

2026 California High School Track & Field Team Manual

I. PRACTICES

Practices are the single most important key to your development and improvement on this team. The coaches plan the workouts with the goal of improving everyone's performance in the meets. Each event group determines their own practice time, but they usually begin at either 3:30 or 4:00. On Mondays we will have announcements as a team before going to our event groups. All other days, you will go directly to your event group. Practices usually run until around 5:30, but depend on each group and have no set finishing time. We will stay until the workout is completed.

Rules for practices:

- ⇒ **Attend all practices & be on time** - Regardless of your ability level, your performance will greatly improve if you are attending all practices. Missing practices decreases your potential and hurts the team as a whole. If you know ahead of time that you will be missing a practice, please notify your event coach as soon as you are aware of it. Please do not tell a friend to let one of the coaches know, but email the coach directly. The email for each coach is listed on the team website. If you attend school, you are expected to be at practice. Excessive absences may result in disciplinary action including suspension or dismissal from the team. Just so everyone knows: ***we do have practices every Friday, including Fridays after meets, and we will be practicing during spring break, on holidays and when it's raining.***
- ⇒ **Dress appropriately** - At practices, please dress appropriately for that day's workout. If it's cold, wear warm ups or tights, if it's warm, wear shorts, if it's raining, wear rain gear. You should always bring both your practice shoes and competition shoes or spikes each day since they may be required for that day's workout.
- ⇒ **Stay for the entire practice** - Unless you have a valid reason and have notified a coach at the beginning of practice, you are expected to stay until the workout is completed.
- ⇒ **Give your best effort** - Trying your hardest at practice will translate into peak performance at the meets. Set realistic goals each day at practice and let the coaches know when you achieve them!

II. TRACK MEETS

For most members of the team, the track meets are the most enjoyable part of the season. Track meets give you the opportunity to use what you've learned in practice and to see how you have improved.

- **Attendance** - Attendance for meets is mandatory and not showing up without prior approval from a coach constitutes a no-show. All athletes are required to check out with their event coach before leaving each meet. This includes home meets.
- **Events** - For all meets, you may compete in up to four events including relays. Which events you will do is determined by the coaches prior to the meet. If you would like to offer input to the coaches about which events you would like to do, you should let them know no later than two days prior to the meet. Once your events have been determined, it is expected that you will compete in all events you are scheduled for (barring injury). Please do not ask the coaches to scratch you from events once the meet has started, the team is counting on you to give your best effort to help us in the meet. Everyone is responsible for checking themselves in to their events.
- **Home Meets** - We need significant help from team members to have a home meet run smoothly. Everyone is required to get to the track as soon as possible after dismissal from class to help the captains set up. During the meet, you are expected to remain in the track area and help out as needed. After the meet, every member must stay until all the equipment is put away.
- **Uniform** – For home meets, you should put on your uniform after the facility has been set up for the meet. Your meet shirt and sweats (depending on the weather) should be put on over your uniform. For away meets, the uniform should be on before leaving, unless you are running late. For post season or invitational meets, you must show your uniform to officials to be admitted into the stadium. A current year's meet shirt is part of your uniform.
- **Warm Ups** - At track meets, we will have a structured team warm up routine which begins 45 minutes prior to the first event. After the team warm up, you can warm up more thoroughly by yourself or with others. As your first and subsequent events approach, you should warm up again to stay loose. For those on relay teams, you should gather together at least 20 minutes before the event to practice exchanges and/or warm up together.

- **Invitationals** - Invitational track meets are elite competitions held on the weekends with many schools sending athletes to participate. Since the meets are highly competitive, the coaching staff will select which individuals will participate. We will not have buses for invitationals, so your parent must drive you to the meet.
- **Scoring** - For dual meets, scoring is 5-3-1(1st, 2nd, 3rd place) for individual events and 5-0 for relays. For the league meet and beyond, scoring is 10-8-6-4-2-1.
- **Night Before** - The night before a meet you should visualize all events you are competing in. Think about your performance from beginning to end and see it as a smooth, relaxed, positive effort. You should also get a good night's sleep before a meet to be well rested and to have your full energy potential.
- **Early Dismissal** - You may be dismissed from school early in order to arrive at meets with enough time to get ready and warm up properly. If you have to leave a class early, please let your teacher know what time you will be leaving at the beginning of class so there is less of a disruption when you leave. All teachers will receive an email the day of meets notifying them of any students who will be dismissed early to attend a meet.

