Mastering the 1st Hurdle

I’m Hector.

I am the author of this book, and a lifelong fan of the hurdles. The hurdles are quite simply my favorite thing in the world. There is always more to learn in the hurdles, and that challenge keeps it fun and interesting despite the ups and downs of any given season. After spending the last 8 years competing internationally as a professional 110 meter hurdler, I’ve acquired my share of knowledge about training for the event.

The sprint hurdles race, consists of the Women’s 100 meter hurdles race, and the Men’s 110 meter hurdle race. Both require fearlessness in running towards the hurdles, and a coordination necessary to clear the 10 barriers without losing speed. With only 8 steps before the first hurdle, and only 3 steps taken in between each hurdle, there is not much room for error in a race.

I’ve always been a pretty great starter, from my days of running 14.40 in High School, to my days of running 13.49 and competing in the Olympic Games, I’ve always been one of the fastest starters. The start to the first hurdle, has always been my favorite part of the race, for the sheer amount of energy im able to put into the race.

There is a simple, repeatable method for improving your start to the first hurdle, getting out ahead of the field, and putting yourself in better position to win the race, and that’s exactly what I am going to show you.

After years of perfecting my craft, I am going to share with you the method I’ve used to continually improve my start throughout the years. By the end of this manual, you will know exactly how to sprint through the first hurdle, and put yourself in the best position possible to win the race.

This manual is going to allow you to achieve real measurable results, I guarantee it.

But before we really get into the “How?” and “What?” of this whole thing, let me first lay down some ground rules…
My Promise & Some Ground Rules

Ok, first my promise to you…

I promise that everything you hear, read, or see from me is 100% the truth.

I will only ever speak from my own real-world experience.

You are here because you are genuinely looking for an edge. Whether you are just starting out, or have a well-established career in the hurdles, you are looking for a new advantage.

This manual will help you.

Believe it or not, this short little manual contains everything you need. And that is not a joke, I really am going to give you a full look “behind the curtain” at everything I do for my start, and how I have been able to make it one of the best in the world.

And if you’re sharp (and ready to work your butt off), you can take this manual, copy everything I do, and be good to go.

Now, I don’t just sell short little manuals that cost about as much a ticket to see the latest blockbuster in theaters. I have other products, trainings, and even courses that I also offer.

And after you finish this report if you have additional needs, you should look into other things I offer...

But if you’re like me, this report is the last thing you will ever need to improve your start to the first hurdle. All that is left for you to do is work hard, apply these principles to what you are doing, and enjoy the process of getting better.

Rule #1: You must read this entire report, twice.

Really, I should make it 3-5 times, but I’m not your coach (or your dad). The point here is, if you don’t read this entire report, and I mean really read every single word, more than once, then I can’t help you.

And that would really bum me out.
I’m opening up some very private things in here. And to be blunt, not many feel I should
share such secrets with the world. But I feel that there are far too many athletes struggling, trying to do it on their own (like I did for most of my career) and I feel this manual MUST be made. I am hoping to give those of you without private coaching, and access to professional and Olympic athletes, an opportunity to learn, and improve.

But if you can’t read this entire report, word for word, more than one time, then you won’t have a prayer as a high performing athlete. If someone can’t invest the time to read this little report, how can I trust that they are ready to put in the time, effort, creativity, and thought required to put this into action?

It wouldn’t matter if this report contained step-by-step directions to an Olympic Gold Medal buried in their own backyard and a shovel, someone who can’t read and dissect what I am desperately trying to hand over, is simply not cut out for this.

**Rule #2: You must take immediate action.**

This should come as no surprise, I hope.

After you finish reading this report, you must take action. It is the saddest thing in the world to me when people invest money into a training I offer, and then never use it.

So with this particular report, I’m declaring martial law. You must take action. You must implement. You must get moving!

In order to produce this report currently sitting on your computer screen, I invested…

1) $1,000s of dollars of my own money into training & coaching...
2) Countless hours of my time reading books, studying, learning new tools, etc....
3) Well over 4,000 hours physically training and testing what works...
4) Years of my life dedicated to training for and competing for International competition and the Olympic Games...

