

SELECTING EVENTS FOR TRACK & FIELD ATHLETES



There is a **strategy** to selecting events. Every athlete is different, from their age and body type to their interests and track IQ. Check out Tracklab's **pro tips** below.

Body Types

Larger and more **muscular** with greater body mass can generate force for shot put, discus, javelin.

Leaner and **muscular** with **shorter** lower legs and greater muscle mass can generate explosive power for sprinting.

Leaner and **agile** with long legs with **explosive** power can generate height or distance for long jump, triple jump, high jump.

Leaner and **lightweight** with more **slow-twitch** fibers for speed endurance.

Built like a sprinter but with good **height** and **long legs** for clearing hurdles.



Track IQ

There are written and unwritten **rules** of track & field. How long the athlete has competed in the sport matters.

Determine track IQ by **milestones** like can they follow one- or two-word verbal commands, jump off one foot, stay in their lane, exchange in zone, or set their blocks without assistance.

Think about their track IQ before entering athletes in overlapping events, more than 3 events in one meet, or technical events like sprint relays, hurdles or high jump.



Interests

Make it fun. Athletes who like to "race" may love sprints. Energizer bunnies may like distance. Some athletes like to throw things as far as they can, jump far or high, hang upside down, or play in the sand, so don't overlook field events.

Age

Remember that athletes compete in **age groups**. USATF determines age group by the chronological age as of December 31 of each year. So if your athlete is 10 in May but will be 11 by end of year, they will compete in May as 11-12. This is called the **competition age**.

Lightning Round

Training a miler: long sprints for speed; 800m and 1500m runs for conditioning. **8U or new athlete:** sprints, long jump, shot put. **Kid just loves to run:** 3000m run. **Skill/technical day:** hurdles, high jump, long jump, javelin. **Anaerobic day:** 100m, 200m, 400m sprints.