



Special Olympics Athletics



Special Olympics

A Handbook for Training at Home



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The Key to Long-term Athlete Improvement

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For any athlete or player preparing for the Olympics *or* Special Olympics, the hours of training and free-play spent in addition to regular practice time are perhaps the most important part of becoming an accomplished athlete. Morning stretching to develop flexibility, daily runs to build up stamina, playing in the backyard or informal competition at the local playground are unstructured, personally motivated, activities that help athletes succeed in sports. For a Special Olympics athlete, however, such activities may not be a part of everyday life.

What happens to an athlete when the local basketball players do not drop by for some 1-on-1 in the driveway, when a three mile run, unsupervised, is out of the question or when the speed and intensity of the playground game is simply overwhelming? For such an athlete, learning sports becomes limited to the structured practice time organized by the coach. And the simple fact is, an athlete who practices a sport for only two or three hours a week will never master the sport.

The work that coaches do in their weekly practices is the foundation for Special Olympics athletes' skill development. A coach can establish fundamental skills, introduce basic competition ideas, motivate athletes to participate and improve their performance. However, it is unrealistic to expect a coach, in only a few hours a week, to completely prepare an athlete for success in competition.

Some coaches simply shake their heads at the physical fitness level of their athletes or at their painfully slow rate of development. However, a coach who is truly committed to improving the performance of an athlete can stimulate athletic activities outside of their regular practices. How? By utilizing a resource that goes untapped in many Special Olympics programs; the energy and commitment of an athlete's family.

Through a simple "Home Training" program for families and training partners, coaches can successfully double or triple the time an athlete spends learning a sport. In addition, family participation can have tremendous effect in many other aspects of the overall Special Olympics program, positively impacting everything from transportation to fund-raising.

Guidelines for coaches to establish a successful home training program:

- 1) Talk with parents and siblings to educate them about the goals of Special Olympics and the importance of regular training or athletic activity at home and to educate yourself about the lives of your athletes.
- 2) Run a practical session to provide families with some simple activities they can



organize at home with their athlete. A home training program can be a great way for parents to get back into shape and a way for them to appreciate what Special Olympics is trying to achieve.

- 3) Provide an easy to read weekly training plan. For example:
 - a. • Warm-up activities/stretchers (15 min.)
 - b. • Simple skill development activities (e.g. Passing drill – 5 min.)
 - c. • Competition practice (*e.g.* 1-on-1 play - **10** min.)
 - d. • Other activities (e.g. taking your athlete to see a live competition)
- 4) Recruit training partners if an athlete does not have active support from a family or group home. Contact community organizations such as a high school Partners Club®.
- 5) Monitor an athlete's activities during the season. Get them excited about training on their own. Ask them to report on training they have done at home. Suggest ways to improve their training.

Coaching excellence requires consideration of the entire athletic life of an athlete. Starting a family home training program is an exciting way of extending a training program beyond regular practices. It takes time and effort to initiate, but the long-term rewards can be remarkable for everyone involved.



Your Goals for the Season

1. What is your best score in each event at the beginning of the season? What is your goal for the end of the season.

Event	Date Tested	Beginning Score	Goal Score by season end

2. What is your best event?

3. What is your weakest event?

4. What skills do you want to learn or improve on this season?



Coach's Goals for the Season

By the end of the season, you should be able to:

- _____;
- _____;
- _____;
- _____.

During the season, you are expected to:

- _____;
- _____;
- _____;
- _____.

Special Olympics hopes that as you go through this season you will set an example for others by becoming a leader among your teammates and abiding by the Athlete Code of Conduct on the next page.



SPECIAL OLYMPICS ATHLETE'S CODE OF CONDUCT

Special Olympics is committed to the highest ideals of sport and expects all athletes to honor sports and Special Olympics. All Special Olympics athletes and Unified Partners agree to the following code:

SPORTSMANSHIP

- I will practice good sportsmanship.
- I will act in ways that bring respect to me, my coaches, my team, and Special Olympics.
- I will not use bad language.
- I will not swear or insult other persons.
- I will not fight with other athletes, coaches, volunteers, or staff.

TRAINING AND COMPETITION

- I will train regularly.
- I will learn and follow the rules of my sport.
- I will listen to my coaches and the officials and ask questions when I do not understand.
- I will always try my best during training, divisioning, and competitions.
- I will not “hold back” in preliminary competition just to get into an easier finals competition division.

RESPONSIBILITY FOR MY ACTIONS

- I will not make inappropriate or unwanted physical, verbal, or sexual advances on others.
- I will not smoke in non-smoking areas.
- I will not drink alcohol or use illegal drugs at Special Olympics events.
- I will not take drugs for the purpose of improving my performance.
- I will obey all laws and Special Olympics rules, the International Federation and the National Federation/Governing Body rules for my sport (s)..

I understand that if I do not obey this Code of Conduct, I will be subject to a range of consequences by my Program or a Games Organizing Committee for a World Games up to and including not being allowed to participate.



Special Olympics

The Mission of Special Olympics:

To provide year-round sports training and athletic competition in a variety of Olympics-type sports for children and adults with intellectual disabilities, giving them continuing opportunities to develop physical fitness, demonstrate courage, experience joy and participate in the sharing of gifts, skills and friendship with their families, other Special Olympics athletes and the community.

The Special Olympics Oath:

***LET ME WIN,
BUT, IF I CANNOT WIN,
LET ME BE BRAVE IN THE ATTEMPT***



Facts about Special Olympics

- It is a year-round sports training and competition program.
- There are 26 sports offered globally. Check with your local director to see which sports are offered in your area.
- There are team and individual sports.
- You must be 8 years old to compete; 5 years old to train; no upper age limit.
- Special Olympics is for people with intellectual disabilities.
- Special Olympics is free.
- Special Olympics is an international/worldwide organization



Athlete Leadership Programs

YOU choose your sport!	Unified Sports	Athletes can be Volunteers
Athletes can be Officials	Athletes can be Coaches	Athletes can be on Boards or Committees
Athletes can be Global Messengers	Athlete Congress/ Leadership Workshops	Athlete can be on Input Councils

Is there a leadership role YOU would like to try out this season?

Does your team have a captain? If not, suggest that you elect one!



