

Performance Hurdles

USAGE GUIDELINES

Words of Caution

1. Are you physically fit? Do not enter into any training routine without a physical exam by a medical doctor.
2. Are you trying too much too soon? Overwork and not enough rest is the recipe for injury. Always make sure you are properly warmed up before beginning.
3. Make sure you know the proper form and techniques of the exercises before you attempt Hurdle training activities. Using improper form and techniques will prohibit improvement and may cause injury.
4. Never try to stand on a Hurdle. Although they are constructed to be unbreakable, attempts to test the durability of the Hurdles may cause injury. The Hurdle may break and injure you or may topple while you are standing on it, causing you to stumble.
5. Do not set up the Hurdles near wet or slippery surfaces. Wet or slippery surfaces may cause you to slip and fall on or near the Hurdles, increasing the possibility of injury.

Why Use a 12" Performance Hurdle?

12" Performance Hurdles are an innovative tool in the enhancement of speed, agility and quickness. The Hurdles can be used in a variety of exercises designed to develop both quick feet and proper running technique. The 12" Hurdle can be used on

grass, on a floor cushion, gym floor or any other flat surface. They are great for stride development, lift mechanics, force application, lateral agility, plyometrics, and anaerobic conditioning.

Performance Hurdles are bright yellow PVC plastic. This construction emphasizes safety for the athlete's work-out, while making them virtually indestructible

Why Use a 6" Performance Hurdle?

6" Performance Hurdles are designed for athletes who need to keep their feet low to the ground while training for agility and quick lateral motion. They are only six inches high, teaching athletes proper movement form without any exaggerated motions. The 6" Hurdles are ideal for court-sports such as tennis, basketball, and volleyball, as well as the cutting motions of soccer and football.

Lateral speed and agility development cannot come from general conditioning drills. Modern sport science clearly indicates that an athlete must match preparation with performance. If you seek to perform with quick feet and fast direction change, you'll need to prepare that way. The 6" Hurdles will prepare you for faster side stepping, linear bursts out of lateral side stepping, cutting, direction change, and agile footwork.

How the Hurdles Work

Hurdles force the legs to utilize correct running form and adapt to faster stride patterns. The 12" Hurdles are best for enforcing the correct biomechanics of linear running. They "teach" in a way words can't. You will learn the important technique of driving the knee up, while keeping the toe close to the opposite knee and the heel close to the hamstring in the recovery phase. Performance Hurdles also train you to fire the foreleg down in a wheeling (like riding a bike) motion and to stay in a "hips tall" running position.

6” Performance Hurdles are best for teaching athletes proper lateral movement form, and help athletes adapt to faster patterns of footwork. They will prepare you for all aspects of lateral speed.

The spacing between the Hurdles can be varied from drill to drill, as well as athlete to athlete. It is important on linear sprints to set the 12” Hurdles at a consistent space. An easy way to do this is to take regular “paces” and make sure the Hurdles are in a straight line. Start with 1 pace (approximately 4 feet apart). As you become better, you can widen them to 6 feet, then 8 feet and so on. The Hurdles should be evenly spaced to emphasize both technique and posture. The Hurdles can also be staggered laterally for drills to improve agility and quickness in changing direction. The versatility of the Hurdles is limited only by your imagination.

The Performance Hurdle Work-out

No training device will help you run faster if you fail to concentrate on the details of correct running motion. You can only run as fast as your technique allows. When running forward, always run with correct sprint posture. This means staying upright with the hips forward and keeping a straight line from your ear through your shoulder, hip, and knee to your ankle. When moving laterally (shuffling), run low in a defensive posture. It is important to concentrate on your arm action, keeping your arm cocked at a 90 degree angle most of the time. Snap your elbow back on each stroke. Finally, concentrate on springing off of your toes, pushing off hard until the leg straightens. Make sure to keep your foot in a dorsiflexed, or toe-up, position so that it is loaded for the next contact with the ground.

Linear Movement Drills

The following linear drills are the most beneficial when done with 12" Performance Hurdles. However, they will also work with 6".

A. Single Leg Hurdles: Place the Hurdles on a straight line one yard apart. Run on an outside edge of the Hurdle (one leg outside the Hurdle, one leg inside). Only the inside leg will go over the Hurdles. The outside leg stays straight, with the emphasis on bouncing off the ball of the foot, while the moving leg cycles up and over the Hurdle. Do the drill over the equivalent of 24 Hurdles per leg.



B. Two Step High Knees: Place the Hurdles one yard apart. Run with both legs hurdling, leading each time with the right leg, then (after 2 reps) with the left. Emphasize knee lift and good rhythm as you run, taking two steps, or foot plants, between each Hurdle. This is a run; do not jump over the Hurdles or lose rhythm!

C. One Step Run: Place the Hurdles one yard apart. This is an aggressive sprint through the Hurdles, focusing on the leg cycle. There should be a single foot strike between the Hurdles. Emphasize lifting the knee and foot. Do not swing the foot sideways around the Hurdles.



D. Long Two Step: Pick up every other Hurdle. The distance will be 2 yards. Repeat drills A and B above. Typically you would do 2 each of A with the left and right foot, and 2 reps each of B leading with the right and left legs. Now stretch the distance to 4 yards apart and repeat the entire sequence. Next stretch the distance to 6 yards apart. Never lose running mechanics control—if the distance and running speed become too great and you lose form, return to a shorter distance.

E. Alternates: With the setting between Hurdles at 2 yards, use a 3 step pattern. Go over the Hurdle with your right foot, then left, making sure there are 3 foot plants taking place between each Hurdle. This drill can then be lengthened very far apart, up to about 7 yards between Hurdles. Start easily, only increasing the spacing progressively as much as your technique will allow.