I’m very fortunate to have had the success I’ve had. But my point is, I work really hard for it. And you can too! I’m not **special**, I am **not exceptionally talented**, and I’m **not exceptionally fast.**
If you really want to make an impact for your hurdling, for your favorite sport, for your life, then be prepared to work hard.

I am going to do everything I can here to show you exactly what I did that changed my life. And I genuinely hope you do the same.

**Rule #3: You must be disciplined.**

Now let me explain this one real quick...

I am going to reveal my entire secret to you, step-by-step. This is the exact same method I have used to improve my start, from my days of running 15.3 and arriving at the first hurdle last, to running 13.49 and arriving at the first hurdle 1st.

So my point is, this method is not specific to a type of athlete. It does not matter what you are built like, whether you’re tall or short this manual is simply a proven method that works for improving your start to the first hurdle.

This manual is the result of a lot of hard work, testing, learning from others, and most importantly a habit of sticking to the script.

And that’s what it will require for you to succeed: discipline.

Everything I am about to tell you needs to be applied to your training. No two athletes are exactly the same, but the one who achieves success is the one who has a plan and follows it through. So you need to be constantly reminding yourself, that while the methods might feel foreign and even weird at first, they are proven to work, and with the discipline to stick to the plan, they will show great results.
Let’s get started: Lace ‘em up tight!

I’m serious about lacing up tightly. Some sprinters barely lace their spikes and their feet slide around when they run. Any kind of slide in your shoe will cause a loss of traction and the amount of power you can put into the ground.

A few words about footwear…
The most important part of a shoe is how well it fits.

The only real advancement spikes and sneakers have made in recent times is that they have gotten a bit stiffer. While this is a great benefit to sprinters, what’s most important is that they fit right. There are a few brands out there that might look cool and look good, but don’t fit the feet firmly enough, or don’t feel comfortable on your feet. When choosing a sprint spike, make sure you overlook the “flashiness” of the spike, and choose one that is comfortable. Don’t overestimate the difference this can make.

Lighter shoes feel quick and nice, and really that feeling of “lightness” is going to be better than any actual reduction in weight, since the actual amount of reduced weight is not significant. Feeling good in a shoe (aside from the fit) is important, and the boost it gives your psyche can actually be meaningful.

In a nutshell this is the importance of footwear for the purpose of running faster, make sure it fits and feels good on your feet.
The Proper Warm Up

*Dynamic warm-up for “Glute activation”*

There are very few sports that take the warm up as serious as track and field. Dynamic movements are necessary to prepare your muscles for the intensities of sprinting. As a hurdler your warm up is that much more important because hurdling is a very ballistic event. A good dynamic warm up primes the vascular system allowing increased blood flow and fuel to your muscles. A good dynamic warm up not only ensures the muscles wake up and blood flow increases, but ensures proper glute activation to allow for better movement patterns. In many athletes the glutes lie dormant, and the following warm up will ensure to activate them for the rigors of hurdling.
This running warm up is designed to ease your way into training. By running 100 meters and then immediately holding some short stretches, you’ll be able to both warm up and stretch in a shorter amount of time, before moving on to drills.

Jog 100 meters (then stretch)
Feet together, touch the toes and stretch (hold for 7 seconds)
Right foot over left, touch the toes and stretch (hold for 7 seconds)
Left foot over right, touch the touch as stretch (hold for 7 seconds)
(walk sideline)

Jog 100 meters
Feet spread wide, bend and touch the track-middle (hold for 7 seconds)
Feet spread wide, bend to the right foot and stretch (hold for 7 seconds)
Feet spread wide, bend to the left and stretch (hold for 7 seconds)
(walk sideline)

Jog 100 meters
Feet together, right foot to your butt and hold to stretch the Quad (hold for 7 seconds)
Feet together, left foot to your butt and hold to stretch the Quad (hold for 7 seconds)
(walk sideline)

Jog 100 meters
On the ground with feet together, touch toes and stretch (hold 7 seconds)
Spread Feet, touch and hold the right foot and stretch (hold for 7 seconds)
Spread Feet, touch and hold the left foot and stretch (hold for 7 seconds)
(walk sideline)

