

Guidelines for Developing Speed

- ❑ Activities must be dynamic (i.e. involve movement and changes of position) and be highly sport-specific; they must also closely replicate the particular movements for which increased speed is desired (adaptations are very specific).
- ❑ Movements must be performed at maximal or near-maximal speed.
- ❑ For speed to remain high, each repetition must be relatively short (approximately 5-8 seconds).
- ❑ Rest between repetitions has to be long enough to allow for sufficient recovery; this will enable the athlete to perform other repetitions at a high speed. Rest intervals can be as many as 12-15 times longer than work periods (e.g. 5 seconds of sprinting followed by 60 seconds of rest).
- ❑ Rest periods should consist of very light activity involving the muscles used during the work periods (e.g. a slow walk if the athlete was sprinting.)
- ❑ The total number of repetitions must not be too high; approximately 10-12 is the norm, as speed tends to decrease thereafter because of fatigue. It is a good idea to divide repetitions into sets (e.g. 2 sets of 5 repetitions each).
- ❑ To avoid injury, athletes should be well warmed up before performing intense exercise.
- ❑ Activities aimed at improving speed should be scheduled at the beginning of the main part of the practice session, when athletes are not yet tired.

