

## Ultimate Frisbee conditioning plan

There are many reasons to train for any sport. You can increase your endurance, your speed, your jumping ability, etc. Training is also very important in reducing injuries. Over the next several weeks we will be bringing you a three part series on training for Ultimate. We will focus on a different aspect of your training in each part. Part one will focus on track workouts, [part two](#) will focus on adding plyometrics to your workouts, and part three will focus on weight training. We will outline a 3 month program that will help you run longer, faster, and with less injuries.

"We" are Michael Wood and Martin Aguilera. Martin is a Nationally Certified Track and Field coach. He is quick to point out that he is "NOT a certified personal trainer, but someone who has been curious and read a lot of books." Martin helped me develop this program for Rival this season. Martin would also like to remind everyone "Don't push too hard."

### Track workouts

The first part of the series focuses on our track workouts...

The following is a 3 month track workout program. We have 2 workouts a week. We suggest one on Sunday, one on Wednesday. We are only suggesting days so that you can fit in the rest of your workouts. We scheduled the workouts so that you have time to recover before doing a similar workout. Sunday workouts can obviously be tough on tournament weekends. My suggestion would be to either drop the workout altogether or you may be able to reschedule your week. Here in Atlanta we have 2 nights of league play during the summer. That factored into our scheduling somewhat.

We incorporate several themes into the workouts. First, we try and have a variety of different workouts so that no one will get bored. We also start out with longer distances in the beginning, to build a solid base, then do more short distances and speed work towards the end of the 3 months. This is a general track workout with a relatively low volume. The two weekly workouts are different in focus. In general, Wednesdays will focus on endurance, while Sundays focuses more on speed and quickness. This helps us in scheduling as Wednesday workouts are generally at the track, and Sunday workouts are generally a part of our practices. We do switch activities between the two days occasionally, again to add variety.

Note: It is common for people running track workouts to run as fast as they can the whole time. This can lead to muscle strains and tears. Also, at the end of your workout, you may feel good enough to add another rep, but resist the temptation as it can lead to injury or just stunt your development. Realize that perhaps this was meant to be an easy or recovery day. You can change the workouts if you don't feel they are pushing you enough, but make the changes in advance rather than during the workout.

Now to the Schedule

Week 1

Sun:- 1x800m slow, 2 shuttles\*

Wed: 1-3 miles (dependent on current fitness level)

Week 2

Sun: 1x800m slow, 1x200m slow, 3 shuttles\*

Wed: 1-3 miles

Week 3

Sun: 1x600m slow, 3 shuttles\*

Wed: 2-4 miles

Week 4

Sun: 2-3 miles, rest, 1x800m slow

Wed: 1x800m slow, 1x400m slow, 2 shuttles\*

Week 5

Sun: 1-2 miles, 1x800m slow, rest, 3 shuttles\*

Wed: 2-5 miles

Week 6

Sun: 2x400m fast, 3 shuttles\*

Wed: 1 mile, 2x400m medium, 1x800m slow

Week 7

Sun: 1x400m medium, 3x200m fast, 2 shuttles\*(begin scheduling starts)

Wed: 2x800m medium-fast, 2x400m medium, 1x800m slow

Week 8

Sun: 3 shuttles\*, 3x400m medium

Wed: 1x800m medium, 1x400m fast, 3x200m fast

Week 9

Sun: 2x800m medium, 3x400m medium, 2x100m medium

Wed: 3 shuttles\*, 3x200m fast, 1x400m slow-medium, 2x200m fast

Week 10

Sun: 5 shuttles\*, 3x100m fast, 1x200m fast, 3x50m fast

Wed: 2 fartleks\*\*, 4x200m fast, 4x100m fast

Week 11

Sun: 5 shuttles\*, 4x100m fast, 10x50m fast

Wed: 2x200m fast, 4 fartleks\*\*

Week 12

Sun: 2 shuttles\*, 10x50m fast, 3 shuttles\*, 4x100m fast

Wed: 6 fartleks\*\*

\*We consider shuttles any of the following exercises. Mix them up however you choose to add variety. One shuttle on the schedule equals however many reps suggested in the shuttle description.

