

What are Some General Training Guidelines?

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Here are some general suggestions when developing a training plan:

- 1) Prior to developing a training plan, conduct a needs analysis on the athlete or group of athletes to determine their specific strengths and weaknesses, energy systems used in the event, goals for the season, and the time constraints created by meets, vacations, etc. Training protocols should be developed based on the results of the needs analysis.
- 2) Training should be specific to the demands of the event and the goals of the athlete.
- 3) Varying training elements will ensure that training plateaus are minimized and the training effect is always high. The body adapts quickly to a set style of training and if the elements are not rotated or completely changed, adaptation will slow dramatically.
- 4) A successful training plan should be an ongoing alternation of overload and adaptation. These two elements need to be in balance for an optimum training effect.
- 5) On the macrocyclic level, training volume should start very high and progressively drop. Intensity should start low and gradually get higher.
- 6) At the meso and microcyclic levels, it may be advantageous to have fluctuations in training volume and intensity that do not necessarily follow the general trend of the macrocycle.
- 7) Training loads should be relatively consistent rather than having huge fluctuations.
- 8) Training elements for a given session should be paired to be both complementary and compatible. Complementary elements are ones which, when used together will create a stimulus that is greater than the sum of the parts. Compatible elements are ones which are similar in nature.
- 9) Each biomotor capacity should be addressed in every single training session. The extent to which each particular biomotor capacity is addressed will be based on many factors. Among the factors to consider are the event that the athlete competes in, the training age of the athlete, the current strengths and weaknesses of the athlete, the current psychological and physiological state of the athlete, and the prior training leading up to that session.
- 10) Each element of training should generally follow the same periodization scheme. That is, low intensity work should not be the focus of strength (i.e. endurance) training at the same period of time that high intensity work (i.e. speed) is the focus on the track.