INTRODUCTION TO Athletics

This Athletics Home Training Guide can best be used as a reference for athletes, friends and family members who want to improve track and field skills, improve the athlete's overall body development and increase his or her level of physical fitness. The Coach's Guide for Athletics includes strategies for coaching race walking, sprinting, distance running, high jumping, long jumping, putting the shot, throwing the softball, and wheelchair racing. This guide is intended for use at home, between those practice sessions and has more general information, including warm-up exercises, basic rules for track and field competition, a fitness/nutrition plan, and tips on staying in shape between seasons.

Athletes of all ages and ability levels can participate successfully in a Special Olympics Athletics program. Wheelchair athletes are not restricted to participating only in wheelchair races. Athletes with low motor abilities may participate in Events designed for lower ability athletes and regular track or field events. In athletics, every athlete can find at least one event in which he can succeed and excel.

In essence, success in track and field depends on the athlete's determination and practice habits. By merely by participating in an athletics training program, the athlete will learn self-discipline as well as the ability to make independent decisions. Most importantly, the athlete will learn life-long fitness skills that will help him or her lead a more productive and independent life.



Equipment and Clothing

At or before your first practice, your coach should cover these issues. If they forget, you should remind them and then write down the answers. It will be helpful for everyone as the season goes along!

Equipment Special Olympics will provide for practices and competitions:

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Equipment you need to get or have:

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

What should you wear to practice?

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____



Protecting Yourself Against Harmful Sunlight

Am I at Risk?

Did you know that the number of new cases of skin cancer, and the number of deaths caused by the most serious type of skin cancer are rapidly rising in the United States? This is particularly troubling since the numbers for most cancers have been declining. Sunlight is the main source of ultraviolet radiation (UV) known to damage the skin and to cause skin cancer. The amount of UV exposure depends on the strength of the light, the length of exposure, and whether the skin is protected. There are no safe UV rays or safe suntans. Sun exposure at any age can cause skin cancer. Your skin and eyes are most susceptible to sun damage. You need to be especially careful in the sun if you have numerous moles, irregular moles, or large moles; freckles or burn before tanning; fair skin, or blond, red, or light brown hair; or spend a lot of time outdoors. Melanoma is the most serious type of skin cancer, and accounts for more than 75 percent of the deaths due to skin cancer. In addition to skin cancer, sun exposure can cause premature aging of the skin, wrinkles, cataracts, and other eye problems.

How Do I Protect Myself From UV Radiation?

If you work outdoors, there are **five important steps** you can take to protect against UV radiation and skin cancer:

1. Cover up. Wear clothing to protect as much of your skin as possible. Wear clothing that does not transmit visible light. To determine if the clothing will protect you, try this test: Place your hand between the fabric and a light source. If you can see your hand through the fabric, the garment offers little protection against sun exposure.

2. Use a sunscreen with an SPF of 15 or higher. Experts recommend products with a Sun Protection Factor, or SPF, of at least 15. The number of the SPF represents the level of sunburn protection provided by the sunscreen. An SPF 15 blocks out 93 percent of the burning UV rays; an SPF 30 blocks out 97 percent of the burning UV rays. Products labeled “broad spectrum” block both UVB and UVA radiation. Both UVA and UVB contribute to skin cancer.

Apply sunscreen liberally at least 15 minutes before going outside.

Reapply every 2 hours or more frequently if you sweat a lot or are swimming.

Warning: Do not depend on sunscreens alone. Combine sunscreen with wide-brimmed hats, UV-protective sunglasses, and tightly woven clothing to increase your protection against UV radiation.

3. Wear a hat. A wide brim hat is ideal because it protects the neck, ears, eyes, forehead, nose, and scalp. A baseball cap provides some protection for the front and top of the head, but not for the back of the neck or the ears where skin cancers commonly develop.



4. Wear sunglasses that block UV rays. UV-absorbent sunglasses can help protect your eyes from sun damage. Ideal sunglasses do not have to be expensive, but they should block 99 to 100 percent of UVA and UVB radiation. Check the label to make sure they do. Darker glasses are not necessarily the best. UV protection comes from an invisible chemical applied to the lenses, not from the color or darkness of the lenses.

5. Limit direct sun exposure. UV rays are most intense when the sun is high in the sky, between 10 AM and 4 PM. If you are unsure about the sun's intensity, take the shadow test: If your shadow is shorter than you, the sun's rays are the strongest. Seek shade whenever possible. You may also want to check the UV Index for your area. The UV Index usually can be found in the local newspaper or on TV and radio news broadcasts. It gives the expected noon-time UV radiation reaching the earth's surface on a scale of 1 to 10+. It is forecast daily for 58 cities. The higher the number, the greater the exposure to UV radiation. The Index helps determine when to avoid sun exposure and when to take extra protective measures. (See <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/om/uvi.htm>.)

Should I Get Checked?

Yes. Skin cancers detected early can almost always be cured.

The most important warning sign for skin cancer is a spot on the skin that is changing in size, shape, or color over a period of 1 month to 1-2 years. The most common skin cancers--basal cell and squamous cell--often take the form of a pale, wax-like, pearly nodule; a red scaly, sharply outlined patch; or a sore that does not heal; whereas melanoma often starts as a small, mole-like growth. So it's important that you examine your body, and see a health care clinician if you find an unusual skin change.

How Can I Learn More About Preventing Skin Cancer?

There are many websites with good information about preventing, detecting, and treating skin cancer, including the following:

American Cancer Society for melanoma and nonmelanoma skin cancers

(scroll menu of common cancers) at <http://www.cancer.org>, or call

1- (800) ACS-2345.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, for various health materials including

skin cancer at <http://www.cdc.gov/ChooseYourCover>, or call

1- (888) 842-6355.

For more information on **OSHA**, visit the agency's website at

<http://www.osha.gov>, call 1- (800) 321-OSHA or your nearest OSHA

office. Teletypewriter (TTY) number is 1- (877) 889-5267.