20 yard shuttle – 3 cones in a line, 10 yards apart. Start at the center cone, sprint to side cone, stop, cut back to other side cone, stop, cut back to center cone. Do 5 reps with rest between reps. Works on quickness and cutting. Variations: Carioca, backpedal, shuffle.

Zig-zag – Set up cones for 90 degree cutting in a zigzag fashion. I'll generally set up two lines, about 5 yards apart, with cones every 5 yards for 25 yards. Do 3 reps with rest between reps. Works on cutting.

90 degree – Set up a running lane with cones ~1 yard wide for 10 yards, then have it turn right or left and continue for 10 yards. Goal is to build speed and work on cutting while staying within the cones. Do 3 reps on each side with rest between reps. Works on cutting.

Stop sign – Set up 2 cones at a start line and 15-20 yards away at the finish line. After the finish line, set up 2 more cones after 2 yards, 2 more cones 1 yards after that, and 2 more cones 1 yard after that. The goal is to build speed during the 15-20 yards, and work on stopping as soon as you cross the finish line. The cones after the finish line will help you measure your stopping speed. Do 5 reps with rest between reps. Works on deceleration.

Box Runs – Set up a square of cones, with 10 yard sides. Start at one cone, sprint forward to the first cone, shuffle (or carioca) along the next side, backpedal down the third side, then turn and sprint out past the first cone. Do 5 reps with rest between reps. Works on acceleration, lateral movement, hip rotation, etc. Variations: Diagonal Box run.

40 yard suicides – Set up 4 cones in a line, 10 yards apart. Start at first cone, sprint to second cone, turn, sprint back to first cone, turn, sprint to 3rd cone, turn, etc. Do 2 reps with rest between reps. Works on acceleration, quickness, endurance.

Scrambles – start in one of several different positions (sitting, lying on stomach, back, etc.) Have someone signal the start, get up rapidly and sprint forward 15 yards. Do 5 reps with rest between reps. Works on acceleration, body control.

Team Relays – Run 40 yards relay races. Do 3 races with rest between races. Fun way to add variety to workouts. Variations: Do a relay of any of the shuttles listed.

Starts – Set up a start line and a finish line 15-20 yards away. Start from a standstill (runner's position if you like) and accelerate full speed through the finish line, then run through (rather than stopping suddenly). Concentrate on the initial burst, maintaining good form, and accelerating straight ahead, don't waste momentum laterally. Do 5 reps with rest between reps. Works on acceleration. Start

these in week 7.

\*\*We consider fartleks to be 100m walking, 100m jogging, 100m sprinting, and 100m jogging.

### Designing a Fartlek exercise for a multi-sprint sport

- Warm up with a steady jog for 10 minutes
- Jog for 60 seconds
- Run hard (3/4 pace) for 90 seconds
- Jog for 45 seconds
- Sprint for 10 seconds
- Jog for 30 seconds
- Run backwards for 30 seconds
- Walk for 30 seconds
- Run hard for 60 seconds
- Repeat 3-4 times
- Cool down at a steady pace for 10 minutes

## Plyometrics

In the [first part](#) of our three part series on training for Ultimate, we covered track workouts. They are probably the most common element in many players' training. In the second part we introduce plyometrics into our workouts. Plyos can be helpful for increasing speed, quickness, and explosiveness. Plyos can make your first step quicker, and make you jump higher. They also help prevent injuries. By getting your body accustomed to the kinds of forces you will experience in a game, you can prepare your muscles and joints so that they are less likely to break down. The important thing to remember, however, is that plyos are to be done in a controlled environment and that we will build up slowly so that we avoid injury before the game as well.

A general rule of thumb to know that you're ready to add plyometrics to your workout routine is the ability to squat twice your weight. Our plyo routine starts out relatively slowly, but you should not ignore weight training as part of your workout regimen. Part 3 will cover weight training.

Disclaimer: You should consult a physician before beginning any workout program. If something hurts, you should stop doing it. We are assuming a base level of fitness and strength. These are the workouts we will be doing for the next few months. We are posting them as an example and they should be used for educational purposes.

