



**AUSTRALIAN
ATHLETICS**

Australian Athletics | ABN 72 006 447 294

Athletics House – Level 2, 31 Aughtie Drive
Albert Park VIC 3206

P +61 3 8646 4550 | athletics.com.au



**WORLD ATHLETICS
U20 CHAMPIONSHIPS
OREGON 26**

**2026 WORLD ATHLETICS U20
CHAMPIONSHIPS
ATHLETE HANDBOOK**



Pre-Selection Preparation

Make sure you have nominated yourself for selection at the Australian Athletics website - <https://www.athletics.com.au/event/2026-world-under-20-championships/>. This is a requirement for selection, and must be completed by Wednesday 1st April 2026.

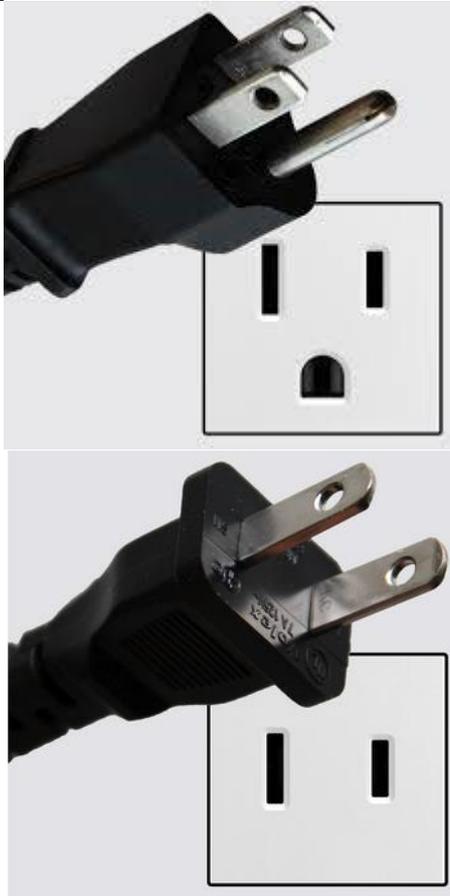
Make sure you are competing in the event that you wish to be selected for, in the Under-20 age group, at the National Championships. This is a requirement for selection; if you are not competing in the required event in the Under-20 age group, you must contact the Chair of Selectors before the competition begins. To do this, please complete the [Meet Exemption Request Form](#).

Start to plan:

- Is your passport valid until the beginning of March 2027?
- What will your training look like between nationals and the World Under-20 Championships?
- What will your competition structure look like? How many competitions do you need to arrive in top shape?
- Who is your team coach? Start to make contact and discuss your plans.
- How will you pay the levy? Do you need to do any external fund raising?
- How will you deal with the travel, time change, and hot conditions?
- How will you deal with being away from school/university for so long?
- Do you have a plan for how often, and with who (parents, coach, etc.) you will communicate with in Australia?
- Do you have any specific dietary needs? How will you deal with foreign foods?
- Is the travel insurance cover sufficient for your needs? Check and review.
- Have you completed your Sport Integrity Australia e-learning courses?

Location Information

United States

Local Currency	US Dollars (USD) 1 AUD = ~\$0.69
Visa	If visiting for less than 90 days, Australians must apply for an Electronic System for Travel Authorisation (ESTA), and enter under a visa waiver program.
Power Adapter	Type A and Type B
Power Adapter Illustration	 <p>The illustration shows two examples of power adapters used in the United States. The top example shows a Type A adapter, which has two flat, parallel prongs and a grounding pin, plugged into a standard North American wall outlet. The bottom example shows a Type B adapter, which has two flat, parallel prongs and a larger grounding pin, also plugged into a standard North American wall outlet.</p>