U.S. Department of Labor Occupational Safety and Health Administration OSHA 3166 (2000)



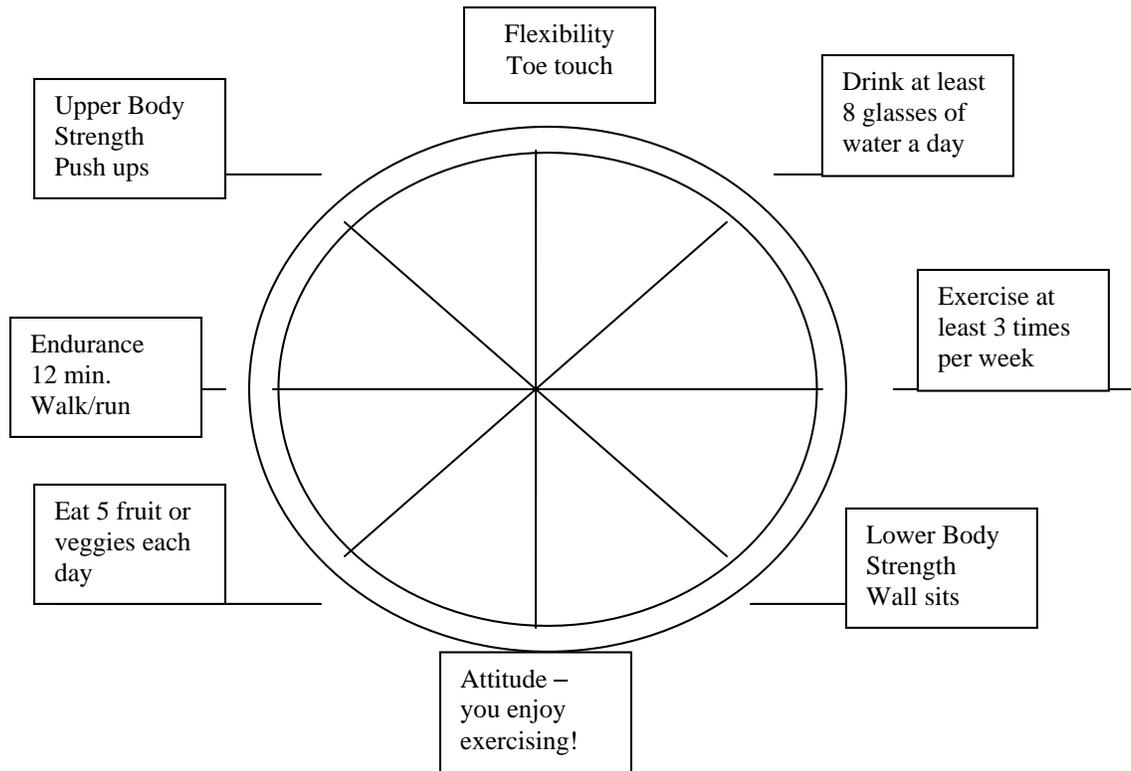
The Fitness/Nutrition Wheel!

Test yourself on the fitness items below.

Each item is a spoke on the wheel. Assume that a score of 10 on the item test is the best you can get. Put a dot on each spoke to mark your score for each skill. A score of 10 goes all the way out to the outside edge. A score of 0 is all the way in the center of the wheel.

Now connect the dots to see which fitness items you should be working on at home between practices!

Here is a sample.





Name 3 fitness items that you could work on to make your wheel roll:

- _____
- _____
- _____

Item: _____

Strategy for improving:

Item: _____

Strategy for improving:

Item: _____

Strategy for improving:

Total Fitness Score at beginning of the season:

Total Nutrition Score at beginning of the season:

Total Score at mid-point of the season: _____

Total Score at end of the season: _____



Athlete Builder Strategies!

FITNESS BUILDERS

Trait to be improved	Potential Strategies
Nutrition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Write down everything you eat – you’ll think about it more! • Before you snack, drink a glass of water. • Try fruit as a snack instead of candy
Endurance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Walk around your neighborhood instead on watching TV at least once a day. • Write down how long you exercise each day and try to add 10% each week • Learn how to measure your heart rate, then record it after each workout
Strength	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep a record of how many strength activities you can do from the list below. • Try an exercise until you are tired, rest for one minute then try it again.. • Find a workout partner to help you and who you can encourage too.
Have a plan/goal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Know what you want to have happen because you exercise – write down what you want to be able to do – and tell someone. • Write down all the smaller things that you hope will happen as you get more fit and mark them off as they happen. • Always start by telling people your goal and see if they have ideas on how to help.
Flexibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Without straining, try to touch your toes, use that as your measure.. • Do at least two of the stretching exercises below • Never stretch without warming up a little first
Hydration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make sure you drink at least 8 glasses of water each day • When you get bored or think you want a snack, have a glass of water! • Drink water when you are thirsty – flavored drinks as a treat or snack.



ATHLETE ACTION!

ATHLETE ACTION is a Special Olympics athlete's home training program that encourages family involvement in a structured format consistent with the coaches training plan (see ATHLETE ACTION on the following page). This program is simple to implement and is fun for family members, group home staff, or friends and neighbors to become involved with.

There are four major sections to the ATHLETE ACTION PROGRAM.

1. **COACHES COMMENTS:**
Coaches briefly describe what has been covered in practice on that day. This information is important since you are asking families to practice previously taught skills, warm-ups, stretching, strength and conditioning exercises.
2. **GAME PLAN:**
This section briefly describes the responsibilities of the athletes, coaches and families as part of the athlete home training plan. Coaches can determine the types of incentives that would be appropriate for athletes to strive for. At the same time training becomes fun and athletes are better prepared for participation in sport.
3. **ACTION:**
This section provides the person working with the athlete at home with some structure, while also allowing for some flexibility in the training program. The Coach has the option to list some activities under the Coaches Comments section, but primarily allows the home trainers to follow general training outlines similar to those provided by the Special Olympics Coaches Guide.
4. **ATHLETE'S SCORECARD:**
The scoreboard provides the family with a simple and clear means to chart and display athlete scores.

Will family involvement in athlete training programs work? Yes! The coaches' best support comes from family members and friends of the special athlete. With proper direction from the coach, at-home training programs may offer the athlete the complete training required to adequately prepare for competition.



A Special Olympics Athlete's Home Training Chart
ATHLETE ACTION

Name:
Week of:

Coaches Comments: (Briefly describe today's practice and what skills will be covered at the next practice.)

