

THROWING THE DISCUS-SIMPLIFIED

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Throwing the discus is a dynamic movement which coaches and biomechanical experts can write about in great lengths. Basic fundamentals are the key to success in all technically oriented events and the discus is no exception. A few key elements on fundamentals will be addressed.

The Grip

Make sure the hand is comfortable! The spacing of the fingers should feel natural – much like shaking someone’s hand. Generally speaking there should be about a half an inch between the fingers. It is very important to release the discus off the index finger...and not the second finger. Try to have only the first joints of the fingers over the edge of the discus so that it can smoothly rotate off the index finger. If you are a beginner...try rolling the discus off the index finger in a bowling style to get the feel of a smooth release.

The Standing Throw

The emphasis on the standing throw should be....1).learning to use the right leg (right handed thrower) 2) learning to establish a sense of rhythm, 3) learning to establish an orbit for the discus (proper angles of release), 4) learning to FACE YOUR THROWS (proper finish position). The standing throw should emphasis position work and not distance. Timing and Posture are keys.

- feet should be at least shoulder width apart and preferably more
- make sure the feet have a heel to toe relationship in positioning-toes of the front foot line up with heel of back foot
- keep the heels off the ground
- develop a rhythmic movement pattern with the discus
- the feet will pivot and move while the discus moves through an arc
- feel a transfer of body wt from the right leg to the front leg
- the discus edge will be up as the athlete sweeps the discus back
- the discus edge levels out as the athlete sweeps the discus forward
- keep the arm away from the body and get a full range of motion
- body wt on the right leg should be aprx.75-80% when the discus is behind the body
- use the left arm/hand to hold the discus when the discus is in front of the body-make sure you look into the middle of the sector
- rotate the heel of the back leg out when you release-get full range of motion
- assume an athletic position and feel that right leg in a flexed position

The Spin

Do not over complicate the spin.....but try to understand the posture and timing involved. Create orbits with the discus and learn to pivot effectively. Here are some key issues to address.

- Establish an Entry position- find comfortable depth with the legs. Feet at least shoulder width apart
- Don't get so low you cant move! Assume an athletic position
- Perform the same rhythmic pattern on every entry
- Limit your wind-ups....1-3 is plenty!
- Establish the same angle on each entry (low to higher orbit-42 degrees)
- Establish the proper orbit angles from the middle to the front of ring (low to higher orbit-42 degrees)

- Don't over-rotate the head and shoulders during the entry!
- Use focal points to establish your position work
- Keep eyes and head up-don't look at the concrete!
- Feel a sprint action across the ring but feel control
- Work towards establishing a build-up in momentum across the ring
- Use the legs throughout the throw!

A few simple ideas to consider while learning to spin. Try using the ring for reference with numerical numbers much like a clock. If the back of the circle is 12 o'clock or noon- the front of the circle can be 6 o'clock Walk through the circle as you learn –and begin making references to the ring in numerical numbers.

Beginners should keep their eyes at 12 o'clock while establishing their entry and preliminary swings with the discus. As you begin your entry- look towards 5 o'clock while moving across the circle. (left sector line for a right handed thrower)) As you pivot your feet and hips try to recover at 11 o'clock as you establish a torqued body position in the middle of the circle. Finish your throw at 6 o'clock as the momentum increases.

A few ideas on establishing position and posture for beginners... Do drills which utilize movement without throwing. Learn the proper positions and angles through reps of drills. The throwing will come along much faster after drills are fundamentally sound. Walk through the circle and break down the following –1) the entry 2) drive phase across the Circle—establish the focal point/step and pivot as you learn 3) setting up your positions in the middle of the circle—shoulders facing 11 o'clock 4) finishing your throw and establishing your shoulders facing the middle of the sector 5)always be aware of the orbits the discus needs to travel through—remember low to higher angles and 42 degree orbits and release angles.

As you advance with your positions and posture.....Learn to AIR PIVOT. As you learn to drive across the circle, advance your technique by pivoting in the air with the hips and shoulders. Land in a TORQUED body position in the middle of the circle! The feet will be quick and should hit the concrete in a nice quick sequence of right –left (right handed thrower). Don't allow your left leg to delay the action of getting your body in a torqued position. (get the foot down!)

Some Ideas on Drills.....

- Use traffic cones or lead pipes for body control-slower controlled movements
- Use the lines on the track for pivot drills and or air pivots
- Use the circle with clock references and do walk-through position work
- Always allow technique to throw far and develop great feel in the circle!