	Santa Barbara, CA (USA)
Time change from AEST	-17 hours (-7 GMT)
Average Daily Temperature (July)	25°C (average low of 15°C)
Average July Rainfall	0mm
Humidity	80%
Altitude	15m
Daily High UV Index	9
Closest Australian Embassy/High Commission	Century Plaza Towers – 31 st Floor 2029 Century Park East Century City Los Angeles CA 90067 Tel - +1 310 229 2380

	Eugene, OR (USA)
Time change from AEST	-17 hours (-7 GMT)
Average Daily Temperature (August)	30°C (average low of 14°C)
Average August Rainfall	10mm
Humidity	85%
Altitude	131m
Daily High UV Index	9
Closest Australian Embassy/High Commission	575 Market Street Suite 1800 (18 th Floor) San Francisco CA 94105-2815 Tel: +1 415 644 3620

Climate

Eugene's climate in August is typically hot and humid, with temperatures typically around 25-30 degrees Celsius for the majority of the competition period.

The Championships are in the summer. The average maximum temperature for the last 4 years during the dates of competition is 34°C, which occurs between 4-6pm. The average low is 11°C, occurring around 6am. Humidity is high overnight and early morning, before dropping during the afternoon and early evening. The general “feels like” temperature is a low of 14°C at 6am, and a high of 32°C between 4pm and 6pm. In terms of worst-case scenarios, the lowest “feels like” temperature over the last 4 years during the competition dates is 7°C (at 6am), and the highest is 40°C (at 5pm).

Daily Avg. max	34°C (4-6pm)
Daily Avg. min	11°C (6am)
Relative humidity	~85%, dropping to ~40% around 4pm

This means that morning sessions may be cool, with afternoon sessions being hot. The challenge for athletes is to be prepared for both!

Competition

The 2026 World Athletics U20 Championships will take place at Hayward Field in Eugene, Oregon (USA). Renovated in 2020, the Stadium has a seating capacity of 12,650 spectators. It hosted the 2022 World Athletics Championships, as well as the 2014 World Under-20 Championships. It has hosted the US and NCAA Championships on a number of occasions.

It is important to note that there are not full training and warm-up facilities at Hayward Field. The warm-up area is comprised of a square 4-lane track around a field, with circular throwing facilities to one side. For the Championships, it is highly likely that athletes will need to conduct at least some of their warmup elsewhere, before coming to Hayward Field for the competition.

The timetable for the event has yet to be released.

When competing, you must wear official Australian Athletics team uniform, which has been approved by World Athletics.

Health

The main health risk during these Championships will likely come from common viruses found when large groups of people are in the same place. These could include, but not be limited to, COVID-19, influenza, gastroenteritis, and the common cold.

Whenever travelling, utilise alcohol hand gel prior to eating.

Further information regarding travel vaccinations will be released shortly. We strongly recommend all team members consult with a travel doctor and ensure all travel vaccinations are up to date, along with an up-to-date influenza vaccination. Team members are responsible for arranging and paying for their own vaccinations.

Australian Athletics will have a doctor present in the US with the team, and a group of performance support staff including physiotherapists and soft tissue therapists present. The team has also arranged comprehensive travel insurance covering all team members.

Finally, COVID-19 is still prevalent, and will likely harm your performance if you catch it close to competition. To reduce the risk, wear N95 masks when advised, try to eat and meet people outside and/or in well-ventilated areas, maintain a 1.5m distance from people as far as practical, and practice good hand hygiene measures.

Travel & Hygiene Packs

It is recommended that all traveling team members create their own travel & health pack. The following are suggested to be included:

- Antibacterial Wipes
- Fess travel nasal spray
- Waterless Handwash Antiseptic Gel
- Betadine sore throat gargle
- Strepsils Throat Lozenges
- Paracetamol
- Nasal Decongestant Spray
- Gastrolyte / Hydralyte sport electrolyte replacement
- Gastrostop / Imodium
- Any prescribed medication for duration of trip – WADA checked and with a letter from doctor.

