



1. starting pistol  
[ˈstɑːtɪŋ ˈpɪstəʊl]
2. finishing line  
[ˈfɪnɪʃɪŋ laɪn]
3. hurdle [ˈhɜːdl]
4. baton [ˈbæʊn]
5. lane [leɪn]
6. running track  
[ˈrʌnɪŋ træk]
7. relay race  
[ˈriːleɪ reɪs]
8. bar [bɑː]
9. pole vault  
[ˈpəʊl vɔːlt]
10. pole [pəʊl]
11. discus [ˈdɪskəs]
12. sandpit [ˈsændpɪt]
13. take-off board  
[ˈteɪk ɒf ˌbɔːd]
14. podium [ˈpɒdɪəm]
15. trophy [ˈtrɒfi]
16. javelin [ˈdʒævəlɪn]
17. shot [ʃɒt]
18. stopwatch  
[ˈstɒpwɒtʃ]
19. athlete [ˈæθliːt]
20. starting block  
[ˈstɑːtɪŋ blɒk]

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## VOCABULARY

# Athletics

*Are you interested in athletics, or what in the US would be called “track and field”? ANNA HOCHSIEDER presents useful words and phrases to talk about running races, jumping and throwing objects.*

**MEDIUM PLUS**

### Sports day

The school I went to held a **sports day** every summer. The children **competed** in various **track events**, such as **the 400-metre sprint** and **the 100-metre hurdles**, as well as in **field events**, such as **the long jump** and **throwing the javelin**. Being no **good at sport** myself, I used to hate those days. I would **come last** in every **race** — often after making a **false start**. My biggest success was when I  **tied for last place** with a classmate.

My son Daniel, on the other hand, is a **natural athlete**. He loves any type of **physical exercise**, especially **athletics**. He’s an excellent **sprinter** as well as a **middle-** and **long-distance runner**. His best time in **the 100-metre sprint** (N. Am.: **dash**) is 10.9 seconds, and he’ll finish a **5K** (five-km run) in less than 20 minutes. He’s also just joined his school’s **cross-country** team.

Daniel also **does well** in **field events**. Watching him **leap** backwards and **fly through the air** head first to **clear the bar** in **the high jump** or **putting the shot** (throwing a six-kilo metal ball) fills me with a mixture of pride and fear. He’s had his share of **sports injuries**, but he’s not one to give up easily.

**PRACTICE**

Now, try the following exercises to practise talking about *athletics*.



Exercise 1	E
Cross out one word in each line (A–C) that you would not associate with the activity described on the left.	
A. running: <b>bar</b>   <del>finish line</del>   <del>lane</del>   <del>starting blocks</del>	
B. jumping: <b>baton</b>   <del>hurdle</del>   <del>pole</del>   <del>sandpit</del>	
C. throwing: <b>discus</b>   <del>javelin</del>   <del>shot</del>   <del>stopwatch</del>	

Exercise 2	M
Match the sentence halves below to complete the definitions.	
A. If you <b>compete in an event</b> ,...	1. you take part in a 5,000-metre race.
B. If you <b>come in first in a race</b> ,...	2. you start running too soon, so that the race has to begin again.
C. If you <b>tie for first place</b> ,...	3. you arrive at the finish line before the other competitors.
D. If you <b>make a false start</b> ,...	4. you and another person win, finishing with the same number of points.
E. If you <b>run a 5K</b> ,...	5. you jump over it without touching it.
F. If you <b>clear the bar</b> ,...	6. you take part in a sporting contest.

Exercise 3	A
Study the picture and text on page 48 again, and find the answer to each question below. Some letters have been given.	
A. What do you call the sport in which you throw a heavy ball as far as you can? s..... - .....t	
B. What do you call a race between teams in which each team member runs one section of the race? .....l.....r.....	
C. What do you call a race in which people run very fast over a short distance? .....p.....t or .....h	
D. What do you call a race in which people jump over a series of small frames or fences? .....u.....s	

**UK / US differences**

**Athletics** is the British English word for sporting events in which people run races, jump over **obstacles** and throw objects. Speakers of US English use the expression **track and field**.

For physical activity done for pleasure or to keep fit and healthy, British English speakers use the uncountable noun **sport**, while speakers of US English use the plural noun **sports**:

- Do you enjoy sport? (UK) / Do you enjoy sports? (N. Am.)
- In British English, the plural noun **sports** is used only before another noun, as in **sports injury** or **sports day** (called **field day** in US English).

**athletics** [æθ'letɪks]  
• Leichtathletik

**obstacle** ['ɒbstəkl̩]  
• Hindernis

**Answers**

- A. bar  
B. baton  
C. stopwatch
- A-6; B-3; C-4;  
D-2; E-1; F-5
- A. shot+put  
B. relay race  
C. sprint / dash  
D. hurdles

