



## COMBINE PREPARATION



Interested in improving your SPARQ Score, Combine 360 Ranking, adding a star to your Rivals.com ranking or standing out in the crowd of college football prospects? Then improve your combine performance.

To do your best, you must prepare for it. Athletic Republic helps football players improve football speed for the forty-yard dash, add quickness for pro-agility cuts and develop explosive power for the vertical jump. We teach the techniques that improve combine results and on-field performance, while supercharging your conditioning and stamina, so you'll be ready to start the fourth quarter with the same strength you had in the first.

Here are some of the key scoring secrets Athletic Republic teaches for running the 40-yard dash fast, perfecting the pro-agility, and adding height to the vertical jump.

## FORTY-YARD FAST



The football combine is defined by the forty-yard dash. If you want to get noticed, drop your 40 time by two-tenths. Two-tenths is two steps on your opponent and enough separation to make a big play. For a wide receiver or defensive back, two-tenths is the difference between a DI starter and DII player.

The following football speed-training tips reveal how to drop those two-tenths by improving how you run the 40-yard dash fast.

Start with the start. The goal is to maximize the amount of force you generate to *propel your body forward*.

Get into the right position at the starting line:

- Always be on your toes.
- Keep your feet slightly less than shoulder-width apart.
- Place your stronger leg forward.
- Position your weaker leg back slightly, toes even with instep of forward foot. No further back than even with the heel! The closer you place your feet to the starting line, the shorter the distance you will have to move.
- The hand on the ground should be on the same side as your back foot.
- Your opposite arm (same side as your stronger/front leg) should be “cocked” as far back as possible, ready to drive *forward*.
- Shift your weight as far forward as possible, putting a lot of pressure on the hand on the ground. You should feel like you are going to fall on your face! If you cannot get your weight shifted into this position, then move your feet a little closer to the line and try again. Just don’t “crowd the line” so much that you feel like you can’t explode forward.
- Keep your head down, fixing your eyes on a position about one yard in front of the line.

Get up to speed:

- Practice getting into the start position every training day so that it becomes second nature.
- Once you are in position, think about two things: RELAX, then EXPLODE. Relaxing your muscles just before exploding out of the starting position ensures that the strongest possible signal gets from your brain to your muscles.
- **EXPLODE** out of the starting position, directing as much power as possible into your front leg—NOT your back leg, because your back leg should be thrusting through to take that next step.
- Drive the “cocked” arm (one on the same side as the leg that is forward) **forward**, NOT up, sideways or back.
- Stay as low as possible and keep your head down for your first 4-5 steps.

***A perfect start should feel like you are going to fall on your face during the first two steps. That means you are directing all your power to propel your body forward. THINK ABOUT NOTHING ELSE BUT EXPLODING FORWARD AND STAYING LOW!***

### Accelerate to top speed:

After the first 4-5 steps, come up into your sprinting position with the goal of accelerating to the finish. Key things to focus on:

- Pump your arms as fast as you can, with all the power coming through your shoulder.
- Keep your elbows locked at 90-110 degrees with your hands relaxed. Your hands should move from your hip to your chin, making a “V” in front of your face. Practice this movement in the mirror, so you know how it feels.
- Drive your knees high.
- Stay on your toes and think about keeping your toes up when you drive your knees high.
- RELAX your upper body.

### PRO-AGILITY PERFECTED



Some coaches care more about the pro-agility or short-shuttle time than the 40-yard dash, because it reflects how well a player cuts and changes direction—two essential skills for every football player.

To execute a perfect pro-agility test:

- Place your feet shoulder-width apart, knees bent at about 45 degrees, and be on your toes in an athletic position. (Or start in a comfortable 3-point stance if required by the combine administrators.)
- Your push-off leg should be your strongest leg (if this is the right leg, you will start left).
- Keep the toes on your push-off leg pointed in towards your body’s mid-line to generate more power for your first step (in other words, “cheat” your foot position towards the direction you are going to move. If the combine tests you starting in both directions, practice switching your foot position and stance depending on the direction you want to go)

- On the first step, open up your hips as you push in one, coordinated movement, then think about getting your foot down quickly to make your next step. Your leg swing needs to move your foot from toe-off to toe-touch as quickly as possible.
- As you take the second step, your body should have turned by the time your foot hits the ground and be in position to accelerate towards the cones.
- When you change direction, try to plant both feet just inside the line. Stay low, plant your toes and generate as much power as possible in the opposite direction.
- Remember: your hand needs to touch the line as you make the cut, and if you plant your foot in the right spot, it will be easy to touch the line and accelerate the other way.
- Practice running the drill at half-speed, focusing on perfecting your cuts. As you gain confidence, up your speed to 75%, then 90%, then full speed.

Perfecting the cutting movement in BOTH directions will be the key to improving your time!

## VERTICAL JUMP



The vertical jump represents a player's explosive power.

Here are a few simple steps will help improve your leap:

- Don't double pump before you jump: it will NOT improve your jump results.
- Stand on your toes, feet about shoulder-width apart, knees slightly bent.
- Keeping your eyes on the target, quickly move down to about 60-degree knee flexion (not 90 degrees) and explode up. Use your downward momentum to the 60-degree flexion point as a springboard to help you explode

upwards. Don't hold your crouch position — a quick transition always results in a better jump.

- Practice timing your "stretch" to hit the target.
- Practice finding a starting position below the target that you find easiest to reach the target at the top of your jump.

To improve your jump height you MUST improve your ability to produce power. Athletic Republic's programs are designed to train the athlete to produce mega-power through resistance training, speed training and overall football conditioning.

© 2010 Athletic Republic. All rights reserved.