



1-DAY EXPERIENCE CURRICULUM



**MAKING
TRACKS**
A Youth Engagement Program

1-DAY EXPERIENCE CURRICULUM

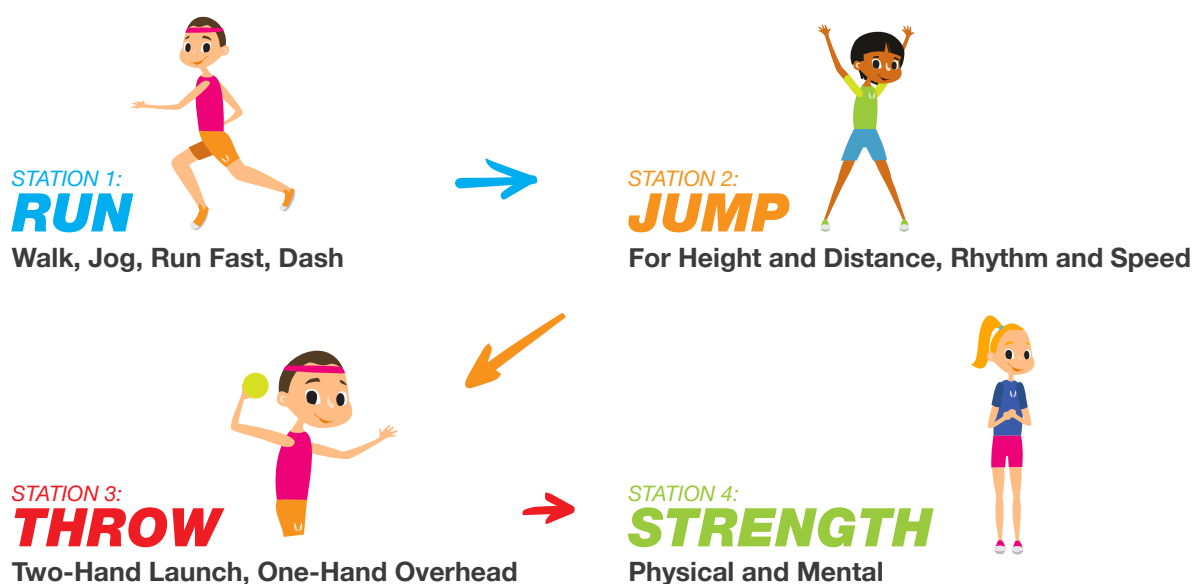


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The RunJumpThrow (RJT) 1-Day Experience, created by USA Track & Field (USATF) in partnership with The Hershey Company, provides children a chance to learn about track and field skills and healthy lifestyles while having fun! This program lasts about two hours and is easy to follow for both organizers and young athletes, with no specialized equipment or facilities required!

The RunJumpThrow 1-Day Experience can take place on a field or in a gym. You will need space to set up four stations for the instruction and practice.



Create designated areas for each station. Groups of children will rotate through each station twice following a brief warm-up.

- For the first rotation, focus on instruction and lots of participation. The purpose of the first four stations is to learn and practice foundational skills that lead to track & field success.
- For the second rotation, the children can express themselves and test their skills with modified competitive games.

Each RJT station lasts 10-15 minutes. Use the specific instructions and teaching cues to help participants make meaningful progressions toward foundational track & field skills.

Pro-tip: Some advanced planning is necessary to ensure a safe and fun event. Structured environments help guarantee success with children.

PREPARE STATIONS IN ADVANCE

Set up the four stations before the children arrive. How you designate the areas will depend on your available space. You may simply use the four corners of a field as general areas for the Run, Jump, Throw, and Strength stations. Or, you might have specialized track and field facilities and equipment available (although this is not required). **Here are some minimums to consider:**

RUN

For the walking and jogging and running fast skills, an out-and-back or an oval can be used. Roughly the area of half a soccer field makes for a good youth-sized oval. Define with cones or other markings to make it easier to see. For the dash, establish start and finish lines to make a straightaway about the length of half a basketball court. For timing the bouts of walking or running and rest, you can use your phone or a watch.

