



MANDATORY GR TRACK & FIELD PRACTICE ITEMS:

- ✓ Sweatshirt, sweatpants (school colors)
- ✓ Athletic shorts • Proper running shoes (see below)
- ✓ **WATER** • Inhaler (if you carry one)
- ✓ **WARM UP PANTS AND SWEATSHIRTS ARE REQUIRED AT EVERY PRACTICE.**
Even in warm weather!

We will have a track spirit store up soon if you need school colors. Please check back.

RUNNING SHOE QUESTIONS:

1. What kind of running shoe does my son/daughter need?

The best type of running shoe depends on your son or daughter's particular "gait" or natural running style. This cannot be determined just by the shoe's feel, brand, or look. Shoes are broken down into "Stability" and "Neutral" shoes. Fleet Feet (9447 N Fort Washington Rd) is the best place to go locally to get a free foot analysis to help determine what shoe may work best. If your student-athlete comes to practice in "vans," basketball shoes, or any type that is not a running shoe, they will not be allowed to practice. FYI: Keep the clogs at home; they can't warm up with them.

2. We were never concerned with a "proper running shoe" in elementary school, so why now?

1. Increased mileage. 2. Less forgiving terrain (our track is hard). The only equipment a runner needs is a shoe. But if they are running in the wrong type, they may experience some issues like shin splints or arch pain. Even if your child is not a long-distance runner, they will need good quality running shoes for general practice. Our kids only "spike up" when doing sprints in practice.

4. What is a shin splint and why should I be concerned about them?

Because, quite simply, they can end a season. Shin splints (often referred to as medial tibial stress syndrome (MTSS)) are a cumulative stress disorder. Repeated pounding and stress on the bones, muscles, and joints of the lower legs prevents your body from being able to naturally repair and restore itself, causing extreme pain in the shins. This can happen when our bodies are not used to running daily, running on hard surfaces without conditioning them first, or have gait issues. Shin splints are the biggest complaint we hear as coaches, and once they develop, they can be a problem for the entire season. Broken down/wrong shoes can also play a significant factor in developing shin splints.

How to check if your child has questionable shoes.

- Are your child's shoes older than 6 months?
- Do you see wear and tear on the heel, sole, or side of the shoes, or are they otherwise broken down?
- Is the tread worn down, gone?

SPIKE QUESTIONS:

Please do not purchase any sprinting or mid-distance shoe until AFTER practice begins.

These shoes can be pricey, so we want to ensure you buy the correct ones. Some kids will know if they will sprint or concentrate on mid-distance events 2-3 weeks into practice. Sprinting or mid-distance shoes are not mandatory, but if your student-athlete is near the top of our roster in terms of speed, they will want them, and they will be required to come out of a block. Not all kids use blocks at this level, so keep that in mind.

5. What's the difference between a spike shoe and a racing flat with spikes?

Sprinters (100m, 200m, Relay) will need **SPRINT** spikes. Mid distance (400m-3200m) will use **MID-DISTANCE** "racing flats". They are very different! A racing flat is very flexible and has a slight heel. Spikes on these shoes are found around the front and middle of the shoe. Racing flats are unnecessary at this age, but if you buy them, ensure you are NOT buying sprinter spikes. You will know a sprinter spike when ALL of the spikes are positioned in the toe box area of the shoe. These shoes are very hard and inflexible. We only suggest discus shoes once your student-athlete decides to throw long-term. Jumpers can use sprinter spikes.

5. What's the importance of the actual spike? IMPORTANT!

Spikes come in different sizes. All track shoes will come with longer spikes (1/4 or 1/2 in). These are not allowed on ANY track surface in most of California. Please throw these away immediately. Only 3/16 in are allowed, and you are responsible for purchasing them. We will have 3/16 spikes available to buy (\$5 for a complete set).

- Please put names on the shoes/shoe bag. Many kids will buy the same shoes and can easily pick up the wrong bag, including kids from other schools. And sometimes they won't know they have the wrong ones until 5 minutes before their race. We inevitably have kids lose spikes at practice and meets. If we see them and pick them up - we will charge \$2 to get them back.