



***FITCH TRACK & FIELD  
TEAM HANDBOOK***

[www.fitchtrack.com](http://www.fitchtrack.com)

## **OUR PROGRAM:**

Austintown Fitch Track & Field is a program that proudly provides our athletes with skilled & knowledgeable coaches for every event group. We are one team that competes in meets throughout Ohio and Nationally from January through June. We schedule the most competitive and well-run meets leading up to the State Championships while also providing our elite athletes with the opportunity to compete on the national stage at both the Indoor and Outdoor National Championships.

We do not consider indoor track as a separate entity or team, but as an opportunity to enhance our skills and prepare for the outdoor season. NOTE: Please understand that "indoor/winter track" is outdoor track's pre-season training. If you show up at the end of February, you will be showing up halfway through the training season and up to 16 weeks behind. If you are not in a Winter sport at Fitch, you are expected to be training with track & field throughout this time.

## **PAPERWORK:**

Our Athletic Department has partnered with FinalForms, an online application that will enable parents and students to complete & sign athletic forms online. FinalForms is available @: [austintown-oh.finalforms.com](http://austintown-oh.finalforms.com).

The only form that you are still required to print & complete is the OHSAA Physical form, pages 3-4. The physical form must be completed by a doctor & by law we are required to have a signed copy on file. Once the physical is received by the athletic department, the expiration date will be input into FinalForms & you will receive automatic notifications via email when your physical needs to be updated.

Information is stored from season-to-season, year-to-year & is shared within your family members eliminating the need to enter the same info more than once. Your only annual requirement will be logging in to verify the existing information for your child by re-signing each form.

## **ATTENDANCE POLICY:**

Practice is not optional. Athletes are expected to be in attendance for all practices, from start to finish, and meets throughout the season. It is the responsibility of the athlete to plan their schedule to avoid conflicts while we are in-season. Doctor appointments should be scheduled around practice, if possible. If a practice is to be missed due to an emergency situation, a coach must be notified as soon as possible.

Being a member of the Austintown Fitch High School Track & Field team is up to a six-day a week commitment. Our athletes are expected to honor their commitment to the team and be at practice daily. One unexcused absence could result in a suspension. Multiple absences, even if excused, could result in dismissal from the team. Violations of the attendance policy may also result in removal of the varsity letter (if earned).

Medical or legal absences from school should be pre-approved by a grade-level principal or attendance office. Eligibility for weekend events is determined by a 1/2 day of attendance the last day school is in session prior to the event.

Clubs, Camps, competitions, AAU games, other sports, etc. are not acceptable reasons to miss or leave early from practices or meets.

## **SPRING BREAK:**

There will be practice throughout Spring Break and multiple meets on the schedule. Attendance is expected.

## **JOBS:**

It is strongly suggested to not work during the season, but if one must, it should be done so sparingly. Athletes who are working must realize that it is not acceptable to miss/leave early from practice or meets due to their work schedule. Working an excessive amount of hours on top of school and practice is detrimental to performance due to lack of proper rest.

### **CUTS / REMOVAL FROM TEAM:**

There are event-group imitations in the sprint-hurdle-jump and throws training groups due to the high level of technical coaching required in order to be successful. After an initial period deemed fit by the coaching staff, athletes will be notified of their status, which may result in continuing on as a member of the group or being moved to a different training group that is more fitting based on their skillset and team needs.

Athletes can also be removed from the team for the following: grades, discipline, character, repeated tardiness, missed practices & meets and other violations of team rules. Three unexcused absences may result in removal from the team.

### **TRAINING GROUPS:**

The coaching staff reserves the right to break the team into separate training groups & assign different practice days & times for each group. Training groups are determined by skill, experience, "coachability", team needs, and the ability to establish and maintain positive relationships with teammates & coaches.

### **PRACTICE:**

Practice sessions are typically scheduled for Monday-Friday, 2:40-5:40 PM. Some event groups may hold practice sessions on Saturdays & Sundays or training sessions after the conclusion of normal practice times. Athletes will be notified well in advance of the schedule.

