

Safety

Safety has to be a prime concern, obviously. A little care beforehand can save a lot of worry afterwards.

Potentially the most hazardous events are **the throws**. In all throws it is essential athletes are well behind the throwing circle, and where there is a cage, always outside it. Officials should warn (whistle, air horn, loud yell) when a throw is about to take place – it's too easy for a spotter or official to be distracted momentarily and not realise a discus or shot is heading in their direction.

Throwing implements must be carried back, not thrown or rolled.

It pays to have a **roped off section** that waiting athletes must stay behind until called for their attempt.

On no account should athletes be in the throwing areas (inside the track) during competition unless helping officials and under strict supervision.

Older runners and jumpers using **spikes** must take them off immediately on completion of the event. Walking around in spikes is an accident waiting to happen.

In the **high jump** the biggest danger is missing the pad or hitting the upright. Many young high jumpers aim for the centre of the bar but momentum means they clear it close to the far end – and risk hitting the upright or hitting the ground. Encourage jumpers to aim for the first third of the bar, thereby clearing it in the centre. (Crosbar sag also means the centre is lower than the ends – a clearance anywhere but the centre requires jumping higher than is necessary.)

Make sure no jumper makes an attempt before he or she is called – it is not uncommon for a child to pre-empt the official and make a jump when the previous jumper is still on the mat.



Check **long jump** pits for glass and dangerous objects before children arrive at the ground. This should be done during digging and raking, so don't dig the pit without watching out for what might be in the sand.

And consider the **warm up and stretches as a safety procedure** – a proper warm up could avoid an injury. (See next page)