As with the track workouts, below is a 3-month plyos program. The program is broken up into 3 separate 1-month periods. The first month is light in intensity, twice a week, and focuses on running

form and building the solid base of lower body strength we'll need for the later workouts. Month two increases the intensity to start working on explosiveness. The last month has a high intensity but drops to a once weekly workout.

Again we try to build on the themes from the track workouts. There are a variety of different exercises throughout the program. We start out with a light intensity but higher volume, and work our way to high-intensity low-volume workouts by the end. The first two months of the program have two days of plyos, we do these on the same days as our track workouts, Sunday and Wednesday. If you have free days in your weekly schedule, you may prefer to switch your plyos to those days instead. The last month of the program is only once a week and we move the workout to it's own day, Friday. You will likely not want to do this workout the day before a tournament, so reschedule or cancel the workout as necessary.

Each month of the workout has a group of 8-10 exercises that you will be doing. For each week's workout(s), do all but two of the exercises. Rotate which exercises you do so that the exercises you are doing the exercises that you skipped the week before. You should do 3-5 sets of each exercise unless otherwise noted in the description. The amount of reps is listed along with each exercise and its description below.

## Month 1

**A Skips (15m):** Skip using 'A' Form. Bring your knee up and forward to be parallel with the ground, keep your foot flexed (toe towards shin). Push off of the ball of your foot; don't let your heel hit the ground. Improves running form.

**Paw Drill (1 min/leg):** Lean forward in an attempt to get your body between 60 and 45 degrees with the ground. Place your hand on a wall and keep your back straight and so the heels of your feet are lifted up slightly. The goal is to simulate the running motion by "pawing" at the ground. Start by bringing the heel of your right foot to your butt, following the line of your other leg. Then drive the foot back to ground, but in front of its old position. Hit with the ball of your foot just behind where your hips are. The goal is to be able to hit the ground and paw through, back to your original position then repeat. If you hit the ground too early you will get a lot of resistance and be pushed upward. If you hit too far back you will barely touch your foot on the ground. Repeat this motion with the same foot for about a minute, focusing on a smooth transition from the strike to the recovery. Also, focus on pulling your heel back to your butt quickly after the paw motion, but not so fast it is out of control. Improves running form.

**Running Balance (30sec):** Go onto one foot and mimic proper running form mid stride. You should be on the ball of your foot, with arms bent at 90 degrees. Off knee should be up with foot flexed (toe towards shin). Hold for 30 seconds if possible. If you lose your balance simply start over. Hold for a total of 30 seconds, not necessarily continuous. It is better to reset with proper form then try and stay balanced with improper form. Improves balance and running form.

Swinging Arm (30sec): Stand still and swing arms as if running. Increase arm speed while maintaining proper form. Arms bent at 90 degrees, close to body, not swinging wildly. Improves running form.

High Knees (10m): Run bringing knees up as high as possible. Improves leg speed.

Butt Kicks (10m): Run bringing feet up high towards butt. Keep feet flexed. Improves leg speed.

Ankle Hops (10): Stand with knees slightly bent. Jump straight up using only your ankles. Do not swing arms and try not to use your quads. Builds lower leg strength.

1 Leg Lateral Hops (10/leg): Stand on one leg and hop back and forth. Try to increase the distance you hop while still hopping back as soon as you land. Alternately, use two legs if the exercise is uncomfortable. Builds lateral leg strength.

Forward Lunges (10/leg): Take a large step forward. Front knee should never pass your toe. Keep upper body upright. Hold for 2 seconds then push back up to standing position and do the other leg. Builds leg strength.

Side Lunges (10/leg): Step wide to right. Keep left leg straight, bend right leg but knee should bend past 90 degrees. Hold for 2 seconds then push back up to standing position and step wide to the left. Builds leg strength.

## Month 2

Standing Broad Jump (5): From a standstill with feet shoulder-width apart, bend at waist and knees and jump forward. Use arm swing to improve distance. Land with bent knees to absorb shock. Builds lower body explosiveness and jumping form.

