

IAAF RULE 170

Relay Races

1. The standard distances shall be: 4x100m, 4x200m, 100m-200m-300m-400m Medley Relay (Medley Relay), 4x400m, 4x800m, 4x1500m.
2. Lines 5cm wide shall be drawn across the track to mark the distances of the legs and to denote the scratch line.
3. Each takeover zone shall be 20m long of which the scratch line is the centre. The zones shall start and finish at the edges of the zone lines nearest the start line in the running direction.
4. Check Marks: When all or the first portion of a Relay Race is being run in lanes, an athlete may place one check-mark on the track within his own lane, by using adhesive tape, maximum 5cmx40cm, of a distinctive colour which cannot be confused with other permanent markings. No other check-mark may be used.
5. The relay baton shall be a smooth hollow tube, circular in section, made of wood, metal or any other rigid material in one piece, the length of which shall be 280 to 300mm. The outside diameter shall be 40mm (± 2 mm) and it shall not weigh less than 50g. It should be coloured so as to be easily visible during the race.
6. The baton shall be carried by hand throughout the race. Athletes are not permitted to wear gloves or to place material (other than those permitted by Rule 144.2(f)) or substances on their hands in order to obtain a better grip of the baton. If dropped, it shall be recovered by the athlete who dropped it. He may leave his lane to retrieve the baton provided that, by doing so, he does not lessen the distance to be covered. In addition, where the baton is dropped in such a way that it moves sideways or forward in the direction of running (including beyond the finish line), the athlete who dropped it, after retrieving it, must return at least to the point where it was last in his hand, before continuing in the race. Provided these procedures are adopted where applicable and no other athlete is impeded, dropping the baton shall not result in disqualification. If an athlete does not follow this Rule, his team shall be disqualified.
7. The baton shall be passed within the takeover zone. The passing of

the baton commences when it is first touched by the receiving athlete and is completed the moment it is in the hand of only the receiving athlete. In relation to the takeover zone, it is only the position of the baton which is decisive. Passing of the baton outside the takeover zone shall result in disqualification.

8. Athletes, before receiving and/or after handing over the baton, should

keep in their lanes or maintain position until the course is clear to avoid obstruction to other athletes. Rules 163.3 and 163.4 shall not apply to these athletes. If an athlete wilfully impedes a member of another team by running out of position or lane at the finish of his leg, his team shall be disqualified.

9. Assistance by pushing or by any other method shall result in disqualification.

10. Each member of a relay team may run one leg only. Any four athletes

from among those entered for the competition, whether for that or any other event, may be used in the composition of the relay team for any round. However, once a relay team has started in a competition, only two additional athletes may be used as substitutes in the composition of the team. If a team does not follow this Rule, it shall be disqualified.

11. The composition of a team and the order of running for a relay shall

be officially declared no later than one hour before the published first call time for the first heat of each round of the competition. Further alterations must be verified by a medical officer appointed by the Organising Committee and may be made only until the final call time for the particular heat in which the team is competing. If a team does not follow this Rule, it shall be disqualified.

12 The 4x100m race shall be run entirely in lanes.

13. The 4x200m race may be run in any of the following ways:

(a) where possible, entirely in lanes (four bends in lanes),

(b) in lanes for the first two legs, as well as that part of the third leg up to the nearer edge of the breakline described in Rule 163.5, where athletes may leave their respective lanes (three bends in lanes),

(c) in lanes for the first leg up to the nearer edge of the breakline described in Rule 163.5, where athletes may leave their respective lanes (one bend in lanes).

Note: Where not more than four teams are competing, option (c) may be used.

14. The Medley Relay race shall be run in lanes for the first two legs, as

well as that part of the third leg up to the nearer edge of the breakline described in Rule 163.5, where athletes may leave their respective lanes (two bends in lanes).

15. The 4x400m race may be run in either of the following ways:

(a) in lanes for the first leg, as well as that part of the second leg up to the nearer edge of the breakline described in Rule 163.5, where athletes may leave their respective lanes (three bends in lanes),

(b) in lanes for the first leg up to the nearer edge of the breakline described in Rule 163.5, where athletes may leave their respective lanes (one bend in lanes).

Note: Where not more than four teams are competing, it is recommended that option (b) should be used.

16. The 4x800m race may be run in either of the following ways:

(a) in lanes for the first leg up to the nearer edge of the breakline described in Rule 163.5, where athletes may leave their respective lanes (one bend in lanes),

(b) without the use of lanes.

17. The 4x1500m race shall be run without the use of lanes.

18. In the 4x100m and 4x200m races, athletes other than the first, and in

the Medley Relay, the second and third athletes, may commence running not more than 10m outside the takeover zone (see Rule 170.3). A distinctive mark shall be made in each lane to denote this extended limit. If an athlete does not follow this Rule, his team shall be disqualified.

19. For the final takeover in the Medley Relay and in the 4x400m, 4x800m and 4x1500m races, athletes are not permitted to begin running outside their takeover zones, and shall start within this zone. If an athlete does not follow this Rule, his team shall be disqualified.

20. In the Medley Relay, the athletes running the final leg and in the 4x400m race, the athletes running the third and fourth legs shall, under the direction of a designated official, place themselves in their waiting position in the same order (inside to out) as the order of their respective team members as they enter the last bend. Once the incoming athletes have passed this point, the waiting athletes shall maintain their order, and shall not exchange positions at the beginning of the takeover zone. If an athlete does not follow this Rule, his team shall be disqualified.

Note: In the 4x200m race (if this event is not run entirely in lanes) the athletes in the fourth leg shall line up in the order of the start list (inside to out).

21. In any race, when lanes are not being used, including when applicable, in 4x200m, the Medley Relay and 4x400m, waiting athletes can take an inner position on the track as incoming team members approach, provided they do not jostle or obstruct another athlete so as to impede his progress. In 4x200m, the Medley Relay and 4x400m, waiting athletes shall maintain the order in accordance with Rule 170.20. If an athlete does not follow this Rule, his team shall be disqualified.