

Long Jump - Overview

Long Jump is a sport in which the performer exercises his strength and stamina. This sport is also known as **broad jump**. In this tutorial, we will discuss about various techniques and tactics that will help an athlete to achieve success in long jump.



Long Jump is a track-and-field event in which an athlete is required to jump to a distance as far as possible from a given take-off point. Among all the athletes, the person who covers a maximum distance is usually declared as winner. The sport is played under both men and women categories.

A Brief History of Long Jump

The traces of this sport lead us to ancient Greece. It was then played as Olympics pattern. The presence of this sport at that time was believed to be due to its usefulness in warfare. However, the practice methodology was completely different from what we see today. In those days, players used to take-off after running a short distance only. In addition, they were supposed to carry a weight known as halters to give them momentum while swinging forward.

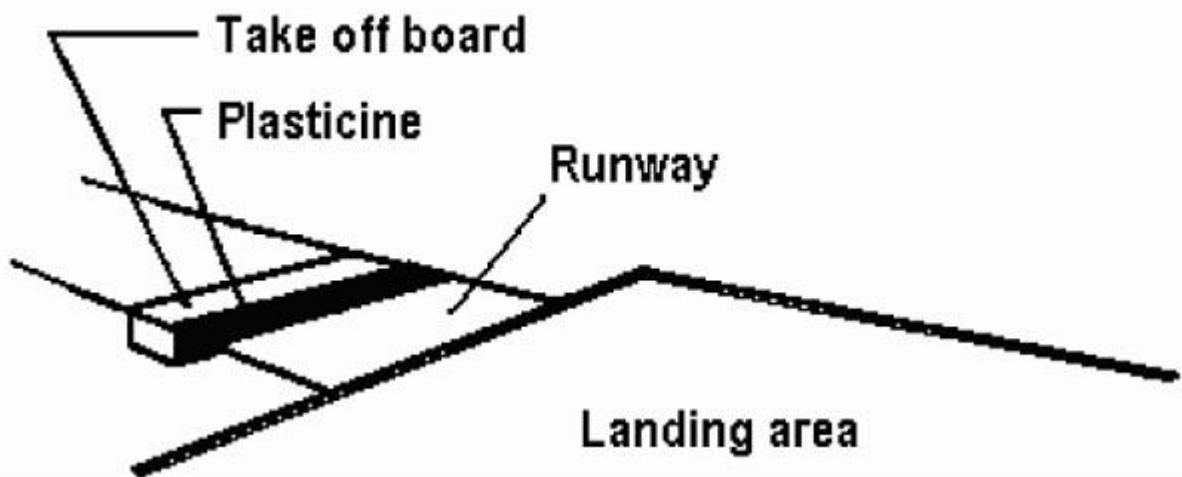


In the late 1800, United States and Europe added this sport into their sport events and soon in 1896 it was introduced in modern Olympics for the first time. However, during this period, the use of halters were completely eliminated. In 1928, Olympics was organised in Holland in which women took part for the first time. Soon after that event, the International Association for Athletic Federation (IAAF) was formed to govern this sport.

Long Jump – Playing Environment

In Long Jump, an athlete has to jump as far as possible from the take-off point. Landing is generally done on a sand pit. For more comfort, the land is filled with silicon sand. The run-up before the jump is also limited.

The **runway** for this sport should have a length of 40 metres and width of 1.22 metres. There is a take-off board present before the landing area. It has the length of 1.22 metres whereas width and depth are 20cm and 10 cm respectively. From at least one metre from the landing area, there should be **plasticine** to record the athlete's footfaulted prints. It is generally white in color.



The landing area should be filled with silicon sands. The length of the field from the takeoff point to the end should be at least 10 metres, whereas its width should be of 2.75 metres.

Long Jump - Participating Countries

Soon after its inception in Olympics, United States and Europe continued to dominate Long Jump events in men's category. But now it is the continents like Asia and Africa that are dominating the sport in both men's and women's categories. More than 62 nations took part in 2012 Olympics that was held at London.

The top five medallist (Men's category) countries in Olympics are -

- United States
- Great Britain
- East Germany
- Sweden
- Cuba

In 2012 Olympics, Greg Rutherford of Great Britain bagged the gold whereas; Mitchell Watt of Australia and Will Claye of Australia bagged silver and bronze respectively in men's category.