Jog 100 meters
Laying on the ground legs straight, lift right leg 10x
Laying on the ground legs straight, lift the left leg 10x
(walk sidline)

Jog 100 meters
Laying Karyoke, 10 swings each side
Jog 200 meters
Drills

These drills are designed to prepare you for sprinting by dynamically warming up the muscles and tendons involved in sprinting.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Drills</th>
<th>Distance</th>
<th>Reps</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A Skips</td>
<td>25 meters</td>
<td>4 trips (down and back=1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B Skips</td>
<td>25 meters</td>
<td>4 trips (down and back=1)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Straight Legs</td>
<td>25 meters</td>
<td>4 trips (down and back=1)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Side Bounce</td>
<td>25 meters</td>
<td>4 trips (down and back=1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reverse Runs</td>
<td>25 meters</td>
<td>4 trips (down and back=1)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Walking High-Knees</td>
<td>25 meters</td>
<td>4 trips (down and back=1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High-Knees</td>
<td>25 meters</td>
<td>4 trips (down and back=1)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bounds</td>
<td>30 meters</td>
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<tr>
<td>60m</td>
<td>@50%</td>
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<tr>
<td>60m</td>
<td>@65%</td>
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<tr>
<td>60m</td>
<td>@80%</td>
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</tbody>
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The warm up above should take **NO LESS** than 40 minutes. If you focus on form and executing properly it should take close to an hour.
Hurdle Mobility

Hurdle mobility exercises must always be performed before hurdling. While the normal workout does a good job at getting you prepared for sprinting, hurdle mobility gets you prepared to go through the ranges of motion involved in hurdling.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Exercise</th>
<th>Repeat</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Walk Overs – right leg first (down and back)</td>
<td>2x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walk Overs – left leg first (down and back)</td>
<td>2x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walk Overs – sideways (down and back)</td>
<td>2x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leg Swings – right leg, forward and backward</td>
<td>2x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leg Swings – left leg, forward and backward</td>
<td>2x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leg Swings – facing the hurdle, sideswing</td>
<td>2x</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

After a thorough warm up, you will be ready to sprint and hurdle at full speed.

Skipping the proper warm up will lead to hinder results and may possibly lead to injury. **BE SURE TO WARM UP BEFORE HURDLING.**

Now that you are properly warmed up, we will get into what you came here for. Improving your start to the first hurdle. Below you will learn the exact method to improving your start and getting out ahead of the field. You will learn proper Block Clearance, the importance of the first step, how to push properly, how to turn over into the first hurdle, and finally how to execute the proper cut step into the first hurdle.
Part One: Block Clearance

Running as fast as possible to the first hurdle, is made MUCH easier with a successful push from the blocks. Proper block clearance allows you to have a really explosive start, as it allows you to push through the first 4 steps, transition to a more upright posture, and turn your feet over before the first hurdle. The better the push from the blocks, the easier the following phases become.

With a proper push from the blocks, you will immediately put yourself in a better position to win the race.

Angles in the blocks

The angles in the blocks are not set in stone, every athlete will be different, but there are some guidelines you should follow. The front block should be approximately 90 degrees, and the rear leg should be in between 110-130 degrees. There are two important aspects to having the most explosive start possible. A) Load the hips in the set position and B) Place the Mid-Foot firmly against the blocks.
Having the ankles dorsi-flexed and the Mid Foot firmly against the blocks (in the set position) is very important. Many athletes have the bad habit of only pushing off the FRONT block, and simply stepping out from the rear block. Doing so makes it impossible to exert all your power on the blocks.

Once in the SET position, there should be no space, between the mid foot and the blocks.

Finding You Power

There is a trick I use, that has allowed me to learn how to load the hips and has allowed me ALWAYS (not some of the time) but always have the most explosive start.

1. Stand in place, with your hands at your side, and your feet shoulder width apart.
2. Lower slightly and then jump into the air. (take note of how your hips load energy when you lower-right before you jump)
3. Repeat, and jump a little higher now. (Take note how your arms greatly aid in helping you jump higher.)
4. Now simply lower to the position, right before you explode upward into your jump, this is your POWER position.