GAME PLAN

Athletes: Record your daily point score by adding each action you complete. Remember each action is worth 1 point (maximum 3 points per day) and each Special Olympics practice attended with your team is worth 3 points.

Coaches: It's fun to compile a team score each week. You can set a weekly score for your team to beat as an incentive to practice at home and score points for the team. Set individual point total goals for the athletes. (i.e. 100 points = patch; 200 points = t-shirt).

Families: It's great to join in the home practice session. Encourage brothers, sisters, friends and neighbors to assist. Make these practices part of your family leisure time.

ACTION

(1) Warm-ups/Stretching (1 point)

- 1
2
3
4
5

(2) Skill Work (1 point)

- 1
2
3
4
5

(3) Strength and Conditioning (1 point)

- 1
2
3
4
5



Here are some weekly scoreboards to get you started. Keep track of your points at home and see if you can get better over time. Make copies of this page so you can keep going all year long!

ATHLETE
SCOREBOARD

M	T	W	TH	F	SA	SU	TOTAL

ATHLETE
SCOREBOARD

M	T	W	TH	F	SA	SU	TOTAL

ATHLETE
SCOREBOARD

M	T	W	TH	F	SA	SU	TOTAL

ATHLETE
SCOREBOARD

M	T	W	TH	F	SA	SU	TOTAL

ATHLETE
SCOREBOARD

M	T	W	TH	F	SA	SU	TOTAL

ATHLETE
SCOREBOARD

M	T	W	TH	F	SA	SU	TOTAL

ATHLETE
SCOREBOARD

M	T	W	TH	F	SA	SU	TOTAL

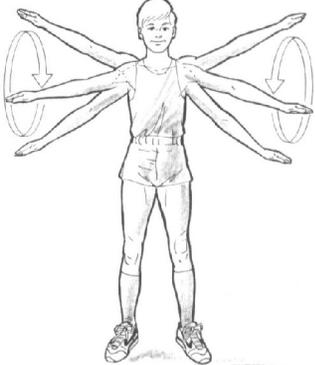
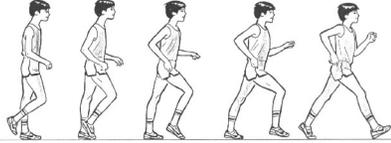
ATHLETE
SCOREBOARD

M	T	W	TH	F	SA	SU	TOTAL



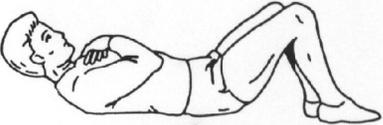
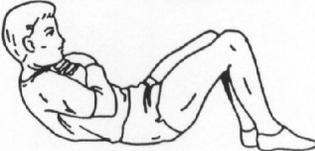
Sample Warm-up/Stretching Activities

Stretching exercises must be performed by all athletes, before they train or compete in sports, to avoid injury and to enhance their performances. Coach the athletes to perform stretching exercises slowly and with good technique. The stretching exercises included in the athlete's warm-up routine should reach all of the body's major muscle groups. The exercises described below are acceptable for warming up prior to an athletics practice or meet.

		
Arm Circles	Hold arms out to sides at shoulder height; make 15 small circles rotating arms forward. Rest. Repeat arm circles by rotating backward 15 times.	
		
Walking/Jogging	Walk around a room or outside for 2 minutes, then jog outside or in place for 3 minutes.	

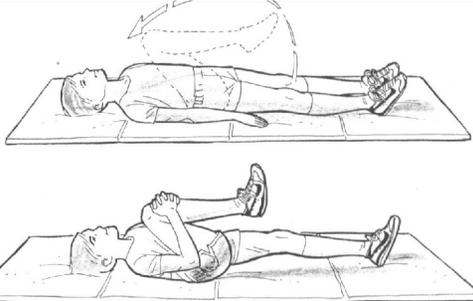
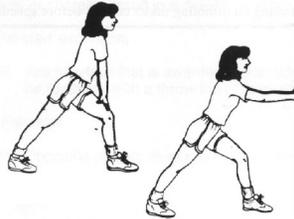


Sample Warm-up and Stretching Exercises

Jumping Jacks	Stand with arms to side and feet together. Jump to position of legs apart and clap hands overhead. Jump to position of legs together and arms at sides. Repeat without stopping for 15 overhead claps.	
Sit-ups/Crunches (20-30) 1 minute	Start in a prone position with arms folded on chest. Lift head and shoulders off the floor by pointing your chin up and in front of you. Return shoulders to the floor (but not your head!) The up motion has chin leading while the down motion has the top of your head stretching to keep your body tall.	
Quads Stretch	Face a wall; bend and lift one leg behind your back; grab and hold that ankle behind your body with the opposite hand; slowly pull to stretch the top of the thigh. Hold for 30 seconds. Repeat with other leg. Do both legs twice.	



Sample Warm-up and Stretching Exercises

		
Hamstring Stretch	With legs slightly apart and knees slightly bent, bend over and try to touch knees, then shins, then ground. Hold each position for 10 seconds. Repeat 3 times.	
		
Knee Lift	While lying down face up with feet together. Bring one knee straight up toward the shoulder. Clasp the knee with both hands and pull it in toward the body. Hold stretch for 6 seconds. Repeat with the other knee.	
		
Calf Stretch	Stand facing a wall with feet together and 60cm away from wall. Lean forward placing hands against the wall. Keep legs straight. Do not bend at hips. Bend elbows slowly, bringing the chest to the wall; leave feet flat on floor and arch the back. Hold stretch for 6 seconds.	