JUMP

Make a beginning line and an end-line about 10 yards away (half the width of a basketball court or the diameter of the center circle on a soccer field).

THROW

You will need softballs (or another type ball that can be held easily in one hand) and larger balls for the 2-hand launch moves. Basketballs will work. If medicine balls are available, use 6 pounds/3 kilos or less. A safe landing area will be needed.

STRENGTH

This station could be the same area (the center of the field, for example) used for the group warm-up. In some circumstances, it might be nice to do the strength activities under a tree or in the shade of a building.

MAKING THE GROUPS

Groups of about 12 work well. For example, 48 children will break into four groups of 12. After the general warm-up the four groups will break out to the four stations. For larger groups, have enough leaders and space to have multiple small groups rotating through the stations at the same time.



GROUP SETUP:

Start by asking the group to stand in a big circle so everyone can see each other. Circles inside of circles make for a fun way to organize larger groups.

1

STAND TALL, TUNE IN, AND BREATHE

 1-2 Minutes

- Stand tall with your feet underneath your shoulders.
- Stand even taller!
- Push your belly out and expand your chest to breath in deeply. Pull your belly toward your spine as you breathe out. Repeat 3-5 times

2

BALANCE MOVES

 2-4 Minutes

- Continue with big breaths and standing extra tall while shifting your weight onto one foot. Shift to the other side. Balance for 10 seconds between shifts and repeat 3 or 4 times.
- Balance on each leg while holding your free knee up at hip height, hold for 5 seconds. Shift legs a few times. Add running action with arms. Go slow, medium and fast with your arms while balancing.
 - Why? Running action arm movements while balancing and holding the other leg up at hip height strengthens the lower leg and hips.
- Next, let's try two different balance challenge moves. We will do each move 3-5 times on each leg.
 - First, balance on one leg and reach up high with arms and then carefully touch toes.
 - Add "swaying like a tree" back and forth 8-10 times while reaching up. Rest on both feet for a few seconds and repeat 3 times each side.



3

RHYTHMIC IN-PLACE RUNNING

 **2-4 Minutes**

- Try running in place at medium speed. Focus on rhythm and get your knees up as high as your hips. Let's explore tempo. Tempo is your speed or cadence. Go slow, try fast, try medium. Repeat 2 or 3 times.
 - Try arm form variations while running in-place. Time 10 second intervals of running in place with high knees with your arms:
 - Both arms above head.
 - Left arm reaches up high and right arm practices running action.
 - Switch arms.

4

LOOSEN- UP

 **2-4 Minutes**

- With both feet intentionally connected to the floor, move your arms in big circles at your side. At the top of the circle, reach up to the sky. Try each arm 10 times each way, and both arms together 10 more repetitions forward and backward.
- Stand wide and grip the ground with your feet and do 5 trunk twists each way.
- Stand on one leg and pull the other foot back with your hand and stretch the front of your leg for 5 seconds. Do each leg twice.
- Balance carefully and try controlled high leg kicks, can you kick as high as your belly, maybe your head? Try 5 each leg. NO FALLING! 😊

5

COME TO CENTER

 **>1 Minute**

- Jog slowly to your assigned station.

FOUNDATIONAL SKILLS:

Foundational skills: Posture, rhythm, tempo, intensity/effort, arm action, torso control, hip hinge, foot contact.

1
RACE WALK

 **3-4 Minutes**

- Explain the main rule of race walking: one foot always has to be on the ground.
- Walk fast to a pre-selected point (or around the area). Try 2 or 3 one-minute bursts of super-fast walking with 20 seconds of rest between efforts.
 - Pro-tip: During the brief breaks, ask what they noticed when they tried to walk fast. Some discussion points that could come up: increased heart rate and breathing, it's hard to go fast and keep one foot on the ground, walking fast is fun!