Diagonal Lunges (10/leg): Step out with right leg at a 45 degree angle. Keep left leg straight and bend right knee, but not past your toe. Hold for two seconds then bring left leg forward and step out with left leg at a 45 degree angle from right left. Repeat. Builds lower body strength.

Ankle Hops (15): Stand with knees slightly bent. Jump straight up using only your ankles. Do not swing arms and try not to use your quads. Builds lower leg strength.

Running Balance (30sec): Go onto one foot and mimic proper running form mid stride. You should be on the ball of your foot, with arms bent at 90 degrees. Off knee should be up with foot flexed (toe towards shin). Hold for 30 seconds if possible. If you lose your balance simply start over. Hold for a total of 30 seconds, not necessarily continuous. It is better to reset with proper form then try and stay balanced with improper form. Improves balance and running form.

A Skips w/Vertical (15m): Skip using 'A' Form. Bring your knee up and forward to be parallel with the ground, keep your foot flexed (toe towards shin). Push off of the ball of your foot; don't let your heel

hit the ground. Try to get as high as possible. Improves running form, builds lower leg strength.

1 Leg Lateral Hops (10/leg): Stand on one leg and hop back and forth. Try to increase the distance you hop while still hopping back as soon as you land. Builds lateral leg strength.

Plyo Pushup (7-10): Start out on hands and knees. Bend arms and push up explosively to get body upright. Have someone throw you a disc to catch. Throw disc back then drop back to hands and repeat. Advanced – use a medicine ball instead of a disc. Builds upper body strength and explosiveness.

### Month 3

Single Leg Cross Pattern Jumps (5): Form a mental cross on the ground. Stand on one leg and jump into each quadrant of the cross. Jump immediately when hitting the ground. Keep jumps going for full 5 reps. Vary the pattern as desired. Try to increase distance of jumps. Builds leg strength and explosiveness.

Diagonal Bounding (20m): Similar to the diagonal lunges except that we're jumping. Start on left leg and jump at a 45 degree angle and land on right leg. Immediately jump forwards at a 45 degree angle to land back on the left foot. Continue for 20 yards. Use arm swings to help increase your jumping distance. Make sure your landing leg is bent. Explode off landing leg. Builds leg explosiveness.

Depth Jumps (5): Start on a box or step 1-2 feet high. Step off box, land on both feet shoulder-width apart, knees bent, and immediately jump straight up. Step back onto box and repeat. Builds leg explosiveness.

Plyo Pushup (7-10): Start out on hands and knees. Bend arms and push up explosively to get body upright. Have someone throw you a disc to catch. Throw disc back then drop back to hands and repeat. Advanced – use a medicine ball instead of a disc. Builds upper body strength and explosiveness.

2 Leg Lateral Jump Over Object (10): From a standing position, feet shoulder-width apart, jump to your side over an object (such as a cone). Land with feet shoulder-width apart, knees bent, and immediately jump back to the other side, again over the object. Builds lateral leg explosiveness.

Rim Jumps (7-10): From a standing position, feet shoulder-width apart, jump straight up reaching with one hand as high as you can on a basketball backboard (or alternately a wall, tree, your imagination). Land with knees bent and immediately jump back up, reaching with the opposite hand. Use arm swing to increase vertical. Builds leg explosiveness and improves jumping form.

Bunny Hops (3): From a standing position, feet shoulder-width apart, jump forward as far as possible. Land on both feet, with knees bent, and immediately jump forward again. Do this for a

total of 3 jumps per rep. Use arm swing to increase distance. Builds leg explosiveness and improves jumping form.

Triple Jumps (2): Take a step or two then jump off left leg as far forward as possible. Land on right leg with knee bent and immediately jump forward again. Land on left leg and again jump, landing back on the right leg. This is one rep. Start the second rep off the right leg. Builds leg explosiveness and improves jumping form.

Martin and I have both found the book [Jumping into Plyometrics](#) by Donald A. Chu to be an invaluable resource in the past. While the above information is based on our knowledge and personal experience, we feel it would be a mistake not to acknowledge such a great resource.