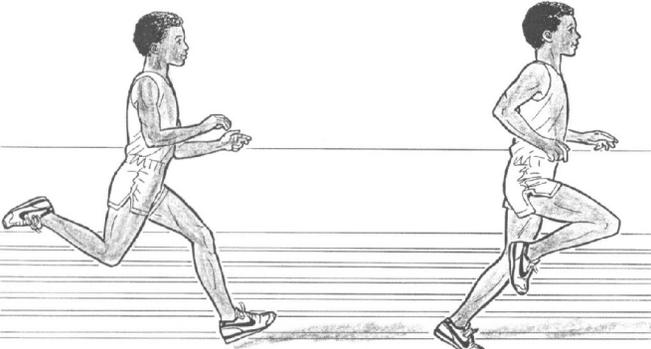


Sample SPORT Skills Activities

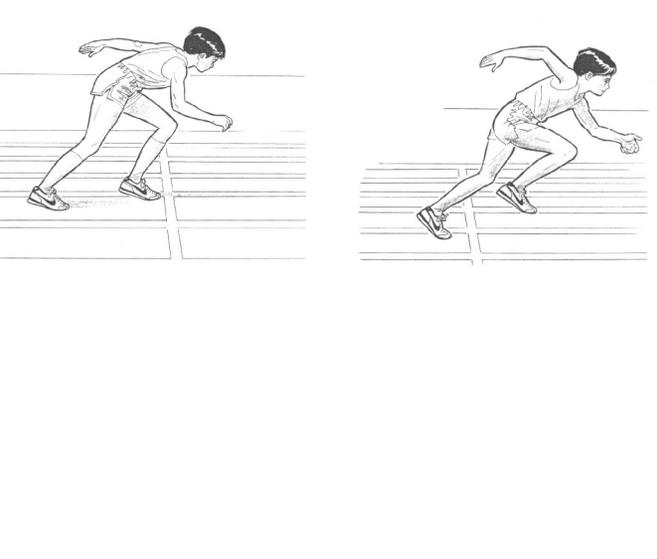
Skill Activities to enhance and maintain learning process away from the practice and play field. **Remember SAFETY is critical. It is imperative that you do not swing or throw any object or ball in the direction or close to any person, people or breakable objects.**

Sample Sport Skill Development Activities

Be sure to warm-up and then do some stretching exercises before you start these activities! The Sport Skill Development exercises included here are designed to be done on your own or with a friend or family member to help you stay in shape and improve your SPORT skills between practices or seasons.

<p>Sprint Drills</p>	<p>Run sprint drills, such as: Starts and Stops Drill; Athlete starts, sprints a certain distance, stops, returns to the start line at a jog, rests and repeats the drills; Back-to-Front Drill; Have the family form a line of three to six people; jog in single file; last runner in line sprints past teammates to front of line to become new leader; wait 30 seconds and then the new last person sprints to lead, and so on; continue for a specified time or distance; for example, one lap or 400m.</p>	
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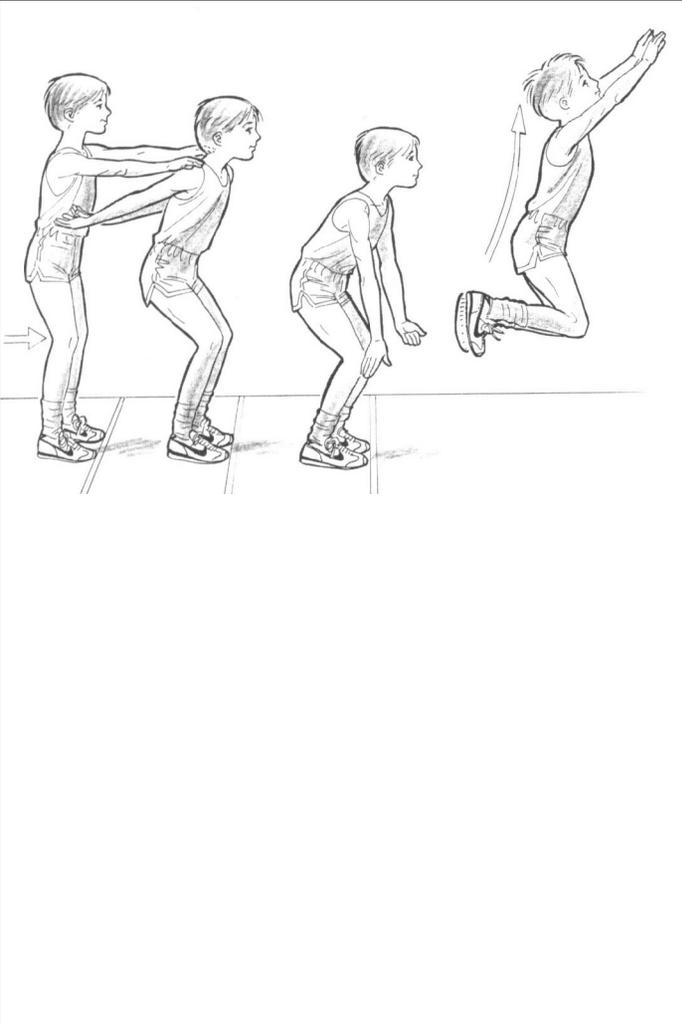
<p>Start Position Drill</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">a. Stand behind the start line, with the power foot in front of the other, in the "On Your Mark" position.b. Set the toe of the back foot 15-30cms behind the heel of the front foot.c. Flex the front knee to 120 degrees, and place the weight on the ball of the front foot.d. Hold the arm that is opposite the front leg flexed out in front of the lowered body; hold the other arm back (for example, left leg and right arm forward).e. Look up slightly, focusing 2m ahead.	
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Sample Sport Skill Development Exercises

<p>Standing Shot Put</p>	<p>a. Assume the ready-to-put position (right-handed put).</p> <p>b. Drive up off the right leg toward the toe-board.</p> <p>c. Swing the left arm strongly around to the left side.</p> <p>d. Rotate the hips and shoulders toward the toe-board.</p> <p>e. Push strongly off the right leg and extend the right arm up and out over the toe-board.</p> <p>f. Transfer weight to the left leg and release the shot from the hand at a high position</p> <p>g. Let the arm follow-through across the front of the body and the fingers down and to the right slightly; exaggerate the follow-through by rotating the body to the left and transferring the weight to the right leg, the left leg moving back..</p> <p>h. Track the flight of the shot.</p> <p>i. Exit the circle from the back.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Practice without a shot, then with a softball, and finally with a shot. Work slowly and gradually up to maximum effort; make throws of increasing distances.	<p>The image contains eight numbered illustrations showing the sequence of a standing shot put throw. 1. The athlete is in a ready position, standing on the right leg with the left arm swung back. 2. The athlete drives off the right leg, leaning forward. 3. The left arm swings strongly around to the left side. 4. The hips and shoulders rotate toward the toe-board. 5. The athlete pushes strongly off the right leg, extending the right arm up and out. 6. The athlete releases the shot from the hand at a high position. 7. The arm follows through across the front of the body, with the fingers down and to the right. 8. The athlete exits the circle from the back, with the body rotated to the left and the weight transferred to the right leg.</p>
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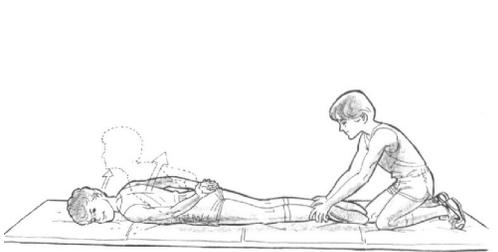