III. BUS RIDES

Depending on team finances, we may get buses for transportation to some away meets. For each meet in which we take a bus, we may designate a traveling squad in order to save money. Each event coach will determine who in their group will be on the traveling squad. Team members not on the traveling squad may get a ride to the meet with their own parents (you may not ride with someone else's parents). No student may drive themselves to any meet, even if they are 18 years of age or older. When we are taking a bus to an away meet, you will be notified the day before the meet as to what time the bus will leave the campus and what time you will be excused from class. We will board the bus in front of the office. At the time designated, you are expected to be on the bus with your uniform on under your sweats. **Please maintain appropriate and courteous behavior while on the bus.** Coming home from away meets, you must ride on the team bus or go home with your own parents, with coach's approval. **You may not get a ride home from anyone else.**

***NOTE* We will not be taking any bus trips in 2026**

IV. WEIGHT TRAINING

A proper weight-training program is an important aspect of your total conditioning regimen, both before and during the season. It will improve your overall strength, flexibility and explosiveness, which in turn, will improve your performances. Different events require different approaches to weight training, so your event coach will suggest one best suited to your needs. Team members who have a weight training class or lift for another sport should talk to their event coach for suggestions on how to handle both.

V. WEEKLY ANNOUNCEMENTS

Every Monday at the beginning of practice, we will have a 5-10 minute period of team announcements. This is to provide team members with information on meets, team rules, and other important team concerns. During announcements as a courtesy to the coaches and your teammates, you are expected to be quiet and listen attentively. We will also announce the weekly Athlete of the Week during this time.

VI. BEHAVIOR

As a member of the California High School track & field team, you are expected to conduct yourself in an appropriate and courteous manner at any function in which you are representing the team. This includes meets, practices and other team activities. This means showing respect to coaches, teammates, officials, bus drivers, competitors and spectators at all times. Similarly, others should be treating you respectfully as well. If you feel you are not being treated properly by anyone, please tell a coach and they will intervene on your behalf. Bullying and/or inappropriate behavior or language directed at another individual either in person or by other means, is cause for disciplinary action. Additionally, the coaching staff reserves the right to render additional disciplinary measures on top of what the school designates if an athlete violates the school's Code of Conduct policy, which may include dismissal from the team.

VII. COACHES

During the time you are at practice, a meet, or any other track function, you are expected to listen to your coach and respond appropriately. If there are any differences of opinion, you may discuss them with the coach at an appropriate time. If you feel you are being treated unfairly, or if you have any other problems with your coach and don't feel comfortable talking directly to them, please contact another coach on the team or the school's Athletic Director for advice.

VIII. EQUIPMENT

All equipment used by the track & field team is the property of the team and California High School. Please treat it properly and use it only as it is intended to be used. If any equipment is damaged, please notify a coach so it can either be repaired or replaced if possible. Proper treatment of equipment includes helping to put it back in its appropriate storage area after you are done using it. Anyone caught stealing or intentionally destroying the track team's equipment will be disciplined appropriately.

IX. UNIFORMS

Every team member is responsible for purchasing their own team uniform, competition shoes and a current year meet shirt. Information regarding uniform purchase will be given to the team at the beginning of the season. Any undergarment which is visible during competition should be solid black in color. Everyone should also purchase appropriate shoes for practice and competition. See your event coach for advice on what type of shoes or spikes you will need. Athletes who cannot afford to purchase a uniform or meet shirt will be lent one by the team.

X. INJURIES

Nothing is more frustrating than working hard in practice, preparing yourself for a big meet, and then becoming injured and missing critical practices or meets. The key to preventing injuries is to warm up thoroughly and to learn to recognize warning signs in your body. If you are experiencing any unusual pain or discomfort, tell your coach so they can advise you. You could make a minor injury a major one by continuing to practice after you notice some pain. If injured, tell your event coach immediately. They will either give you injury advice or refer you to the athletic trainer.

XI. ACADEMICS

To be eligible to participate in athletics, you must maintain a 2.0 cumulative GPA in classes taken during the previous quarter and be currently enrolled in 20 units. If there is a possibility that you might become ineligible, or if you need any help with your classes, you should notify a coach immediately. If you become academically ineligible during the season, you may apply for a one-time academic waiver. Contact the athletic director for more information on applying for a waiver.

XII. GOALS

The best way to maintain your focus and intensity throughout the entire season is to set goals for yourself to achieve during the season. Having something to strive for and concentrate on helps to motivate you during practices. It is also a great feeling of satisfaction to achieve a personal goal that you have set for yourself. A couple of key points: 1) the goal should be attainable, you can always set a new goal for yourself if you achieve it; and 2) goals may take many forms. You could set a time or distance goal, set a goal of getting a certain place at the league meet, set a goal of qualifying for a particular meet such as the Tri-Valley Regionals, or maybe even just set a goal for finishing the season in better shape than how you started it. Remember, a goal that is so far out there that it is unrealistic to achieve will only frustrate you. Each team member is encouraged to share their goals for the season with their coaches.