This Power position is the one you must replicate when in the SET position. The truth is, that
regardless of the block settings, you must raise the hips to the degree in which they allow you to feel the sensation of power in the hips.

This loading of the hips is going to be VITAL to your getting the most explosive and powerful start possible. The goal is to apply as much FORCE as possible onto the starting blocks, and this can only be done when you push off BOTH blocks.
Using Your Arms

The arms initiate the push. Just as when performing a vertical jump, the arms move before the legs, it is the same when exploding from the blocks. There is a simple rule for the arms. **Get them into proper sprint position immediately.** Many athletes do some pretty weird things with their arms out of the blocks, it then takes them several steps to get them moving in proper sprint motion. The goal with the first step, is to have them moving properly as soon as possible.

**The forward arm sweeps into position beside the cheek,** while the **opposite arm swings as aggressively backward as possible.** The arms should contribute to the explosion out of the blocks, and so the movements should be aggressive but fluid.

**Tips in the Set Position**

Before rising to the SET position, you should find a point either **directly below your eyes,** or **slightly behind the starting line.** I personally fix my eyes on the front of the blocks. The eyes should stay locked on this position as you rise to the set position.

Before rising to the set position, I slow my breathing down and prepare to take a big breath IN when the starter calls us to SET.

I have **ONE** thought in the SET position.

**REACT as fast as possible.**

In a race, there is no need to think about how to move your Arms, or how far to push from the blocks. Those things are worked on in practice, so that when it's time to race you can focus on racing. In training though, your focus out the blocks should be to **sweep the arms** and **drive the knee as far as possible.**
Part Two: The Push Phase

The Push Phase consists of the first 4 steps out of the blocks. This is the time to take advantage of the strength you’ve gained in the weight room, and it is the only time during the race when you can really put 100% power into the steps. After the Push Phase the remainder of the race is focused on turning the feet over as fast as possible (frequency).

The First Step

Now that you understand how to properly find your power position in the blocks, and how to properly align yourself for maximum force, it’s time to take the first step. From the set position there are various things that happen simultaneously 1. A forceful push is applied against the blocks 2. The arms swing into proper sprint position 3. The knee is driven forward 3. The front block is pushed against until full extension of the leg.

Errors made in the first step

“Falling” to the track- this occurs because the athlete is focused on creating power and or speed with the legs and the feet, rather than exploding from the HIPS. Falling to the track is very detrimental to creating speed, as it requires the athlete to produce force at the point of contact, and disrupts the timing of the rotary action in sprinting.

“Reaching” for the first step- this happens when the angle behind the knee excessively opens, and is caused when the athlete does not properly load the hips before contact. This error can lead to the hips dropping if the athlete over extends themselves and do not have
the strength to continue smoothly on to the second step.

“Stepping Out” - this is a 3rd error that shouldn’t occur, and if does, it only occurs because you have not properly learned how to push from the blocks. Pushing was discussed previously, and should be revisited if this error occurs.

Imagine using a hammer to strike a nail. You lift the hammer up, and slam it straight down into the nail. You do not lift the hammer, “place” it on the nail, and then push into the nail. Doing it that way would require insane amounts of strength and would likely be impossible. The same exact principle applies to the pushing phase during sprinting.

Executing properly will ensure force is generated BEFORE the feet strike the ground, and not when they strike the ground. This simple concept is important to understand.
Applying Power Properly

It is one thing to push as hard into the track as you can, it is a completely different thing to do it properly. Doing it properly is often times broken down into “angles” and talked about as if it is some extremely complicated thing, but it is not. Just as you learned what it feels like to explode properly from the blocks, I will now tell you exactly how it feels to push properly through the Push Phase.

Rotary Drill

1. Stand straight with your arms at your side, and your feet shoulder width apart
2. Raise one knee as high as you can, while keeping the foot tucked under the hip, and the ankle tightly dorsi-flexed
3. Position your hands properly to balance yourself (as in running motion)
4. From this position, reverse legs so that you are now balanced on the opposite leg, with the other knee raised high

This is the most important drill you can perform as a sprinter (hurdlers are sprinters) as it
will ingrain the proper motions required by the legs when sprinting, improve coordination and timing, and strengthen the various muscles involved in keeping proper balance and position when sprinting.