The top five countries in women's category are –

- United States
- Soviet Union
- Romania
- Germany
- Russia

In 2012 Olympics, Brittney Reese of USA bagged the gold medal, whereas Elena Sokolova of Russia and Janay Deloach of USA bagged the silver and bronze medals respectively. There are many athletes from Asian countries like India, China, Korea, Uzbekistan, Nepal, Indonesia and Philippines who have performed exceedingly well in Long Jump.

Long Jump - Training

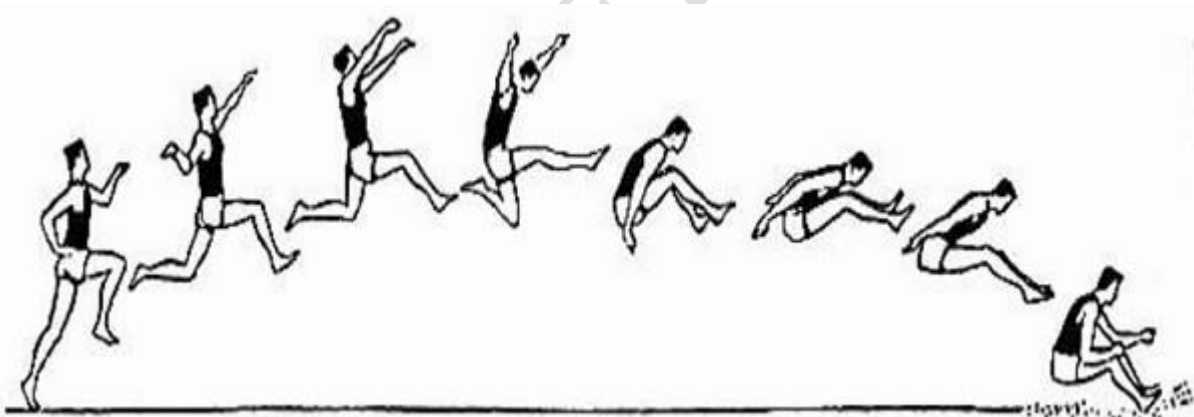
Instead of learning much difficult techniques, one should focus on the basics to master this sport. Two things that matter the most in this sport are speed and lift at the takeoff point. Flight techniques and landing are equally important. An athlete needs to attain a good speed within a given specific distance boundary.

During the preliminary training, one should not be introduced to the take-off board directly. The following points should be kept in mind during the initial stages of training –

- Your head should be upright throughout the jumping session.
- Choose a jumping area that is more suitable to have sideways jumping.
- Initially, you should make short approach run and should mark the places where the running actually starts.

Apart from these, it is also advised to the starters not to take long run initially. Take short approach, run, take-off, and land naturally at whatever position you are comfortable with your speed. If you take-off through a long run without practice, then fatigue can occur quickly and this will affect further practice.

- Make sure that you run fast during your practice session with your head upright.
- Make a flat back land off with your legs being stretched straight.
- Take-off leg should be extended as much as possible to cover a good distance.
- Do not keep your arms tight. Instead, keep them free and swing them with body movement to get maximum momentum.



Some points should be noted about take-off foot. Only sailing is done with proper tactics.

- Make sure that the heel of your feet will lands first.
- As the take-off proceeds, there will be a rolling action of the ball of the foot.
- Make the use of the toes of your take-off foot and rise it up against air as high as possible.

Running should be done in fast-foot action manner. That means, pawing should be done first, then extension of the take-off leg should be made with much speed.

During the take-off process, the mid-line of the body should contain the foot. The pointing direction of the foot should be in the forward direction of jump.

Dos and Don'ts during the Practice

The following points should be in your checklist during practise –

- Till the take-off point, do maintain your speed at any cost.
- As soon as you cross the board, give a rapid boost to your speed.
- To maintain more upright positions, do experiment on your running styles that suit you better.
- Compensatory action of the arms should be done to give the momentum.
- Landing drills should be added to the practice schedule.

The following are the things that you should not do –

- Just before take-off, shortening or lengthening the stride.
- Without attaining much speed, taking-off from the hill.
- Inclining the trunk too far forward or backward.
- Imbalance during the flight.
- Positioning one foot below the other foot during the landing phase.

Long Jump - How to Play?

It is wise to practise the sail techniques effectively for the improvement of take-off techniques. Through this practise, the upright trunk will be maintained and striding position of the free leg will be improved.