F. Staggered Hurdle Run: Set up your Hurdles one yard apart in a staggered position so that your body is in the center of the staggered Hurdles. Slowly run down the Hurdles with your left leg going over the line of Hurdles to the left, and your right leg going over the line of Hurdles to your right. Take one step between each Hurdle, alternating your legs evenly.



Lateral Movement Drills

The following lateral drills are the most beneficial when done with 6" Hurdles. However, they will also work with 12" Hurdles.

A. Two Step Laterals: Place the Hurdles one yard apart, similar to the Two Step High Knee, but you move laterally. Take two steps over each Hurdle, focus on pushing off with the trailing leg, not reaching with the lead leg. Keep your hips low as in a defending position and your shoulders parallel to the direction you sidestep. There should be no crossovers in this drill.

B. Lengthened Four Step: Space the Hurdles 2 yards apart. Repeat drill A, with a 4-step pattern (4 foot plants laterally) between Hurdles. The goal is to practice running laterally at a higher rate of speed. The quantity of Hurdles should be only 4. Your objective is maximum lateral speed within 10-15 yards. Evenly lengthen the space between only so long as you can move fast without compromising technique.

Change-of-Direction Drills

Please Note: In all change-of-direction drills it is important to maintain correct posture and alignment upon the directional change push-off. The “power line” of the body should run diagonally from the inside shoulder to the outside (push-off or trail) foot. The knee should drive up and the toe should be up (or dorsiflexed). All cutting is done with knees bent on impact, foot flat, and no continued motion downward at time of foot plant.

A. Quick Change: Place four Hurdles one yard apart (to emphasize change of direction rather than lateral movement use no more than four Hurdles). Begin by two-stepping laterally through the Hurdles. Upon reaching the outside of the last Hurdle with the lead leg, reverse direction and two-step back to the starting point. Only one foot (the outside foot) will touch outside the Hurdles as you change direction. Avoiding a “double touch” is one of the keys to improved cutting. Work both legs equally.

B. Coach’s Quick Change: Place four Hurdles one yard apart. The athlete starts in the middle of the Hurdles. The coach will begin the drill by pointing one direction. The athlete begins two-stepping laterally through the Hurdles in that direction. The coach then points right and left randomly. The athlete reacts with a quick lateral change of direction in response to the coach’s signal.

Coaches Quick Change Variations

Drop Step: Start in the middle of the 4 Hurdles. The coach begins the athlete moving side to side. On the command of **Go!** the athlete plants the outside foot (if you are moving to the right, plant with your right foot), drops the inside foot back behind, and sprints 5 yards. This is a spin move. It must be practiced at a walk first, then at a slow trot, and work to full speed with practice.

Lateral and Go: Do lateral quick change to a coaches command and break into a 5 yard sprint on his command. The key is a sharp angle from lateral to linear, not a rounded off cut (which is slower).

Mirror: Set 2 rows of Hurdles 10 yards apart, facing each other. The Hurdles are parallel to each other, with two athletes standing parallel in the middle of the hurdles. To a coaches command, the athletes move laterally, then on a whistle they sprint forward at each other. At about 2 yards apart you can a.) Mirror each other's lateral side step, b.) cut sharply and mirror each other left or right, c.) charge forward then retrieve a ball that the coach quickly tosses right, left, or overhead.



C. Ickey Shuffle: Place two Hurdles one yard apart (for this drill it is important that only two Hurdles are used in this drill). This drill is similar to the Quick Change, but with only two Hurdles it entails more frequent and quicker changes of direction. Straddle one of the two Hurdles and two-step over the Hurdles. When the lead leg touches on the outside of the second Hurdle, immediately change direction. The trail leg should never touch the outside of the second Hurdle. In other words, take two steps between the two Hurdles and only one step (with the left foot when going left, right foot when going right) outside the Hurdles. After completing the drill, alternate legs to insure proper training for each leg.

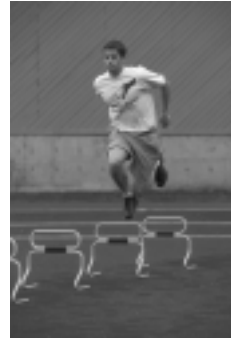
Jumping and Hopping Drills

Please Note: For clarification purposes, we define jumping as any leaping exercise off of two feet, and hopping as any leaping exercise off of one foot

A. Single Hurdle Jumps: Stand next to a Hurdle with your feet together and jump over as quickly as possible for 10 seconds. Do them first side to side, then front to back.

B. Series Hurdle Jumps: Place the Hurdles one yard apart. With the feet together, jump over the Hurdles as quickly as possible. Emphasize the explosive push-off from the feet. You can also set Hurdles in a zig zag pattern with jumps and turns at each landing.

C. Hurdle Hops: Place the Hurdles one yard apart. Keeping one leg tucked, hop over the Hurdles as quickly as possible. Emphasize explosive push-off and getting the knee driven up into the air.



D. Hurdle Jump/Hop and Run: Place the Hurdles one yard apart. Repeat the Hurdle Hops or Hurdle Jumps drill, but after reaching the outside of the last Hurdle break immediately into a short sprint.

The key to 12” and 6” Performance Hurdles, like any equipment, is to enjoy their use and have fun. Try to be creative, and come up with your own sport-specific applications. Try to retrieve a ball thrown to you as you go over the Hurdles, or set up a Hurdles obstacle course similar to the cuts and turns of your own game. Hurdles are a multi-purpose tool limited only by your imagination—Enjoy!