



**Hi Coach!**

Whether you coach soccer, football, basketball, lacrosse, or baseball, you know that your players need to spend time working on their speed and agility. But do you even know how to design a speed training program for your players?

Chances are that you have your players run a few sprints and run some shuttle drills every now and then, which is great! But without hitting all 6 of the skills listed below, your program isn't maximizing your athletes' potential.

The athletic "skills" you need to address each practice are:

- 1.) **Footwork**
- 2.) **Acceleration**
- 3.) **Agility/Reaction**
- 4.) **Plyometrics**
- 5.) **Strength**
- 6.) **Flexibility/Mobility**

(click any links below for our [Video Drills](#))

1.) [Footwork](#) entails both coordination and foot-speed. Speed ladders and hop scotch drills are great for developing coordination and body control. For foot speed, I love using "Lightning Feet" drills that have players moving their feet in patterns (2 Step, Scissors) as fast as they can in a 20-30 sec interval.

2.) The best [Acceleration](#) drills get your players to get to top speed as quickly as possible. As simple as it seems, your primary goal here is to get your players to sprint their hardest. Turn it into a race and you'll get your players' best efforts. I recommend anywhere from 4-6 40 yard sprints.

3.) Those shuttle drills and zig zag patterns are great for **Agility**. Take it one step further by adding a **Reaction** component to the drill. Have players change direction when you give an audio cue (whistle, "switch!"). Next time have them react to a visual cue by pointing your arm or raising your hand for them to switch directions.

4.) **Plyometrics** are jumping drills that build explosiveness and develop your athletes' fast-twitch muscles. It's no coincidence that your fastest sprinters are also your highest jumpers. Throw in 10 squat jumps and 10 lunge jumps each practice.

5.) **Strength** is a tricky subject due to both age and equipment restrictions. I'll be brief by saying that building up strength in the **core** and upper/lower body is the surest way to reduce injury and improve athletic performance. Have your athletes hit a Push-up, Plank, Squat/Lunge Circuit at the end of each practice to keep them strong.

6.) At both the beginning and end of practice, you should have a basic **Flexibility/Mobility** routine. Start practice with a moving, **dynamic warm-up**. End practice with a static stretch. A thorough routine stretches the hamstrings, quads, calves, inner/outer hip, and hip flexors. The best athletes have great hip mobility, don't ignore the hips!

Now you know all the key drills that you need to include in your speed/agility program. Stay tuned for next newsletter about the timing, frequency, and ordering of the above speed skills.

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