<p>Standing Long Jump</p>	<p>a. Identify the takeoff line or board. b. Stand just behind the line / board with feet shoulder-width apart and toes pointed out slightly. c. Hold the chin up. d. Hold the arms relaxed at the sides, keep the back straight, and let the body lean forward slightly. e. Flex the knees and ankles sharply, swing the arms vigorously to the rear, and inhale fully. f. Initiate the takeoff by swinging the arms forward and low past the knees, then up toward the landing area. COACHING SUGGESTIONS g. Exhale and spring forward off both feet at a 45 degree angle; use strong ankle and leg extension to create a powerful takeoff.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Demonstrate the ready-to-jump position; play "Simon Says" to prompt the athletes into the correct position.• Emphasize taking off from both feet. <p>Have two people jump together, holding hands. Have two family members hook arms with an athlete to practice jumping off both feet.</p>	
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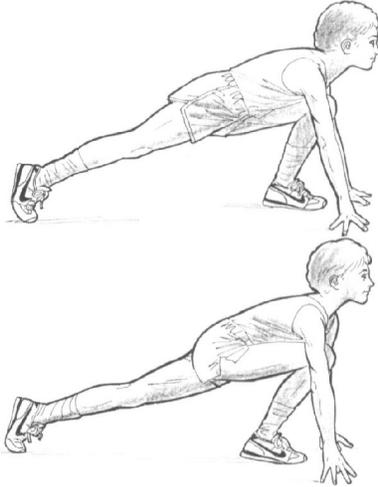


Sample Strength and Conditioning Activities

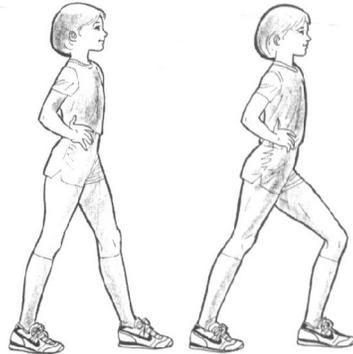
Do at least one of these activities for at least 5 minutes

Jump-the-Line	Find or make a line on the floor. Place both feet on one side of the line and then jump up so that both feet land on the other side of the line. Jump back and forth as quickly as possible for 30 seconds. Rest for 30 seconds and then repeat.	
Wall Sit	Place your back against a wall and move down so that it looks like you are sitting in a chair – BUT THERE IS NO CHAIR! Hold yourself there by pushing with your legs for 30 seconds, rest for 30 seconds and then do it again.	
A. Trunk Exercises Sit Ups	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Lie on floor with knees bent. Clasp hands behind head. Come up to a 45 degree angle, or "crunch", position. Return to lying position. Repeat exercise 5 times; gradually increase to 10 times or more. 	
Trunk Lifts	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Lie face downward on the floor with toes pointed back and hands behind the back. Let partner hold your feet down with hands on the backs of your ankles. Slowly raise upper body up off the ground as high as possible, and return. Avoid using arms for leverage; use trunk muscles. Keep hips, thighs, knees, and feet on the floor. 	



<p>B. Arms and Shoulders Push-ups</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none">a. With body inclined forward, place weight on hands and feet.b. Bend arms to drop the chest to the floor; then push up to original position. Do not bend back, hips or knees. Keep head up.c. Repeat exercise 5 times and gradually increase to 10 repetitions.• Variation: start from kneeling position. Walk hands forward so that body is straight and inclined forward. Weight is on hands and knees. Bend arms to bring chest to floor then push up to original position. Knees are bent, but do not bend hips.	
<p>Mountain Climber (Actually good for both Arms and Legs!)</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none">a. Squat down so chest touches knees and hands are on floor in front of and outside of the feet.b. Extend one leg straight back, resting it on its toes.c. Support the weight of the body with the bent leg and the hands.d. Switch the legs quickly, moving one forward and one back.e. Repeat the switches several times to resemble climbing up a mountain.f. Keep the head up, and stay on the toes.	



<p>C. Legs: Jump and Reach</p>	<p>a. Stand with feet slightly apart. b. Bend knees and hold arms down toward the ground. c. Swing arms forward and up, and reach as high up as possible. d. Jump straight up off the floor using a strong push off the feet. e. Flex knees and ankles to soften landing; then, jump again straight up off the floor.</p>	
<p>Alternate Knee Bends</p>	<p>a. Stand with one leg in front of the other, feet pointing forward, and hands on hips. b. Bend front knee slowly to a 60 degree angle and return. c. Switch legs and repeat bend with other knee. d. Keep the head and back erect.</p>	

More Stretching and Strengthening Ideas



Sport Specific	Exercise	Description
Stretches	1) Torso Twist	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Place a stick behind your back, holding with one hand near each end. Stand upright and flex knees. While breathing normally, turn torso slowly to the right; hold, then turn torso slowly to the left and hold. Keep your abdominal muscles tight throughout! Start out doing this exercise for one minute or about ten repetitions and increase them over time.
	2) Knees to Chin	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- To stretch lower back, lie on your back with your feet flat on the floor and knees up. Reach and clasp your arms around your knees, pulling knees up to your chest and hold for 10 counts. Relax your hands, let your knees and feet back down and repeat. As an alternate, try one knee at a time.
	3) Hip Stretch	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Lie on your back, with legs bent and feet flat on the floor. Cross the left leg over the right so that your left ankle is just over your right kneecap. Grasp your bent right leg and gently pull both legs toward your chest. Hold the stretch for 10 seconds and repeat three times. Relax and start over by crossing the right leg over your flexed left leg. Pull both legs up to chest and repeat three times, holding for 10 seconds.
	4) Trunk Stretch	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- To stretch your hips and lower back, lie on your back with your legs straight. Bend left knee up and cross it over your right leg, placing left foot outside of right knee. Reach your left arm straight out along the floor. Put your right hand on the outside of the left knee and slowly pull your left knee over to the right keeping your left arm



