

Athletic Trainer Services



Coaches' Education Handout

off season training

The off-season too often becomes a time of complete rest for youth athletes. While everyone needs rest and recovery time from the mental and physical stresses of a playing season, the off-season does not mean an athlete should not train. But if the off-season doesn't mean taking time off, what does it mean?

Off-season is defined as a period of time when an athlete is not participating competitively in their sport. It is critical for all athletes to have some sort of off-season built into the year. Unfortunately, most high school athletes play multiple sports or participate in the same sport throughout multiple seasons. With this type of year round participation in sports, there is an increase in the number of injuries as well as the severity of the injuries. These are predictable and preventable consequences associated with overuse and lack of rest in young athletes that are always competing and that do not have an off-season.

Purpose for off season training

During this cycle, intense workouts take place three to five times a week for 8 to 12 weeks, focusing on improving strength, speed, conditioning, and flexibility.

- To physically and mentally rest and recover from the stresses of the in-season.
- To prevent overuse and trauma injuries.
- To physically and mentally prepare for the in-season

In-season workouts vs. Off-season workouts

The intensity of the workouts is increased during the off-season

- Off-season is a great time to work on flexibility because the other seasons do not allow for this
- Off-season is an excellent time to refine skills (stick work, ball handling, footwork, etc)

Strength

- Help to establish a base for the pre-season and in-season cycles
- Should focus on improving foundational movements such as jumping, landing, running, squatting, and pushing and pulling patterns
- The athlete's ability to correctly move, push, and pull his or her own body weight is extremely important during the off-season

Speed Training

- Rapid acceleration and deceleration
- Directional changes while maintaining speed
- The ability to coordinate arms and legs while accelerating and decelerating
- Bursts of speed
- Lateral movement
- Efficiency of movement

Conditioning

- The purpose of conditioning in the off-season is to increase athletic workloads to handle the mental and physical stresses of the in-season, while increasing the athlete's overall fitness level.
- Helps athletes prevent injury
- Helps decrease recovery time from tough training sessions
- Conditioning encompasses all aspects of athletic performance

Flexibility

- Is the ability to move joints, muscles, tendons, and ligaments through their entire range of motion, from contraction to extension
- Allows the athlete to correct tight and shortened muscles
- Maintain range of motion and muscle strength
- Helps prevent injury



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