2
JOG

 **3-4 Minutes**

- Now we are going to learn about jogging. When both feet are off the ground, even for a fraction of a second, that's called "flight." If one foot is not on the ground and you have flight, means you are no longer walking, you are jogging!
- Ask children what is was like to jog over from the warm-up area.
- Have a conversation about jogging technique. Key points: the tempo of jogging is controlled, slow, and rhythmic. Run with tall posture and loose shoulders.
- Try jogging to the cone or flag (or around the oval).

3
RUN FAST

 **3-5 Minutes**

- Now rest for a minute and discuss what will change when running as fast as you can.
- Let's try the same routine we did with walking but switch the effort/rest.
 - "When I say 'Go,' run as fast as you can for 20 seconds. We will rest one minute and repeat 2 or 3 times."
- While resting, discuss the technique of running fast: big arms, high knees, powerful feet striking the ground.

- Rest while you teach the rules and technique of the start. This race lasts only a few seconds, so it is important that we have a fair start. That means everybody starts at the same time. To do this we use “commands.”
- The commands are “READY – SET – GO!” When the leader says READY, get in position with your game face on. For SET, the runner has to be motionless and loaded like a spring with the legs bent, and at GO the spring is released.
- Practice reaction time with just your arm action.
 - On the “Ready-Set-Go” commands, start the arm action of running while standing in place.
 - Now, practice following and reacting to the commands with in-place running. Stay motionless, and at the “Go” command, start running in place FAST for only 5 seconds.
- Now let’s practice the start of the dash. Everyone can go together by lining up on the starting line and accelerate 10 meters to the finish line. Listen to the commands!
 - Pro-tip technical points: The first steps are powerful with big arm action and forward hip drive.
- Line up and we each can try 2 or 3 starts. Practice the commands and accelerate to an imaginary line about 10 yards out.

4

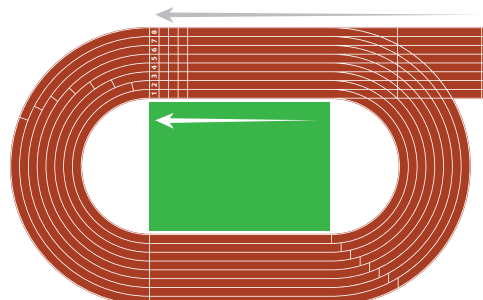
DASH

 **1-3 Minutes**

TRANSITION

 **> 1 Minutes**

- Think about your jogging skills and head to the Jumps station!



FOUNDATIONAL SKILLS:

Balance, posture, ground force reaction, soft landing, hip extension, arm drive.

1

IN-PLACE JUMPS

 **2-4 Minutes**

- Let's do some rocket jumps! Stand tall, bend your knees, load your arms back, now push into the ground and jump straight up. Driving your arms up. Land softly. Try 3 in a row. Try 5 in a row.
(Advanced variation: can you bring your knees up to your chest when you are in the air?).
- Balance and try 3 in a row one-legged rocket jumps. Try the other leg. Now try 5 in a row.

2

MULTI-JUMPS

 **3-5 Minutes**

- Now we are going to do variations on hopping back and forth from this beginning line to the end line.
- Spread out and balance on one foot and begin hopping forward with small easy bounces (3-6 inches per bounce is enough). Mostly focus on balance, posture and rhythm. At the end line, turn around and hop back on the other leg.
- Let's do an activity called 5-4-3-2-1. We are going to hop back and forth from the beginning line to the end-line. The first time hop on one foot 5 times in a row and then switch smoothly and hop on the other foot 5 times and repeat until you get to the end and stop and wait. Now, hop 4 times on one leg, shift to the other without disrupting your rhythm and hop 4 times on the other foot. Repeat until you get to the line. Next, hop to the line with 3 left foot contacts, then 3 rights all the way to the line. Now 2 lefts and 2 rights switching naturally between legs. The last time try giant leaps alternating left and right foot contacts to the line.

3

SKIPPING

 **4-5 Minutes**

- Line up and skip to the end line, skip back to the start.
- Can you skip facing sideways? With teacher commands, try facing each direction two times each.
- Who can skip backwards? Try it down and back.