We can divide basic jumping into three distinct sections –

- Approach
- Take-off
- Flight

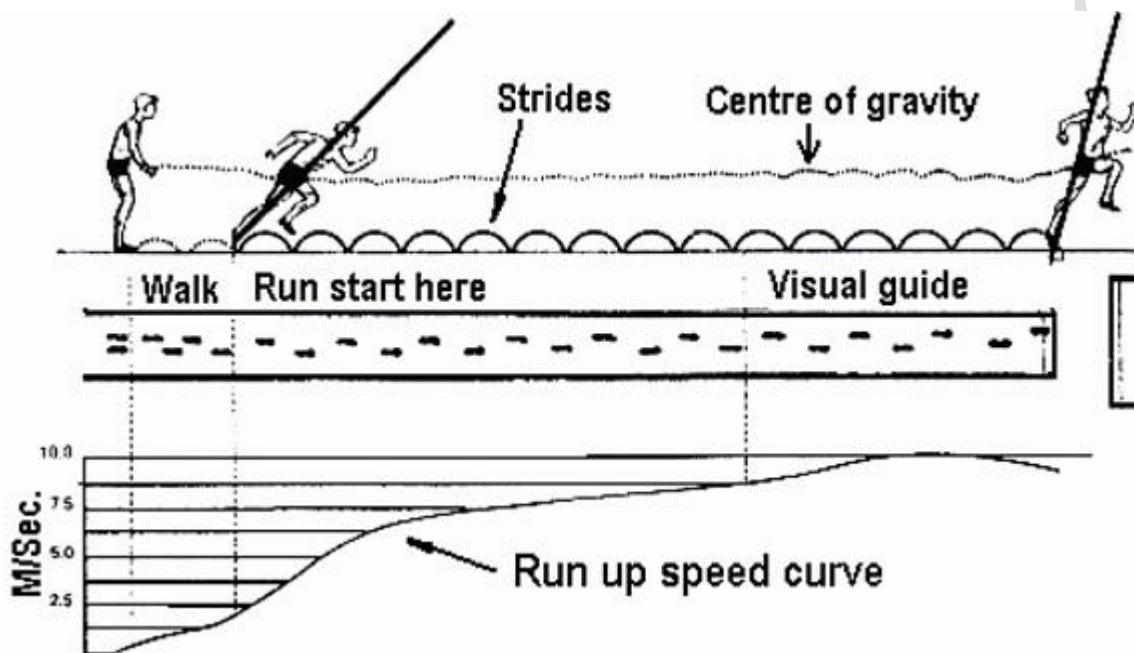
Let's discuss about these techniques in detail and try to understand how to apply them effectively in our practise.

Long Jump – Approach

The number of strides varies depending upon the level of competition. For primary school performers, the number of strides varies in between 11 to 15 whereas for

senior athletes, the number of strides varies between 19 and 23. Due to low muscular strength, the approach run for women is 3-4 metre less in comparison to men.

A systematic rhythm must be set to achieve a high horizontal velocity. To achieve this, the speed pattern must be modified. Maintain this rhythm till the take-off point and at the point of take-off, lower your hip and rise with a sudden force to gain an instant momentum. From the normal stride, the sinking of hip stride should be 25 cm below.



It is a general practice that in the approach run, if an athlete is running in 19 strides, then his take-off foot is going to touch the ground 10 times. Hence to mark the starting point, the player initially runs backward from the take-off point. He continues to run till his take-off foot touches the ground 10 times.

The moment it touches the ground, the coach will mark that point. This type of practice will be done minimum six times. The farthest point from the take-off point is taken as starting point. The wind is also a factor in it. If the wind is blowing from the back the run up distance will be longer and vice versa.

Long Jump – Take-off

When the athlete's leg gets on the board during the take-off phase, its position is much ahead of the centre of gravity and this helps in imposing maximum vertical velocity. In addition to this, an athlete can attain more speed by making the upward acceleration of his non take-off leg, arms and free limbs. To impose vigorous impulses, strengthen your take-off leg as much as possible.

You need to keep the following things in mind –

- Extensions should be made up to maximum with the help of ankle, toe, hip, and knee.
- Position of your free thigh should be parallel to the ground.
- Your opposite arm should do the coordination.
- Chest and back should not lean down and your eyes should look forward.
- Instead of making variable speed, maintain a constant rhythm throughout the approach.