	5) Upper Back Stretch	<p>extended and shoulder on the floor. Try to hold the stretch a total of ten seconds, three times. Then switch and repeat on the opposite side.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Clasp fingers behind your head so elbows are forward. Pull elbows back slowly until fully extended and parallel to shoulders. Hold elbows in that position for 5 seconds. Repeat stretch 10 times.
Strengthening	1) Upper Body <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Squeeze 2) Lower Body <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Arm and Leg Reach Stair climbing, walking or jogging	<ul style="list-style-type: none">-- Strengthen wrists, arms, and forearms by squeezing a soft rubber ball, tennis ball, or hand grip everyday. Squeeze as many times as you can until your hands feel fatigued. Make sure you squeeze a ball that is small enough to fit into your hand, to assure all five fingers are exercised.- Strengthens lower back. Get on the floor, on your hands and knees. Extend your right arm out in front of you, parallel to the ground. From this position extend your left leg out behind you, holding this extension for 5 seconds. Lower the arm and leg and repeat 5 times. Relax, extend left arm out in front parallel to the ground and right leg out holding 5 seconds and repeat 5 times as well.- Strengthens thighs and rear end.



Appendix A

Basic Rules of Athletics:

A. GENERAL RULES

A1 General rules for track events.

- a. Runner is disqualified after two false starts.
- b. Runner must remain in lane throughout race (for sprints).
- c. Runner must start behind the start line.
- d. Runner is disqualified if he impedes another runner's progress by obstructing, jostling, interfering, or otherwise gaining an unfair advantage.
- e. Runner must wear sneakers or athletic shoes.
- f. Wheelchair athletes must start races with the front wheels behind the start line.

A2 General rules for relay events.

- a. Runners must pass the baton within the exchange zone (20m zone).
- b. Runners may not throw the baton to make a pass.
- c. Runners must remain in their lanes throughout race.
- d. Runners are disqualified if they obstruct, impede or interfere with another runner's progress.

A3 General rules for the softball throw and the shot put.

- a. Use an official size softball or shot.
- b. Enter and exit the throwing / putting area from the back.
- c. Throw the softball in any manner; put the shot from above the shoulder.
- d. Make three throws or puts; the best throw or put will be the final score.
- e. Do not step over the front restraining line (softball throw), or step on or over the toe-board (shot put).

A4 General rules for the standing and running long jump.

- a. Start behind the takeoff line.
- b. Make three jumps; use the best jump as a final score.
- c. Measure the distance of the jump from the takeoff line / board to the closest impression made in the sand by any part of one's body, measured at a 90 degree angle to the line / board.



A5 Comply with the general rules for the high jump.

- a. Avoid diving over the bar.
- b. Avoid touching the pit, standards, and bar when deciding not to jump after a bad approach; you may re-start that approach, but only if you do not touch the pit, etc.
- c. Do not take off from both feet; high jumps must be made from a one-foot takeoff.
- d. Jump in turn.
- e. Exit the pit from the sides or the rear.
- f. Understand that three consecutive fouls at any one height will dictate one's final placement; final score is last height cleared.

SPORTSMANSHIP

5.0 Given an Athletics practice or meet, the athlete will exhibit sportsmanship with teammates and opponents at all times.

1. Exhibit competitive effort.

- a. Put forth maximum effort during each event.
- b. Practice the skills with the same intensity as you would perform them in competition.
- c. Always finish a race or event; don't quit.

2. Exhibit fair play at all times.

- a. Always comply with the rules.
- b. Demonstrate sportsmanship and fair play at all times.
- c. Respect the decision of the officials at all times.



MODIFICATIONS AND ADAPTATIONS

MODIFICATIONS OF ACTIVITIES

Special Olympics athletes are often denied the chance to learn new skills or activities in community settings because they are not physically able to perform the skills exactly according to the coach or the instructional guide. The Special Olympics coach may modify the skills involved in an activity so all of the athletes are able to participate. For example, modify the game of tag by requiring the athletes to creep on hands and knees, thereby allowing the non-ambulatory athletes to participate. Talk to your coach about modifications that may be appropriate, but remember that fewer modifications means quicker integration with other athletes in all settings.

ACCOMMODATING THE ATHLETE'S SPECIAL NEEDS

In competition, it is important that the rules not be changed to suit several athletes' special needs. However, there are other ways to accommodate the athletes' special needs. For example, the distance of a race may be decreased for Special Olympics athlete with muscular deficiencies. The sound of a bell can be used to assist athletes with visual impairments running a race.

ENCOURAGING ACTIVITY

Family members can structure activities so that athletes respond to challenging questions such as "teach me how to put the shot" or "show me how to run at the same pace for at least 60 seconds". Such an approach permits athletes with various levels of ability to respond in ways that allow for success. Obviously, variations in response to these questions would be apparent from athlete to athlete depending on the level of ability and severity of impairment.

CHANGING THE METHOD OF COMMUNICATION

Athletes sometimes require communications systems that are suited to their needs. For example, verbally explaining a task may not match up well with some athletes' information processing systems. Information which is more specific might be provided in other ways. For example, the family member could simply demonstrate the sports skill. Some athletes may need not only to hear or see a skill, but also to read a description of the skill..



ADAPTATIONS

More specific adaptations for associated impairments are listed below.

Orthopedic Impairments

- Use track surfaces that are flat, solid and smooth. In throwing events, stabilize the competitor's chair during the throw.
- Use a target in the softball throw.
- Use obstacle courses marked by flags and / or gates.
- Use wheelchair track and field rules.
- Use crutches, walkers and canes for stability.
- Decrease the distance of running events.

Auditory Impairments

- Use flag or hand signals for start
- Use smoke of the gun as a starting cue.
- Tag athlete to initiate start.

Visual Impairments

- Put sand at the end of the course so participants know when the finish line is crossed.
- In distance events, have a sighted partner run with the participant.
- Use a shorter approach in the high jump. Use a raised or different texture take-off restraining line for long jump and softball throw.
- Use brightly colored equipment.
- Set up guidelines in inside or outside lane.