TRANSITION

 **> 1 Minutes**

- Skip over to the Throws area!



FUNDAMENTAL SKILLS:

Gripping the object to be thrown, ground force reaction to initiate the movement, using the whole body to throw.

Two important considerations: Safety first! Throwing objects always creates some risk. Set up the area thoughtfully and provide instruction and supervision. Second, participants bring a wide range in experience to this station. Be considerate and modify so everyone can have fun and learn.

1

LESSON ON SAFETY

 1-2 Minutes

- Arrange the group so everyone can see and hear the instructions. It's fun to throw as far as you can, but we need to be careful. Never throw at another person. Only throw when it is your turn and throw toward the target.

2

PRACTICE OVERHAND THROW "SOFTBALL THROW"

 3-5 Minutes

- This time while you are here, let's get in a few practice throws and learn some skills. Next time you are here you can learn more skills and see if you can throw farther.
- Improve your distance with proper technique!
 - Grip: spread your fingers a bit to avoid gripping the ball too tightly.
 - Hold the non-throwing arm up and keep it long and loose.
 - Start the throw with the opposite leg forward.
 - Use your whole body to throw using the legs, hips and trunk before starting the whipping action with your arm.

3

2-HAND LAUNCH FOR HEIGHT

 3-5 Minutes

- Now let's throw something bigger and heavier. Use a basketball (or similar) and try to throw for height using your legs and hips, not just your arms.
- To do this, use both hands to hold the ball. Prepare to throw by bending at the hips and swing the ball between the knees with long arms. Push into the ground with both feet causing the ball to swing up. Aim straight into the air so the ball flies high and then bounces on the floor just in front of you.

TRANSITION

 > 1 Minutes

- Head over to the Strength station!

FOUNDATIONAL SKILLS:

Knowing that strength can be both physical and mental.

1

INTRODUCTION TO STRENGTH

 3-5 Minutes

- Welcome the group with a brief conversation about strength. Describe some examples. Conversation points:
 - Strength is physical and mental. Examples of physical strength include having flexible, fast, and powerful muscles. Examples of mental strength include being happy, focused, and intentional about the direction you are going. Being nice to yourself and each other is mental strength.

2

MOVES YOU CAN USE

 5-7 Minutes

- Let's explore moves and exercises you can do at home to get physically strong!
- Let's see how you do push-ups! Yes, you can go from your knees. Try 3 or 4. Now let's try a fun variation. At the top of the push-up when both arms are straight, can you balance on one hand and point the other to the sky? Try 4 or 5 each side.
- Now let's try a strength move for our core muscles: the in-place dogtrot. With your hands and knees on the ground try balancing on two points by carefully lifting your right hand while slowly lifting up and back with your left leg. Go back to both hands and knees on the floor and try lifting the left arm and right leg. Slowly switch back and forth 5 times.
- To strengthen the hips and legs do lunges. Stand tall and step forward with one foot while dropping the back knee carefully to the ground. Keep your spine straight up-and-down. You can have your hands on your hips or use them for balance. Push back to the standing position from your heel of the front foot. Try the other side. Repeat 3-4 times each leg.

TRANSITION

 > 1 Minutes

- Let's connect with the other groups and take a break.

END OF ROUND ONE

Take a little break after the first rotation. Bring the group back to center and check-in. Encourage the adult leaders to talk to children considering open-ended questions like, "What was your favorite station?. You can also use this time to encourage participants to start thinking about improving the next round by asking, "Could you throw the ball farther next time?" "How?"

SPECIAL NOTE:

Depending on the situation, it may be appropriate for some children to be fans or finish line judges rather than competitors. One or two events might be enough for some children. Others will joyfully line up for all three racing opportunities and want to keep going.

1 WALK

 2-3 Minutes

Line children up that want to try the fast walk contest. Have a finish line set up that will take most children about 1 minute to get to (a lap around $\frac{1}{2}$ a soccer field, for example). Listen to the starting commands and follow the rules, “NO flight! You have to keep one foot on the ground!”