Determination of take-off leg is very simple. Just kick a ball with your left leg, having your right leg on the ground. If the right leg maintains the balance of your body well, then it is your take-off leg and vice versa.



Long Jump – Flight

Flight is the most important part of the jumping. You need to keep the following points in mind during the Flight –

- Free leg should be raised to a horizontal position during the take-off.
- Position of the free leg however should trail back as much as possible during the whole flight.
- Best position for the hands is above the shoulder level.
- Keep the trunk in the upright position as much as possible otherwise it will make obstacles in moving your leg up during the landing time.

During the flight, it is crucial that you maintain perfect alignment between your head, back, and hips.

Long Jump - Rules

All rules for long jump are made and monitored through International Association for Athletic Federations. Playing by rules will fetch you points on your performance and the reverse may cost you penalty which may lead to disqualification from the entire tournament.

Here is a list of some important rules that every athlete needs to follow while participating in a Long Jump event –

- The number of trials varies depending upon the number of competitors. If the number of competitors is more than eight, then each one will be given three trials and best eight among them may be given additional three trials. However, if the number of competitors is less than eight, then each may be given six trials.
- If a competitor wishes, he can have some practice trials before the beginning of the competition under the supervision of judges. Once the competition has begun, they are not allowed to use the competition or take-off area.
- Markers are provided by the organising committee to the players to mark their take-off and run off points. No other substances like chalks should be used which can leave indelible marks.
- Soon after the athlete jumps, measurement is done from the nearest point that has touched the take-off point.
- All measurements are done perpendicular to the take-off point.
- For the trial to be legal, the wind meter reading is also important. It should show the parameters within the required specific zone.
- The performer has to complete his jump within one minute.
- If there is a tie between two players after scoring, chances are given to them till the time one performs better than the other and gain more points.

Long Jump - Champions

International Association of Athletic Federation (IAAF) is the governing body of high jump. Every participating country has its own governing body to organize the long jump competitions successfully throughout the calendar.

Here is a list of some important tournaments in Long Jump –

- Summer Olympics

- World Championship
- Asian Games
- World indoor Championship
- Commonwealth Games

Let us now discuss briefly about some of the champions of Long Jump who have made a mark in this sport.

Carl Lewis



Carl Lewis is a competitor for USA who has won ten Olympic medals out of which nine are golds. Besides this, he has won ten medals in World Championships out of which eight are golds. He retired in 1996 after winning his last Olympic medal.

One of his achievements is that he accomplished 65 consecutive victories in ten years in long jump. He won many awards due to his achievements which include World Athlete of the Century, Sportsman of the Century, Olympian of the Century, and Athlete of the year (1982, 1983, and 1984).

Ralph Boston



Ralph Boston is a competitor for USA. He is the first person who broke 8.2 meter barrier.

He has won gold medals in 1960 Rome Olympics and in two Pan American Games.

In 1963, he made the record of longest triple jump. In 1964, he won a silver medal in Tokyo Olympics. In 1968, he won a bronze medal in Olympics. After this win, he retired from the world competitions.

Greg Rutherford



Greg Rutherford is an athlete from Great Britain who has got specialization in long jump. He has taken part in Olympics, Commonwealth Games, World and European Championships.

In 2012, he won a gold medal in Olympics while in 2014, he won two golds one in Commonwealth Games and other in European Athletics Championships.

In 2015, he won a gold medal in World Athletics Championships. In 2005, he won AAA Championship and European Junior Championships in long jump event. In further years also he won many championships and medals.

Heike Drechsler



Heike Drechsler is a competitor for both East Germany and Germany. She holds the record of being the only female till now to win two gold medals in long jump in Olympics.

In her long jump career, she has won total nine gold medals. In 1983 and 1993, she participated in World Championships and won gold medals in both the years in long jump event.

She has also participated in European and German Championships and won many medals.

Elżbieta Krzesińska



Elżbieta Krzesińska is a competitor for Poland. She had won gold medal in 1956 Melbourne Olympics.

In 1960, she won a silver medal in Olympics. Besides this, she won Polish Championships in the long jump event in 1952, 1953, 1954, 1957, 1959, 1962, and 1963.

In 1954, she participated in European Championships in Athletics and won a bronze medal. In the same year, she also won World Student Games.

In 1959, she won her first Universiade. In 1962, she participated in European Athletic Championships and won a silver medal. She expired on 29th December 2015.