by parents just like you. If you help out with On Track you will have so much fun that you will want to become involved every week.

YOU CAN HELP BY:

- Setting up the special equipment.
- Helping to organise the children into their groups.
- Doing anything the On Track leaders ask of you.
- Watching your children have fun as they develop new skills.
- Participating in the activities



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CROSS COUNTRY

This is what many Little Athletes do in the winter. Cross Country involves running in the parks or countryside around your Centre. It is a distance event with courses varying in distance and difficulty to suit the age of the runners. Cross Country is a great way to stay fit and keep in touch with your friends from Little Athletics.

YOU CAN HELP BY:

- Getting up early and helping to set the course.
- Acting as a course marshal – making sure the runners follow the correct course (marked by flags).
- Timekeeping.
- Recording the runners times.
- Writing out result tickets.



LEVEL 1 OFFICIALS EXAM QUESTIONS

Answer these questions by circling the appropriate letter on the fold out answer sheet below:

1. Which statement is correct for a 200 metre race?

- A All athletes must do a crouch start.
- B Only those athletes using blocks are required to do a crouch start.
- C No athletes are required to do a crouch start.
- D All Under 12 to Under 15 athletes must do a crouch start.

2. In a 100 metre race, after the athletes are placed in their lanes, behind the starting line, what is the next move?

- A The starter fires the gun.
- B The starter commands "On your marks".
- C The starter commands "Set".
- D Each athlete leans forward on the front foot waiting for the Starter's gun.

3. Which statement is correct for a 1500 metre event?

- A All athletes must run in set lanes.
- B Athletes must run in set lanes for the first 300 metres.
- C Athletes do not have to run in set lanes.
- D Athletes must run in lane 1 only.

4. What is the length of the change over box for a 4 x 100 metres relay?

- A 10m
- B 15m
- C 20m
- D 25m

5. In long jump an under 10 girl's take off foot:

- A Must be on or behind the mat.
- B Must be completely on the mat.
- C Must be completely behind the mat.
- D Can protrude over the front edge of the mat.

6. When a board is used, the jump is measured from:

- A The back of the board
- B The place where you think the child placed his/her take off foot.
- C The centre of the board.
- D The edge of the board nearest the pit.

7. In Triple Jump if an athlete begins their hop from the right foot, they should step onto:

- A Both feet.
- B The left foot.
- C Either foot.
- D The right foot.

8. A high jumper must:

- A Take off from the right foot.
- B Take off from both feet.
- C Take off from the left foot.
- D Take off from one foot.

HOW TO HELP AT LITTLE ATHLETICS

HOW MUCH HAVE YOU LEARNT ABOUT LITTLE ATHLETICS?

Thank you for taking time to read this booklet. We hope that you will now work on several events and gain some practical experience. When you feel ready you might like to do the test on the next page. You can refer to this guide as you go along or ask a qualified official or event Chief at your Centre for help.

Send your completed test to:

VLAA. Level 1 Official,
Locked Bag 1011 Port Melbourne 3207

LEVEL 1

We'll check your answers. You will then receive a certificate to recognise that you are a qualified Little Athletics Level 1 Official.

Please complete this form and return it with your test.

Name _____

Address _____

_____ Postcode _____

Centre _____

Email _____

Ph: _____

