

Discus



What is a discus?

A discus is an implement in the shape of a plate that the athlete has to throw as far as they can. The discus can be made of rubber, wood and metal or plastic and metal.

How heavy is the discus?

U6, U7	350g
U8, U9, U10	500g
U11, U12, U13G	750g
U13B, U14, U15, U16, U17G	1kg
U17B	1.5kg

How do you throw the discus?

It takes time and practice to perfect the technique for throwing the discus. As long as the athlete throws the discus in a safe manner, anything goes.

- Starting position - the athlete should stand side on to the throwing area with their feet shoulder-width apart.
- If the athlete is right-handed, then the right side of their body should be towards the back of the circle, vice-versa for left-handed athletes.
- Grip - the hand is spread over the discus with the pads of the fingers just over the edges. The thumb should gently rest at the back of the discus.
- Release - out the front of the hand, off the index finger, with the arm being extended.

Can the discus be thrown underarm?

Yes, and it is a perfectly valid throw. For the younger athletes it may take a while to be able to make a discus fly flat. In fact the discus can come out of the hand in any way, even out the back. If thrown correctly however, athletes will get a bigger throw.

When is a foul recorded?

- If the discus lands on or outside the sector lines.
- If the athlete leaves the circle in an uncontrolled manner.
- If any part of the athlete touches the ground outside the front of the circle during the throw.
- If the athlete walks out the front half of the circle.

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Where do I measure from?

- Measure from the nearest edge of the landing mark of the discus to the inside edge of the throwing circle
- The zero end of the tape goes out to where the discus landed.
- The tape needs to be pulled directly back through the centre of the circle.

What are some basic rules?

- Athletes must commence the action from a stationary position inside the circle – meaning they cannot do a run up from outside the circle.
- The athlete must not leave the circle until the discus has landed.
- Athletes must be told the reason they have been fouled.
- If the discus hits the cage (where one is present), bounces off and lands inside the sector lines this is not a foul.
- Athletes can enter the circle from any direction (front OR back), but **they must exit from the back half of the circle.**

What are the safety considerations?

- Keep participants who are waiting their turn, well back from the cage.
- Judges should stand on the outside of the sector lines and always be alert.
- Participants should not lean on or touch the cage, while waiting for their turn.
- Make sure the discus is smooth and there are no unsafe edges.
- Make sure the sector lines extend well past the largest throw you are expecting and mark these with a red flag.
- Carry the discus back after each throw.
- Athletes must not throw until told to.

What are some “Handy Tips” for conducting discus?

- Peg the athlete’s best throw and measure it at the end of the competition.
- For large groups, allow athletes to have 2 throws rather than 3.
- Mark out sector lines before the competition for the day/night starts.
- Have the next athlete ready to throw with the discus in hand.
- Move any discus that are not being used away from the immediate area.
- For younger age groups, only allow athletes to do a standing discus throw (no turns or spins).
- For younger age groups, mark out 5m & 10m distances and award the athletes on a points system, rather than measuring their throws. (5m = 5 points, 10m = 10 points etc). (Except when measurement is required for competition meets.)

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- Hold the discus flat against your palm; the edge of the discus sits on the pads of the first joints of your fingers; rest your thumb on the back of the discus
- Use a balanced ready-stance; hold the discus up in front of your eyes; your throwing hand on top of the discus; your non-throwing hand underneath for support
- Keep the discus flat and your throwing hand on top while you swing the discus back off your supporting hand in a wide arc
- Swing your feet, hips, chest and shoulders to the front as you move your weight from your back to your front foot
- Stand tall as you swing your arm forward
- Release the discus off your index finger (out of the front of the hand) in a flat spin
- Watch the discus go



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IDEAS FOR LITTLE ATHLETIC COACHES TO HELP DEVELOP SKILLS

- Use smaller discus or Frisbee
- Practice standing throws from cones
- Roll discus along the ground emphasizing the release being from index finger (if it is released properly it should roll in a straight line)
- Hold and throw vertically in the air and make it spin off index finger (the discus should spin smoothly and be vertical in the air and land on its rim)

COACHING CUES – STANDING THROW

- Hold discus in palm with ends of finger wrapped around the edges (fingers spread out)
- Thumb should rest on back of discus
- When preparing to throw, have throwing hand over the top of discus and other hand underneath for support
- Keep shoulders level
- Keep the discus flat when preparing to throw and when throwing (it should skim through the air)
- Discus is released off the index finger in a flat spin
- Have knees bent and stand side on to where you plan to throw
- The heel of back foot level with toe of front foot
- Push with the legs and finish with chest and hips facing forward
- Finish looking up to where you want to throw and hand releasing discus should also be up to where the discus should go (not down towards the ground)

TECHNIQUE – SPIN

- Spin is very complicated and only done by older and experienced athletes
- Start with similar stand to standing throw
- Body weight evenly over both feet
- If right handed thrower, start the spin with the right leg leaving the ground and weight goes to the left
- Swing the right foot around and in to the middle of the circle
- The discus is held high with both arms held out
- The discus must stay behind the hips throughout the whole spin
- Keep the shoulders level and knees should be bent
- Once the left foot touches the ground at the front of the circle, the aim is to drive the hips forward by pushing with the right foot and blocking with the left
- The throwing arm then follows the hip and whips around fast
- The discus is released so it spins flat rather than wobbling
- Chest and head are both up tall and looking towards where the discus is meant to be going