Safety

The USA is generally a safe environment, and we will be staying on University Campuses which provide some additional safety. However, it is worth being mindful of your personal safety at all times. In the very unlikely event of civil unrest in the form of demonstrations and protests occurring, we will take adequate steps to ensure everyone's safety. However, when out and about on your own or in small groups, you should avoid drawing attention to yourself, and also avoid voicing opinions that could be deemed political in nature. As highlighted on the Smartraveller website, violent crime is more common in the USA than Australia, as is gun crime, and minimizing risks here will be important.

Planning

In order to best set yourself up for success at the World Under-20 Championships, it is important to consider a variety of questions and scenarios, and have solutions and plan B's set up. Failure to plan is planning to fail!

Key things to consider:

1. There are no pre-departure standards; prepare yourself to perform – if you need help, ask the appointed team coach.
2. How many competitions do you need in order to arrive at the World Under-20 Championships in peak condition?
3. What will your training look like between nationals and the World Under-20 Championships?
4. How will you handle the travel/time-change?
5. How will you handle the temperature and climatic conditions?
6. How will you handle being away for 3 weeks?
7. Who is your team coach? Start to make contact and discuss your plans.
8. Do you need a plan for school/university work?
9. What does your pre-competition taper look like?
10. What could go wrong? What are you doing to protect against this? What are your plans B and C?
11. How will you handle any cultural differences in the way events are organized and run? E.g., What will you do if all the buses are running late?

Being away from home:

- You will have a roommate – what if they snore/are loud?
- You will have a lot of free time – what will you do?
 - How will you balance preparing for the Championships over sightseeing/exploring?
- Do you need to continue with school/university work?
- Eat the same amounts and as much as possible similar types of food as you would normally
- How will you keep in contact with friends and family, whilst minimising the disruption to your preparation?
- Extra walking at the Championships – how will you prepare?

This last point is worth considering in detail. As we will be staying in and around University Campuses in both Santa Barbara and Eugene, there will be a lot more walking than in a hotel; to the food hall and back multiple times per day, to the training venue, and even between rooms. One thing that a lot of athletes fail to adequately prepare for is just how tiring this can be, so please ensure you're aware of this increased load, and plan for extra downtime or non-walking periods.

If you need any help in working through solutions to these questions, get in touch and we can help you out.

Travel

The current plan is to travel to Santa Barbara (California) for a pre-competition camp. To arrive at this camp, athletes will fly from Australia to Los Angeles International Airport (LAX), and then a coach to Santa Barbara. For athletes already in the US, flights to Santa Barbara airport itself may be possible. We will fly from Santa Barbara (SBA) to Eugene (EUG), which requires transit through San Francisco (SFO).

Travel to Los Angeles from the East Coast of Australia generally takes around 14 hours on a direct flight. Santa Barbara and Eugene are 17 hours behind AEST.

All athletes will be affected to some extent by these travel requirements.

To reduce symptoms of jet lag and travel fatigue, the following should be taken into consideration:

- Avoid heavy training sessions the day before and after travel.
- Minimising jet lag:
 - Go to sleep 1-2 hours later, and wake up 1-2 hours later, for 3-5 days pre-travel
- Travel nutrition – pack in carry on

- Suitable food for long haul flight
- Pack your own food for the plane to ensure you meet your nutritional goals and support recovery. Pack extra for flight delays.
- High hydration required for 24+ hours in a dry, air-conditioned environment. Pack electrolytes to have on flights.
- Compression garments
 - To reduce swelling, as well as the potential for DVTs
 - Class II medical grade compression socks are best
 - Other leg compression garments will still support.
- Travel comfort
 - Noise cancelling headphones
 - Ear plugs
 - Neck pillows
 - Eye shades
 - Eye drops, nasal spray
 - Movement on plane
 - Hand sanitiser and wipes
 - Consider use of N95 face masks on board and in airport/crowded environments.
- Sleep on flight
 - Medication – seek doctor’s advice
 - Avoid caffeine
 - Prioritise sleep and rest over moves. Any and all sleep/rest is best, even if not time zone aligned.
- On arrival
 - Don’t nap once we arrive
 - Strategic use of caffeine can support the adjustment of your body clock
 - If you wake during the night and cannot get back to sleep:
 - Do not turn on the lights, complete a workout or grab a meal
 - Try to stay in bed until it’s time to get up – listening to music/podcast with your eyes closed will achieve rest.
 - Seek daylight in the morning, go outside for a walk to support body clock adjustment
 - Minimise blue light exposure during the evening
 - Align meal times to local time on arrival
 - Chat with your coach about what you will do in the first 24-48 hours off the plane
 - Create a training plan that includes activation work and light drills within minimal high intensity.