Athletes are required to bring appropriate clothing & attire for outdoor practices daily regardless of the weather. This includes: hoodie/sweats, hats/gloves, compression tights, running shoes & event-specific shoes/spikes. If you are unprepared, you will be sent home & it will be counted as an unexcused absence.

### **EVENT PLACEMENT:**

Athletes are entered in events that are best for team success. Final decisions on event placement and meet lineups are determined by the coaching staff and not the athlete or parent.

### **INVITATIONAL LINE-UP AND JUNIOR VARSITY:**

The invitational lineup will typically be made up of the 2 top performers in each event & relays. A final decision on invitational athletes is a decision of the coaching staff and not of the athlete or parent.

Junior varsity (JV) athletes will participate each week in the Tuesday dual/tri meet as long as they are fulfilling their commitment to the team and following team rules. In some occasions such as relays and or to fill in for injured athletes, JV athletes may have the opportunity to compete in a weekend invitational.

### **MEETS & TRAVEL:**

All athletes will travel to and from away meets in transportation provided by the school district. For exceptional situations that prevent an athlete from doing so, a parent/guardian must provide advanced notice to the head coach to make them aware of the situation.

All athletes participating in a dual meet, invitational, or championship meet are required to stay until all events are complete and attend the post-meet team meeting. Athletes are not permitted to leave a meet until all team activities are complete.

## **POST SEASON EVENTS:**

Individual event and relay entries may be subject to change at the coaching staff's discretion for all postseason meets (ACC, District, Regional, State & National Championships). All decisions will have the interest of the team first and the individual secondary.

## **TEAM MEETINGS:**

We will meet as a team before practice at least once a week to go over all pertinent information. These meetings are typically held to discuss line-ups, expectations, goals and overall team progress for the week. All athletes are required to attend.

## **INJURIES - THERAPY/REHABILITATION:**

Athletes should notify their coach of any injuries or issues that may need medical attention to set up a visit with our trainer. Athletes should see our athletic trainer first for all injuries instead of going to the urgent care, emergency room or family doctor (unless the injury requires immediate medical attention - i.e. emergency situation). Our trainer will formulate a plan after diagnosing any potential injuries and setup appointments with our team doctors, if necessary.

The training room is a place for injury rehabilitation and not a hang-out room. If an athlete is not receiving treatment, they should not be in the training room.

On meet days, it is the responsibility of the athlete to report to the trainer early enough to be completed in time to warm-up with the team.

## **DRESS CODE, UNIFORM, AND EQUIPMENT:**

If you choose to wear long-sleeve compression tops or long tights under your team-issued uniform, they must be solid NAVY. Undergarments may only have ONE logo according to OHSAA state rules. Athletes on relay teams must wear identical uniform tops and bottoms.

At meets, athletes must wear their team issued uniform and warm-up. If a proper uniform is not worn, the athlete will not be allowed to participate in the meet. Any additional apparel must be Fitch Track and Field team gear or other Austintown Athletics apparel.

Our uniforms are very expensive. Please take care of them as they are your responsibility throughout the season. You are responsible to wash them and return them to the head coach when requested.

Any athlete who loses or damages the uniform will be charged the full cost to replace the item(s). It is strongly recommended that the uniforms are not machine dried. They are a dri-fit material that will last longer if they are hung dry.

Cell phones and other electronic devices are not permitted during practice or meets. Please keep these items in your bags, and locked up in your lockers.

NOTE: Austintown Local Schools and the Track & Field program are not responsible for lost or stolen items. It is the responsibility of the student-athlete to bring a combination lock and securely lock their belongings in the designated locker room during all practices and meets.

## **TEAM WEBSITE:**

Our team website is located at [www.fitchtrack.com](http://www.fitchtrack.com). Check the site regularly for schedules, announcements and other team-related news.

Thank you,

Austintown Fitch Track & Field