XIII. NUTRITION

What you eat during the season plays a large role in preparing your body to perform at peak potential. If you are not eating properly, you will not gain the strength or energy needed to practice and perform effectively. It's very important to have a good breakfast and lunch each day that we have practices and/or meets. Some guidelines to observe:

- ⇒ **Eat moderate to large quantities of Complex Carbohydrates** - These include whole wheat pasta, whole grain breads, brown rice, potatoes, cereals, & grains. They provide long-term energy for your body.
- ⇒ **Eat large quantities of Fruits and Vegetables** - These provide necessary vitamins and nutrients to help your body perform.
- ⇒ **Drink lots of water** – 6-8 glasses of water a day is recommended. Water helps your circulatory system to transport nutrients to muscles, eliminate waste products and dissipate excessive body heat.
- ⇒ **Moderate amounts of Proteins** - These include lean meats, fish, poultry, dairy products and eggs. Drinking a glass of chocolate milk or a protein shake after a difficult workout helps your body to recover effectively.
- ⇒ **Limited quantities of Fats and Sugars** - These include butter and margarine, meat fats, table sugar, honey, sodas, greasy foods, high fat cheeses, and yes, unfortunately, that means most fast foods!!

The day of a meet, you should eat mostly carbohydrates and proteins and limit your fats in any meal you have. If you have a lot of time between races during the meet, whole wheat bagels, nuts, raisins, apples, oranges, and bananas make good snacks to keep your body energized. Remember, before and after your race drink water!

XIV. PARENT INVOLVEMENT

Part of what makes a strong track program is the involvement and help the team gets from the parents or family of the team members. Without help from parents, the track team not only wouldn't thrive, it wouldn't survive. While some parents are able to donate more of their time than others, some support from each family would greatly benefit the team as a whole. Please ask your family to help out as much as they are able. Some areas that parents can really assist the team are:

- ⇒ Volunteering to be a team coordinator
- ⇒ Attending meets to cheer on the team
- ⇒ Donating money to the team and participating in fund raisers
- ⇒ Helping to officiate events at home meets
- ⇒ Helping with the team carbo loads
- ⇒ Assisting with the team banquet
- ⇒ Providing snacks to the team for long away meets

Please encourage your parents to actively participate in the team, we all benefit!!

XV. TEAM CAPTAINS

During the first few weeks of the season, the coaching staff will be deciding on who will best serve the team as the captains for the year. These individuals are usually selected due to their leadership, team commitment and athletic contributions. To be a team captain, you must have been on the team the previous season and be a junior or a senior.

XVI. WORK/OTHER COMMITMENTS

If you have a job or other regular commitment and there is a potential schedule conflict with track practices or meets, you must notify your event coach as soon as possible to avoid misunderstandings. Regular conflicts may result in changing event groups or dismissal from the team. If you need to schedule a doctor's appointment during practice time, please inform your coach ahead of time.

XVII. CLUB TEAMS/PERSONAL TRAINING

If you are a member of a club team during the track & field season, it is understood that the track team's meets and practices take priority over those of the club team. If you have a personal trainer or coach during the season, this may create conflicts regarding training and philosophy. It also creates a possible issue with overtraining. Personal coaching is best utilized in the pre-season. Talk with your event coach if you are either considering personal training during the season or on a club team, to see how we can resolve any potential issues.

XVIII. BANQUET

Towards the end of the season the team will be having an awards banquet either on campus, or at a local facility to celebrate the success of the team for the year. It is a really fun event and everyone is encouraged to attend and to bring their families. During the evening we will be handing out varsity letters, league meet awards, have scholar athlete recognition, give out participation certificates, and recognize other exceptional team members. Don't miss it!

XIX. INDEPENDENT STUDY P.E.

Students who wish to receive ISPE credit must contact the appropriate school administrator before the season, and fill out and turn in the forms prior to the deadline. It is each student's responsibility to make sure the appropriate paperwork is filled out and signed by anyone required by the school. Athletes may not miss more than 5 practices and meets combined for the entire season in order to have the form signed by your event coach at the end of the season.

XX. PARTICIPATION DONATION

The participation donation enables the team to pay for invitational fees, incentive awards, equipment, and the team yearbook. It also pays for additional members of the coaching staff who aren't covered by district funds and the team's yearly athletic department contribution. Without this donation, the team wouldn't be able to maintain our current staff, or purchase needed equipment. We greatly appreciate all parent donations to help fund our program. If a parent works for a company that has a donation matching program, please contact the Cal High financial analyst for instructions.

XXI. CRITERIA FOR LETTERING

Varsity athletic letters in track & field will be awarded automatically to any team member who either:

- A. Is a senior, has been on the team at least 3 years, and hasn't yet earned their letter

or

- B. Is a team captain

or

- C. Achieves the varsity EBAL Championships qualifying standard in one or more individual events, and competes at the varsity level at the EBAL Championship meet

Coaches have the option of giving athletes their letter who don't meet any of the above criteria, but exhibit exceptional effort and/or team leadership on a regular basis. Conversely, coaches reserve the right to deny athletes their letter because of attendance problems or for disciplinary reasons.