2 RUN FAST

 3-4 Minutes

Line up, and on the Ready-Set-Go, run as fast as you can for 20 seconds (or race 1 time the width of a field or length of a court).

3 DASH

 3-4 Minutes

Use the straightaway to line children up for the start. The race is very short and very fast so each child could try it 2 or 3 times if they want to.

4 CLOSE AND TRANSITION

 >1 Minute

Great job racing! Have fun jumping at the next station!

SPECIAL NOTE:

These are games of self-regulation rather than testing the absolute limits of jumping potential. Control, safety, and fun for everyone are the focus here.

1

SPEED HOPPING

Using the ready-set-go commands used for the dash, line up and race 10 yards (or meters). Try racing while hopping 2 or 3 times each leg.

 **2-4 Minutes**

2

STANDING BROAD JUMP

Line up on the beginning line. Jump forward off both feet and land on both feet. No falling back! Go back to the line and try again for 5 total attempts.

 **5-6 Minutes**

3

4 GIANT ALTERNATE LEG BOUNDS

Start on two feet. Jump forward take four big leaps landing on two feet at the end. Walk back and try again. You can go farther!

 **1-2 Minutes**

4

TRANSITION

Great jumping! Now you can test your throwing skills!

 **>1 Minute**

SPECIAL NOTE:

Safety first!

1

REVIEW SAFETY

Throw only when it is your turn and only toward the target.

 **1 Minute**

2

OVERHEAD THROW FOR DISTANCE "SOFTBALL THROW"

The best way to have this drill set up is for everyone to have their own ball to throw. Use the sideline of the field. Everyone throws at the same time as far as they can. Try to see the ball land and remember the spot. Wait for the teacher to let you know when it is your turn.

 **3-5 Minutes**

3

2 HAND LAUNCH FOR DISTANCE

When you were here last, you got a chance to try to launch the bigger ball into the air as high as you could. Now let's try the same 2-Hand technique and throw for distance.

 **3-5 Minutes**

4

TRANSITION

Well done everybody! Head over to the Strength station!

 **>1 Minute**

SPECIAL NOTE:

The two physical assessments below can be done in about five minutes. This allows some time for the mental lessons on developing a positive attitude and goal setting.

1 SIT AND REACH FUNCTIONAL FITNESS TEST

 2-3 Minutes

Let's test the flexibility of your back and legs. Sit on the ground with your feet in front of you and your knees comfortably straight. Round your spine, bend at the hips and reach toward your toes. How far can you get past your knees? Can you touch your toes? Can you reach farther than your toes? Relax with a few deep breaths and repeat once or twice more and see if you can go a bit farther.

2 SIT-TO-STAND FUNCTIONAL FITNESS TEST

 2-3 Minutes

This is a test of coordination and strength. Start by sitting on the floor with crossed legs. Then, stand up and try not to use your hands or knees. You can use one or both hands if necessary. Also, you can get to one or both knees on the way up.

3 LESSON ON POSITIVE ATTITUDE

 2-4 Minutes

Great athletes understand that they have control over their attitude. That means that when they feel anxious, sad or scared, they notice it, acknowledge their feelings, and try to focus on something positive or affirming. Does anyone have any ideas or examples of using your brain on purpose to have a good attitude?

4 LESSON ON BEING INTENTIONAL (GOAL SETTING)

 2-4 Minutes

Great athletes set goals. That means they have an idea of what they want to do in the future, and they make decisions every day to make their idea a reality. You can have goals for today or tomorrow and also your goals can be for weeks or even years in the future. Start having ideas about being great right now and make decisions every day to make your dream come true.

GROUP SETUP:

Participants face away from the sun and toward the teacher with enough personal space to move their arms in full range of motion.

