

# A VOLUNTEERS GUIDE TO STARTING

The primary goal of a starter is to ensure all runners receive a fair and equal start for each race. No competitors should be allowed to gain an unfair advantage, nor should any competitor suffer any disadvantage in the starting process.

## THE PROCESS

- 1 Check surroundings and equipment are safe for all children and volunteers.
- 2 Arrange children into lanes they are to run in (Centre should have a policy for lane allocations).
- 3 Give each child a practice start before the event begins.
- 4 Contact timekeepers to check if they are ready for start of race.
- 5 Make sure track is clear. Blow whistle to warn for start of race.
- 6 Starter says 'On your marks'. Competitors must not touch the ground on/in front of the line with their hands or feet.
- 7 When all children are settled and still, starter says 'Set' and raises the starting device (Set is not required for events over 400m).
- 8 Starter fires starting device and starts race. If child takes off early, the starter fires a second shot and the children are called back. Starter begins again from step four.

## EQUIPMENT

- Stand - elevated to provide a view of all lanes.
- Starters gun device (Eg. E-gun, timing solutions starting box, etc.).
- Whistle.
- Ear protection.
- Radio, or other similar communication device to contact other volunteers (Eg. Timekeeper).
- Starting blocks for children aged U11+ in laned events.

## LOCATION OF STARTER

### **Straight Start** (70m, 100m).

Starter should be located on the infield, slightly in front of the start line to enable all children to be viewed.

### **Staggered Start** (200m, 400m, 800m).

Starter to be located in a position behind the field, so that all children are in one line of vision and can be seen without turning your head.

### **Curved Start** (800m, 1500m).

Starter to be located on the infield, slightly in front of start line to enable all children to be viewed.

# A VISUAL AID



On your marks

Set

Go/Bang!

## FALSE START:



Second bang or whistle indicates a false start.

## What is a false start?

Where, after assuming a full and final starting position, a competitor commences their start before the starter fires.

- If an athlete initiates a movement that was not stopped and continued to the commencement the start it shall be a false start.
- Starters should not be overzealous in calling false starts with standing starts, as unintentional over balancing is common.

## SAFETY

- It is expected that Centres no longer use cap guns, nor are there any Centres using starting pistols. As such, information specific to these devices is not included as part of this guide.
- Starters should always wear protective ear plugs or muffs.

## HANDY HINTS

- Know the start rules for the event being conducted.
- Know the correct heights/track positions for all hurdles.
- Work as a team with other officials, including those who manage nearby field events that may impact the race start (Eg. High jump).



These guides are intended as a template for the conduct of events only, noting that individual Centres will have varying operating procedures based largely on available resources, including personnel and equipment.

For a full copy of Little Athletics Victoria's Rules and Regulations, including the more expansive Centre Officiating Guide, please visit [www.lavic.com.au](http://www.lavic.com.au)

*With thanks to Athletics New Zealand and Athletics West for the sharing resources and graphics in the creation of this guide.*