During this drill, there is no excessive reaching forward with the legs, as often times seen with beginner sprinters (and even many advanced sprinters who haven’t learned proper sprint mechanics). Contrary to popular belief, sprinters don't “reach” with their strides down the track. Forward motion is produced upon touchdown of the strides, and all emphasis is on bringing the knees UP and DOWN.

This drill will help you get a sensation for the UP and DOWN motion required in applying force properly. This sensation is the one which you must search for during the Push Phase of the start to the first hurdle.

**Pushing Through Four**

Pushing for 4 steps is necessary to create the momentum you need going into the first hurdle. As you learned with the Rotary Drill, the action of the legs must be cyclic with the sole focus on the UP-DOWN motion. This same exact motion is to be executed upon pushing from the blocks. Beginning with the very first step.

When the gun sounds, your goal must be to explode through the first 4 steps as aggressively as possible. The goal is to gain as much ground with these first 4 steps, and the only way to ensure you do not over-extend (drop hips) is to ensure that you move your legs in the piston like action learned in the rotary drill.
Steps Two, Three and Four

As you push through 4 the shin angles naturally rise to a more vertical position with every stride, but the emphasis must remain the same. Push **DOWN** into the track, do not try to make a stride with the lower half of the leg (from knee to foot). Push **DOWN DOWN DOWN**. **THIS IS THE MOST IMPORTANT ASPECT OF PUSHING PROPERLY THROUGH 4.**

During the push phase the arms should swing big, and swing aggressively, you are trying to gain as much ground and put as much power into the track.

The goal here is to be as aggressive as possible. It must be over exaggerated in training, and ingrained to the point where it happens on auto pilot. Aggression through the 4th step will be largely dependent on the amount of force you were able to generate during block clearance, and your ability to create power through the hips, rather than through the legs.
Part Three: Turning Over

Now that you have cleared the blocks properly, and have pushed your way down the track, it is time to stand up and begin to run fast. Steps 5-8 are *turnover* steps, and the focus is on increasing the frequency of each stride the closer you get to the hurdle.

The goal with the last 4 steps into the hurdle, is to turn them over as fast as you can, and set up the rhythm of the race. Every step should be faster than the last, and the only real way to ensure that they are is to focus on *frequency*. If you are actively applying POWER to the track during the last 4 strides into the hurdle, you are setting yourself up for problems.

**Errors made when pushing too long**

- **Get too close to the hurdle**- getting too close to the first hurdle, will put you close to every subsequent hurdle in the race, and will greatly increase the likelihood of you hitting one.

- **Hips too low**- during the push phase, the hips are slowly rising with every step. Pushing for too long will keep your hips too low going into the first hurdle and will cause you to be out of position and will cause you to “jump” and “float” the hurdle.

- **Cut step is nonexistent**- The cut step is very important in clearing the hurdle properly and running fast times, but pushing for too long will cause the cut step to not exist, instead a normal running stride will take place into the hurdle, which will diminish speed and power into the hurdle.

Creating turnover is achieved by easing off the power, and focusing instead on the *speed* of the steps taken. The steps should feel light, and the hips should feel like they naturally rise, the faster you attempt to move them.

There are two key aspects to turning over as fast as possible.

1. Running off the toes
2. Rushing
Staying on the toes

Staying on the toes is something that all sprinters must learn to do. It is even more important for hurdlers, because it is the only way to truly ensure the hips stay tall during a race. Sprinting off the toes is fairly straight forward and absolutely anyone can instantly visualize the right way to do it. The trick is strengthening the calves and maintaining proper hip posture when running off the toes.

To do this you will perform 2 simple exercises. These exercises, although simple, will fatigue you when performed properly, and more importantly will ingrain the proper sensations for sprinting off the toes.

Jump Rope

Its amazing how something so incredibly simple can be so incredibly effective. Jumping rope, when done properly, will make you a more ballistic athlete, and is the absolute best exercise a hurdler can perform to strengthen the calves and tendons. You may be thinking, “properly”? is it possible to jump rope wrong? The answer is YES, and a gran majority of people do not jump rope to get the full benefits of the exercise. When performed properly, jumping rope will strengthen the calves, hamstrings, and glutes, and help to ingrain proper hip position for sprinting and hurdling.