We strongly suggest each athlete have a clear plan for how they will manage the impact of travel/jetlag on their performance. This approach may include some or all of the areas mentioned above.

Recovery

Different recovery strategies can be put to great effect throughout the athletics season, but during both taper and championships are when they come to the fore.



Hierarchy of Recovery Aids

Appropriate training prescription (think periodisation, weekly load distribution, taper), sleep and nutrition remain the key pillars of effective recovery.

Leading into major competitions, athletes and coaches need to consider:

- Training programming (when is the final key training session? what is planned between this and the first day of competition?)
- Sleeping in new locations (single beds, sharing a room with teammates, will you nap?)
- Competition nutrition (specific food types and their availability in comp location, be they sports foods or for everyday nutrition requirements)
 - Will you need to take over specific non-perishable foods?

Additional recovery aids will also play a bigger role as athlete readiness becomes the priority. These include, but are not limited to:

- Water immersion (hot, cold, contrast, active/passive, pools/showers)
- Compression garments
- Compression boots/sleeves
- Physical therapies
- Relaxation techniques

We strongly suggest each athlete have a clear recovery strategy throughout the season, but particularly around competition in Eugene. This strategy may include some or all of the areas mentioned above and should consider:

- Event specific demands
 - multiple rounds of competition at championships
 - How will you recover
 - event scheduling – time of day
- Trialing a variety of modalities to find the best options
 - Experience with these recovery modalities

Environmental conditions will be different than Australian conditions in winter. We suggest coaches and athletes plan how they can incorporate heat acclimatization prior, and how to adapt to environmental conditions in America.

Distance athletes should consider and practice cooling strategies well in advance of the championship.

During the staging camp it is not advised to try cram in last-minute heat acclimatisation (there is such a thing as too much heat exposure & it is a common mistake!). *This will be dependent on temperature in Santa Barbara staging camp.*

Key things to consider:

1. How will you recover between rounds during your event?
 - a. Practice this in training
2. When will your last hard training session before the World Under-20 Championships be?
3. What do you need to consider when recovering from training during the holding camp?
4. Do you need to consider heat acclimation pre-departure?
 - a. Distance athletes: Will you use pre-cooling strategies, how will you practice this extensively before the championship?
5. Is there anything you need to pack and bring with you from a recovery standpoint?

Packing List

- Competition equipment (& spares)
- Australia kit
- Personal clothes
- Swimmers
- Wet weather gear (inc. towel)
- Jumper
- Specialised recovery equipment – foam rollers, etc.
- Key competition and training nutrition items (non-perishable) – gels, supplements (if relevant), snacks
- Passport
- Phone
- Photocopy of photo page of your passport
- Plug adaptor and powerboard
- Things to do – books, laptop, school/university work etc.
- Eye mask
- Ear plugs / Headphones
- Insect repellent (that ideally contains DEET).
- Sunscreen
- Medications & Hygiene pack – including paracetamol & diarrhea relief tablets (with loperamide)
- Spending money (US Dollars)
- Pen
- Pins
- Facemasks
- Hand sanitizer
- Antibacterial wipes

Contact Details

Craig Pickering – Team Leader:
craig.pickering@athletics.org.au

Miles Thompson – Operations Manager:
miles.thompson@athletics.org.au