

PERFORMANCE ONE

Agility

Agility is the ability to change the direction of the body in an efficient and effective manner and to achieve this you require a combination of:

- **Balance**
 - **The ability to maintain equilibrium when stationary or moving (i.e. not to fall over) through the coordinated actions of our sensory functions (eyes, ears and the proprioceptive organs in our joints)**
 - **Static Balance - ability to retain the centre of mass above the base of support in a stationary position**
 - **Dynamic Balance - ability to maintain balance with body movement**
- **Speed**
 - **the ability to move all or part of the body quickly**
- **Strength**
 - **the ability of a muscle or muscle group to overcome a resistance**
- **Co-ordination**
 - **the ability to control the movement of the body in co-operation with the body's sensory functions e.g. catching a ball (ball, hand and eye co-ordination)**

How do we improve agility?

We can improve our agility by improving the component parts of agility (listed above) and practicing them in training.

Plyometrics

Plyometrics are what I believe the best form of exercise involved in shaving off valuable time from your 40. Plyometrics use shocking methods to turn your slow twitch muscle fibers into fast ones. Slow twitch fibers are used for distance running, while fast twitch fibers are used for speed bursts.

Marathon runners are full of slow twitched fibers while sprinters are full of fast twitch fibers. Not only will plyometrics make you run faster, but it will even increase your vertical jump! Depending on skill level, plyometrics can shave off valuable mili seconds from your 40 and add inches to your vertical jump. All in all, plyometrics will make you more explosive and better overall athlete

Running Technique

This is probably the fastest and quickest way to drop your 40 time. On the start you need to focus on exploding of the line. Remember the clock starts on your first move. At the line you want to place your right hand on the line and bring back your right foot. Then at a 90 degree angle you should put your left arm as if you were putting it inside your pocket.

The first ten yards you want to stay at a 45 degree angle and slowly creep up to a full running stance. You want to pump your arms as fast as you can at a 90 degree angle. Remember to run through the line and pretend you're running a 50 yard dash. You also want to take smooth large strides towards the finish line in a straight line.

Lengthen Your Stride-

Stride length is extremely important because if your steps are short and choppy you will waste vital energy. Short strides cause your body to work twice as hard to travel the same distance. This is not something you want when focusing on speed. Practice stretching your legs out, and covering the most ground in one step as possible, saving energy and improving speed. Remember don't stride out so far that you get off balance, but avoid short strides. You will find your ideal stride length with practice.

Other Factors To Improve Your 40

Flexibility

I got news for you. If you can't touch your toes without bending your knees, then you haven't reached your full potential in running. Flexibility gives you the ability to take larger strides and thus shaving time of your 40.

So work on your flexibility and watch the time lower. This with running technique is the easiest way to improve your time and your athletic performance.

Core Performance

If you didn't know your abs and hips control you're running. This can make or break your 40 time. So if you haven't focused on your core, this is the time to start. A stronger core will equal a stronger time. There are many exercises and stretches to improve your core.

Shoulders

Shoulders? Yes, shoulders. Your feet will only move as fast as your arms. Meaning if you pump your arms harder, you'll run harder. Look at all the world-class sprinters. What do they have in common? They all have amazing defined shoulders. So never forget the importance of your arms and shoulders and keep those arms pumping.

Expectations

Don't expect to cut a whole second off your 40 after reading this article. Be more realistic and set goals. Set short term goals like taking off .1 in a month and long term goals like .5 in a year. With hard work and dedication anything is possible. Remember consistency is the key to everything in life. Don't ever quit and always think big.