

## North West Athletics: DRILLS .. SKILLS .. SELF-ESTEEM (3)

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10-15 minutes at the start of your session / lesson  
**ALL can drill together**

Following on: the drills presented assume a proficiency with the drills and activities outlined in Drills – Skills – Self-Esteem (1 & 2)  
In general, efficient execution with the basic drills should be developed and practised **before** youngsters move on to the next challenge.

**Be patient** .. do **not** prioritise “skill extension” ahead of “skill acquisition” .. keep practice brief, varied .. **details are important.**

If you plan to introduce any aspect of the program, it is strongly suggested you read: “**Standard Strategies**”

[www.nwaswimaths.com](http://www.nwaswimaths.com) ► PROGRAMS ► Athletics and/or Swimming Programs ► Standard Strategies

Youngsters will learn at different rates .. there is no set number of repeats before mastery is expected .. equality cannot be legislated.

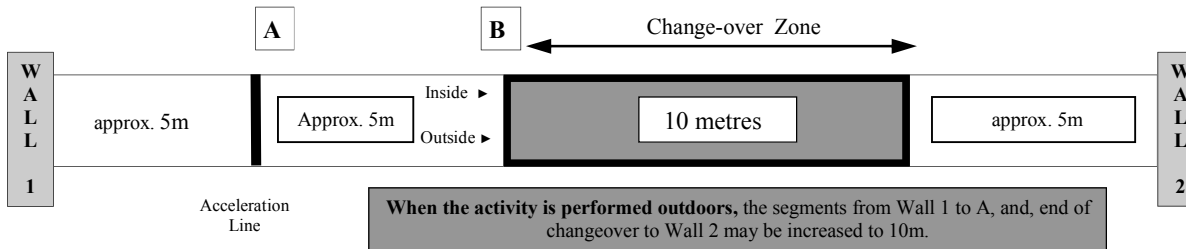
**The challenge for teachers / coaches is to cater to these differential rates of learning**

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**Keep it Simple**

### Indoor Relays ... adapt to your circumstances

The following practice drill was designed for completion in an indoor, basketball court size stadium (approx. 30-35m); adaptations to many other locations can and should be made ... group activity, with several teams executing at the same time.



#### Runner 1:

Starts at B, baton in right hand ... sprints to Wall 2 ... touch wall, return, sprinting to Wall 1 ... touch ... return through the change-over zone, passing the baton to Runner 2 ...

#### Runner 2:

As Runner 1 passes, en route to Wall 1, Runner 2 quickly assumes stance at B (“outside” of the lane) and accelerates when Runner 1 passes the acceleration line (A), receiving the baton in the left hand before the end of change-over zone.

#### Runner 3:

As Runner 2 passes, en route to Wall 1, Runner 3 quickly assumes stance at B (“inside” of the lane) and accelerates when Runner 2 passes the acceleration line (A), receiving the baton in the right hand before the end of change-over zone.

#### Runner 4:

As Runner 3 passes, en route to Wall 1, Runner 4 quickly assumes stance at B (“outside” of the lane) and accelerates when Runner 3 passes the acceleration line (A), receiving the baton in the left hand before the end of change-over zone.

**Baton Hand** (Start-Receive, Carry and Deliver):

Runner 1	Runner 2	Runner 3	Runner 4
Right	Left	Right	Left
Inside	Outside	Inside	Outside
(Bend)	(Straight)	(Bend)	(Straight)

**Lane Position:** where does the outgoing runner stand?

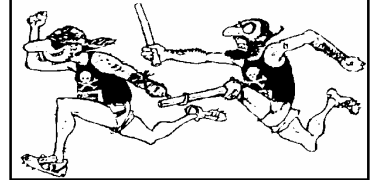
**No runner, at any time, changes the baton to their other hand**

Recommended that each group have 1-2 slow execution relay runs before increasing speed;  
also, all runners try all positions.