How to jump rope

1. Standing with the jump rope in your hands, feet shoulder width apart, contract your glutes, and push your hips forward.
2. While ensuring to keep your hips forward, begin to jump rope.

You will notice a powerful the bounce beneath your toes when holding the proper position, and you’ll also notice how not only your calves will fatigue, but so will your hamstrings and glutes. Jumping rope should be done DAILY and the number of reps you perform should increase every week.

A beginner program would look like this.
Jump Rope
Both feet- 30
Right leg- 20
Left leg- 20
Both feet- 30
The total here would be 100 with 3 rounds for a total of 300 reps a day. Week 2 would add on 50 jumps per set for a total of 150 extra jumps per day.

You will notice immediate benefits from jumping rope on a consistent basis, and I advise you to push your limits on a weekly basis.

Once again, the KEY is to hold your hips FORWARD while jumping rope. It is only this way that you will work the entire backside (calves, hams, and glutes). Failing to hold this position takes away 80% of the benefits, and will overwork the calves and tendons.

**Rushing**

Rushing sounds like it wouldn't be correct, but the perfect start to the sprint hurdles race, is an all-out controlled aggression. During a race, you don't think about the 3 steps in between the hurdles, you simply move through them as fast as possible. When approaching the first hurdle you don't think about any of the steps involved, you simply move through them as fast as possible. This is something that naturally happens over the course of a season, and something that you will need to actively work on when trying to compete at higher levels. Rushing gives you a feeling of being out of control, but over time, through reps and practice you will learn to control this rushing sensation and it will lead to truly remarkable improvements in your hurdling.

There is really only one way to understand this concept of rushing. The following workout will ingrain the proper sensation.

**30 Meter Fly’s**

Strengthening and preparing the legs to run on the toes is important to your ability to turn
your legs over faster in a hurdle race, but ingraining the proper sensation can really only be
done through workouts performed at top speed. 30 meter fly’s is the best workout you can do
to ingrain the sensation of rushing the leg turnover. It is a workout that is very taxing on the
nervous system though, and should be done under close supervision and always done early
in the week when the body is fresh.

This is a true SPEED workout and should be performed with full recovery between reps (5-
10minutes).

**The workout**
Place 4 cones on the track. The first 2 will be placed at 30 meters, the second 2 will
be placed at 60 meters.

5 total reps will be performed out of a 3 point stance with a minimum of 5 minutes rest
between reps.

Rep 1
Push through your drive phase, and work to full speed through the 60 meter mark.

Rep 2
Push through your drive phase, and work to full speed through the 60 meter mark.

Rep 3-4-5
Push through your drive phase, work to full speed by the 30 meter mark. Upon reaching this
mark you must attempt to **turn your feet over as fast as possible**. There should be
absolutely no emphasis on putting power into the track, **the sole focus is on turning the
legs over as fast as possible**.

Between the 30-60 mark you should shorten the arm stroke, and you should focus on staying
on the toes. The feeling will be intense, and you might feel like tipping or falling over. This is
the sensation that you are going for. You absolutely MUST push the limit during this drill. I
advise you to perform this workout TWO times before returning back to sprinting out of the
blocks at full speed toward the first hurdle.
Part Four: The Cut Step

The cut step is very important to running your fastest through the hurdles. The cut step is the very last step taken into the hurdles and it is purposefully shortened so that you can better push yourself into the hurdle.

The cut step can best be described as a step you don’t intend to take. That’s how I choose to describe it to you because that’s how the step feels when performed properly. The step is so short, and so quick, that it almost feels as if I didn’t mean to take it.

Beginner hurdlers often take proper cut steps by accident. They do it when they approach a hurdle too fast, get too close, and throw in an extra step to keep from crashing into the hurdle. This step, is extremely short, and placed very fast to keep from running into the hurdle. Often times though the beginning hurdler will jump the hurdle after taking this cut step by mistake. That is NOT something you will do, but if you have ever experienced this then you already have experience with the cut step.