1 THREE TIMES CLOUD HANDS

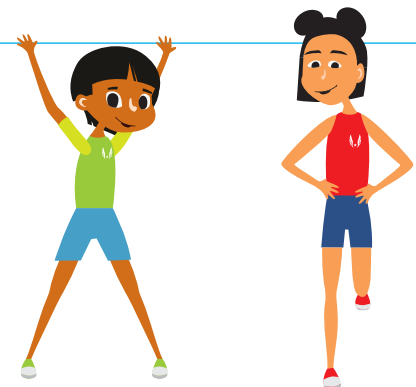
 2-3 Minutes

- Stand tall with your feet underneath your shoulders.
- Stand even taller!
- Repeat this routine three times:
 - From your tall posture, relax your arms at your sides and exhale. Try to get most of the air out.
 - Slowly bring your hands to the front as if holding a ball in front of your navel.
 - Slowly lift hands up to face while inhaling deeply and pushing your belly out.
 - Continue to lift hands into the sky while breathing out.
 - Inhale and sweep arms wide to the side.
 - Exhale and slowly sweep arms down to the beginning position.

2 CLOSURE

 1-2 Minutes

- Thank you for coming! I hope you had fun while learning to run, jump, and throw! (See more information on next page)



CLOSING

Once you've completed the final station, recap the skills children practiced today and how that can translate to other activities. Did they have fun? What did they learn?

Encourage them to continue seeking out track and field opportunities if they are interested. Direct their parents or guardians to USA Track & Field's website (usatf.org) to learn about how they can get connected with a local Association.

POST-EVENT

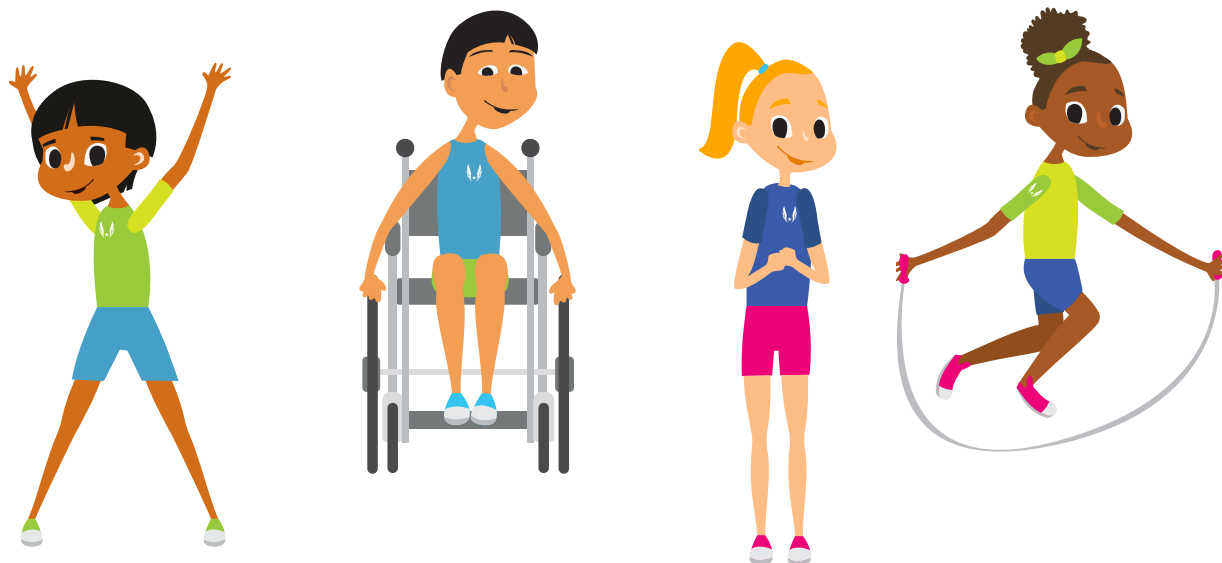
As an organizer, please fill out our brief RunJumpThrow Organizer Survey on runjumpthrow.usatf.org/resources to help us continue to improve the curriculum.

LEARN MORE

Now that you've completed the 1-Day Curriculum, check out our other program offerings

- Adaptive program for children with physical and cognitive disabilities
- 6-Week curriculum
- At-Home program
- [Learn More](#)

Congratulations on putting on a great event for your community!





runjumpthrow.usatf.org