Appendix B

TERMINOLOGY

If need more explanation of a term you see a term here, ask your coach!

Anchor The final or fourth leg of a relay race.

Approach The run-up and / or the adjustments made by an athlete before performing the actual skill.

Ball-Heel-Ball The method in which distance runners contact the ground while running.

Baton A tubular object that must be carried by and passed between members of a relay team.

Blind Pass A relay pass with the outgoing runner receiving the baton from the incoming runner without looking at the exchange.

Break Leaving the starting blocks before the start command.

Chute An extension of the straight-away on an oval or semi-oval track.

Circle The competition area for the shot put.

Closed Position A powerful throwing position for the shot put in which the putting shoulder and hip are back.

Crossbar The bar, which can be raised and lowered, that is placed between two standards for the high jump.

Crouch Start The "all fours" position of a runner at the start of a sprint.

Dead Heat When two or more runners cross the finish line simultaneously, resulting in a tie.

Did Not Finish (DNF) When an athlete starts a race, but drops out before crossing the finish line (athlete receives a participation ribbon only).

Disqualification (DQ) When an athlete violates a rule, does not show up for a scheduled event, or gains an unfair advantage by impeding or interfering (athlete receives a participation ribbon only).

Drive Leg The leg that exerts the force during a stride or takeoff.

Exchange Zone The 20m long zone in which the baton must be passed from the incoming runner to the outgoing runner during a relay race.

False Start An illegal start in which one or more runners cross the start line before the start command is given.

Field Participation area for the field events.



- Flex** The act of bending a joint, such as the elbow or knee.
- Follow Through** The movement of a part or parts of the body following another movement of the body.
- Foul** An infraction of a rule.
- Front Runner** An athlete who is leading, or who likes to lead a race while setting the pace.
- Grip** The hand hold of an implement for an event.
- Handoff** The exchange or pass of the baton between the incoming and outgoing runners of a relay team.
- Head Wind** The direction of the wind blowing toward the athletes.
- Heat** A preliminary race to determine which runners advance to the final race.
- Impeding** A violation in which one runner bumps, or cuts in front of, another runner forcing him to slow or break stride.
- Jogging** Running at a slow pace.
- Kick** Leg speed at the end of a race.
- Kicker** An athlete who depends on a superior kick to win a race.
- Lead Leg** The first leg to leave the ground in jumping.
- Lead off Leg** The first runner on a relay team. The distance one member of a relay team must run; a certain section of a relay race.
- Legal** A successful attempt and completion of any jump or throw in which there are no rules violations or infractions.
- Marks** An athlete's starting point for a race or a jump.
- Pace** The rate of covering a specific distance while running or walking.
- Passer** The relay runner who hands off the baton.
- Passing** When an athlete declines to attempt a jump or throw when it is his turn.
- Pit** The landing area for long jumpers and high jumpers, usually filled with sand or sawdust (long jump) or synthetic materials (high jump).
- Power Foot** The lead foot in a race; the preferred or "strength" foot.



- Receiver** The athlete who receives the baton in a relay race.
- Recovery** The act of bringing an arm or leg back to the drive, push, or stride position.
- Reflex** An involuntary and automatic muscle reaction.
- Rhythm** Uniform and well-coordinated running action.
- Scissors Jump** A high jump style in which the legs are moved in a scissors motion when crossing the bar.
- Scratch Line** The restraining line which cannot be crossed in throwing and jumping events.
- Sector** The 40 degree landing area for the shot put and softball throw.
- Shot** Iron, plastic or brass spheres used for shot put competition.
- Staggered Start** The start used for the 200.400 and 800m races, and for the 4x100 and 4x400 relay races, in which the runners are positioned at different points around the curve of the track.
- Stance** An athlete's particular starting position.
- Starting Blocks** Metal blocks set in the track behind the start line, used to support the athlete's feet for all sprints.
- Straight-away** The straight area of a track from one curve to the next.
- Stride** The distance covered by an athlete's leg cycle while running.
- Swing** A pendulum action of an athlete's body, or parts of the body.
- Takeoff** The act of leaving the ground.
- Takeoff Foot** The foot from which the athlete propels himself off the ground.
- Takeoff Mark** The spot from which the athlete leaves the ground.
- Toe-board** A restraining board which the athlete may not cross over, used in the shot put.
- Visual Pass** A relay pass with the outgoing runner receiving the baton from the incoming runner while looking back at the other runner and baton during the exchange.
- Warm-Up** The gradual process of raising the body temperature and loosening muscles prior to strenuous exercise.
- Wind Sprint** A short, practice sprint for conditioning.



Appendix C

Sample Off-Season Fitness Program

Warm-up (15 minutes) 10 repetitions each exercise

Head Turns - side to side
Shoulder Shrugs
Arm Circles – with arms elevated to side, elbows straight
March in Place
Up and down on toes
Windmills

Stretching (15 minutes)

See Above

Aerobic Activity (20 minutes)

Jogging (wheelchair running)
Jumping Jacks
Jumping up and down
Hopping from one foot to the other
Windmills
Sidestepping in a line
Dancing
(Alternate activities for athletes in chairs: medicine ball toss
 alternate knee kicks
 arm swing to opposite ankle
 figure 8 with wheelchair
 dance in chair)



Muscle Endurance (20 Minutes)

Or

Muscle Strength (20 Minutes) depends on the number of sets and repetitions

Bent-knee or regular push-ups

Or Chair push-ups

Bent-knee sit-ups

Bent-knee diagonal sit-ups, elbow to knee

Partner Resistance Walking or Riding with stretch band

Half-squats or alternate lunges

Or Knee Straightening

Up on Toes

Or stretch band resisted toe pointing

Stretch band resisted arm presses forward

Stretch band resisted arm flys from front to side

Stretch band rowing

Weight lifting (use weights or milk bottles filled with sand):

Lift arms straight forward

Lift arms out to side with elbows straight

Bend and straighten elbows.

Cool-Down

Slowly walk or wheel in circles

Trunk twists

Arm circles

Shoulder circles

Head turns

Stretching (insert cool-down stretches here)