Teach “upward” & “downward” passes ... you are not dealing with Olympians .. learning new skills is FUN



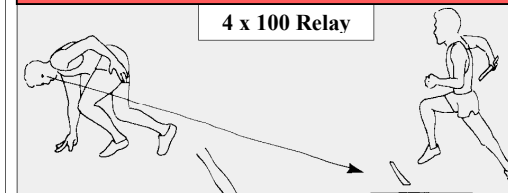
**Relays = Teamwork**  
*Working Together*  
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**4 x 100 Relay:** R – L – R – L  
Inside / Outside / Inside / Outside

There are **many** relay tags and reminders; especially note the importance of Short Course Relays;  
Short course relays can be repeated .. but, Full Course: after 1-2 runs, that's it .. even trained bodies are tired; errors multiply, and the team is practicing slowness.  
They are forming an error habit.

**Relay Change-overs:** this is no one way (Upward / Downward) .. learn and practice both; like running order, select what is best for the **team**.



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**Reward Endeavour**

e.g.  
Special tags can encourage and support pursuit of improvement

## Simple (Fun) Relay Change-Over Drills



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### Sprint Relay Upward Pass

Relay running requires teamwork ..  
Confidence in each other  
Receiving runners **never** look back

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There are many factors to consider in the selection of relay team (roles), e.g.

- Good starter?
- Best bend / straight runners
- How far does each runner (plan to) carry the baton?
- Time change-over zones?  
e.g. how long does it take the baton to pass from the start of the acceleration zone to the end of the change-over area?

Team performance depends on effective role play .. e.g. final runner has to hold their nerve.

Decide on the team's change-over technique .. consistent technique facilitates team flexibility.

While team members have speciality roles, have occasional role changes .. fun / enhanced appreciation.

**Youngsters love relays ... working together trying to complete a team task**  
**Keep an open mind**

**Don't fall into the trap .. I must do a certain type of pass ..**  
**the fastest runner must run last.**

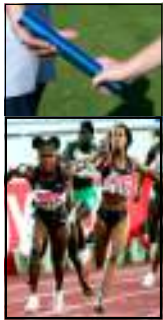
(There is little doubt that the downward pass is theoretically "the best" .. but it may be the most difficult to learn and apply .. **do what is best for the team !!**

**Determine and select the strategies that secure the best result for the team, not those that satisfy an individual ego (coach/athlete/parent)**

(Theoretically, in a 4x100 relay, the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> runners carry the baton furthest)

There are **many** factors to consider .. the most important is **FUN**  
**FUN** comes with successful completion

Time the baton from 10m before the acceleration marker, to 10m after the end of the change-over zone; repeated trials and techniques can help you / the team decide what is best.



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### Sprint Relay Downward Pass

Relay running requires teamwork ..  
Confidence in each other  
Receiving runners **never** look back

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**Short Course Relays** ... these allow you to refine skills and make repeated efforts in a single session, at race pace; e.g. Start ► 1<sup>st</sup> change acceleration marker at 40m ► 2<sup>nd</sup> change acceleration marker at 90m ► 3<sup>rd</sup> change acceleration marker at 140m ► Finish at 200m  
Chalk marks suffice .. (adjust change-over marks to suit teams, and allow repeats)

Runs are full pace, after a few introductory trials .. encourage runners to talk through "what happened" .. **develop skills of runners in all positions.**

**Remember: A Child is NOT a little adult**

Develop a range of relay change drills in which **all** can participate .. don't just focus on the few who can run faster .. if you encourage through involvement an appreciation of the factors and skills involved in relay performance, you will enhance respect and support.

Hear something, and you'll forget it

See something, and you'll remember it

**DO something, and you'll understand it !!**

**Do something, and you'll appreciate it !!!!**

**Quickstep Ladder Drills** .. great for enhancing co-ordination;

5-10 minutes of each session can be used in the warm-up or as a break during a session to empower youngsters with these skills:

1 Step in .. 2 Steps in .. Laterals .. Ali Shuffle .. Ickey Shuffle ... many more; variations are only limited by imagination and the specific needs of each sports focus.

Also see: PROGRAMS .. General Programs .. Agility .. Agility Ladder Activities, E-Book, p. 19+



**Timing is everything**

It is as important to know .. **when**,  
as it is to know .. **how**.