Common errors made in the cut step

Planting- this happens when the hurdler “prepares” to clear the hurdle. They actively make an effort to “do something” in their last step, and instead of sprinting through the hurdle they “plant”

Stomping- this is the same as above, the hurdler is “preparing” to hurdle, and makes a conscious effort to clear the hurdle some kind of way.

Twisting- this is caused before the cut step takes place, and it is once again cause by the “anticipation” of the hurdle.

When hurdling, you must SPRINT through the hurdles, not prepare to hurdle, not jump the hurdles.

There are 2 things I do to perfect my cut step. One is a hurdle drill, the other is a workout.
The 1-Step Drill

This is my all time favorite hurdle drill. And one that you will come to love as well. This drill will correct nearly all hurdle technique, and most importantly it will ingrain the proper cut step. The setup is pretty simple. Place 5 hurdles 8 feet apart at a height just below the inseam. To find the proper height, simply stand over the hurdle, with both feet on each side. I use the hurdle at 36” because it is the last height I can stand over without raising on my tip-toes.

It is important to start at a low hurdle height to ensure proper movement over the hurdles, and to ensure you focus on extending into the hurdle, rather than jumping over it.

The key with the 1 step drill, is to develop a rhythm in clearing all 5 hurdles. The drill should start with the intention of simply clearing all 5 hurdles, but over time should be performed as a drill for time. You will compare the lead leg time to the trail leg time, to see which side is slower, and have a better understanding of where you should focus your efforts with technique training.

Things to Focus on

1. Drive with the knee
2. Stay forward
3. Coordinate the arms with the legs
4. INCREASE SPEED as you get better at the drill

PLEASE perform this drill often. If you do nothing else in this entire manual, peform this drill. I absolutely guarantee 100% that it WILL take your hurdling to new levels.
Extended Hurdle

I call this drill the extended hurdle drill, because that’s exactly what it is. Instead of placing the first hurdle at the normal 13.72m mark, you are going to place it at 18 meters and run at it full speed from the blocks. This is going to do 2 things, it is going to allow you to approach the hurdle with more speed, and it’s going to force you to take 2 extra steps to the first hurdle, thus allowing you to correct any cut-step errors.

In this workout you will take 10 steps to the first hurdle (as opposed to the normal 8) and will continue to run off the hurdle through 30 meters at full speed. This workout can be done any time during the week, but I suggest it be done early in the week, and not too close to competition, as you will want to practice at the normal spacing’s the closer you get to competition.

This drill WILL be intimidating at first. You WILL stutter step, and mess the drill up the first couple times you attempt it. But you must continue to work on it, even if it takes you 2 or 3 practice sessions to master the workout. This drill is not very often shared but is a drill that will take your hurdling to new levels, once you develop the aggressiveness and fearlessness to sprint through the extended hurdle at full speed.
Conclusion

That’s it folks! Mastering the first hurdle is as simple as following this guide.

1. Produce as much Power Out of the blocks
2. PUSH through 4 steps
3. Turn Over AS-FAST-AS-POSSIBLE through 7
4. Cut the 8th step for an optimal take-off into the first hurdle

Following these steps you are guaranteed to improve your start to the first hurdle. Not only will you improve, but you will consistently be FIRST to the first hurdle (just hope your rival doesn’t have this manual). Improving to the first hurdle is fairly easy when you follow the steps outlined above. But as stated earlier, you MUST take action, and you MUST discipline yourself to do the work that needs to be done!

I hope this guide helps you take your game to another level, I will discuss the steps covered in this manual in more detail on my blog but if you have any questions before then, feel free to contact me at sprinthurdles@gmail.com
A Small Favor

I am in preparations for the 2015 World Championships in Beijing, China, and of course the Olympic Games in Rio in 2016. I am looking to raise funds for my training, and if you feel this guide has proved beneficial, I ask that you visit my Go Fund Me page at http://gofundme.com/hcotto and consider donating.

CLICK HERE TO VISIT my Gofundme page

ANY donation, even $1 will go a long way in helping me prepare, and I will be incredibly grateful for your support!

Thanks again, and be sure to visit me at sprinthurdles.com if you have any questions or comments.