



Football Heat Acclimatization Guidelines

Week 1

July 22-26

No organized workouts; no pads; helmets only; conditioning & weightlifting only.

Week 2 Official start date and team selection (approved March 13, 2013)

July 29- Aug 3

Helmets only (no other pads on players); football specific workouts (without equipment) are permissible. X's and O's and chalk talks are permitted.

Week 3

Days 1 and 2 (Aug. 5-6)

Helmets only! (No other pads on players): football specific workouts without equipment are permissible. X's and O's and chalk talks are permitted.

Days 3-5 (August 7-9)

Helmets and Shoulder Pads only! Contact with blocking sleds and tackling dummies may be initiated.

Day 6 (August 10) 100% live contact drills may begin. Beginning on Day 6 and continuing through day 14, double-practice days MUST be followed by a single-practice day. On single practice days, one walk-through is permitted, separated from the practice by at least 3 hours of continuous rest. When a double-practice day is followed by a rest day, another double-practice day is permitted after the rest day.

On a double-practice day, neither practice should exceed 3 hours in duration nor should student-athletes participate in more than 5 total hours of practice. Warm up, stretching, cool down, walk-through, conditioning, and weight-room activities are included as part of the practice time. The two practices should be separated by at least 3 hours of continuous rest in a cool environment.

Definitions

Before participating in the preseason practice period, all student-athletes should undergo a pre-participation medical examination administered by a physician (MD or DO) or as required/approved by state law. The examination can identify predisposing factors related to a number of safety concerns, including the identification of youths at particular risk for exertional heat illness.

The heat-acclimatization period is defined as the initial 14 consecutive days of preseason practice for all student athletes. The goal of the acclimatization period is to enhance exercise heat tolerance and the ability to exercise safely and effectively in warm to hot conditions. This period should begin on the first day of practice or conditioning before the regular season. Any practices or conditioning conducted before this time should not be considered part of the heat-acclimatization period. Regardless of the conditioning program and conditioning status leading up to the first formal practice, all student athletes (including those who arrive at preseason practice after the first day of practice) should follow the 14-day heat-acclimatization plan. During the preseason heat acclimatization period, if practice occurs on 6 consecutive days, student-athletes should have 1 day of complete rest (no conditioning, walk-throughs, practices, etc).

Days on which athletes do not practice due to a scheduled rest day, injury, or illness do not count toward the heat-acclimatization period. For example, an athlete who sits out the third and fourth days of practice during this time (eg, Wednesday and Thursday) will resume practice as if on day 3 of the heat-acclimatization period when returning to play on Friday.

A *practice* is defined as the period of time a participant engages in a coach-supervised, school approved, sport or coaching related physical activity. Each individual practice should last no more than three (3) hours. Warm-up, stretching, and cool down activities are part of the 3-hour practice time. Regardless of ambient temperature conditions, all conditioning and weight-room activities should be considered part of practice.

A *walk-through* is defined as a teaching opportunity with the athletes not wearing protective equipment (eg, helmets, shoulder pads, catcher's gear, shin guards) or using other sport-related equipment (eg, footballs, lacrosse sticks, blocking sleds, pitching machines, soccer balls, marker cones). The walk-through is not part of the 3-hour practice period, can last no more than 1 hour per day, and does not include conditioning or weight-room activities.

A *recovery period* is defined as the time between the end of 1 practice or walk-through and the beginning of the next practice or walk-through. During this time, athletes should rest in a cool environment, with no sport- or conditioning related activity permitted (eg, speed or agility drills, strength training, conditioning, or walk-through). Treatment with the athletic trainer is permissible.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE 14-DAY HEAT ACCLIMATIZATION PERIOD

1. Days 1 through 5 of the heat-acclimatization period consist of the first 5 days of formal practice. During this time, athletes may not participate in more than one (1) practice per day.
2. If a practice is interrupted by inclement weather or heat restrictions, the practice should recommence once conditions are deemed safe. Total practice time should not exceed 3 hours in any one (1) day.
3. A 1-hour maximum walk-through is permitted during days 1–5 of the heat-acclimatization period; however, a 3-hour recovery period should be inserted between the practice and walk-through (or vice versa).
4. During days 1–2 of the heat-acclimatization period, in sports requiring helmets or shoulder pads, a helmet should be the only protective equipment permitted. During days 3–5, only helmets and shoulder pads should be worn. Beginning on day 6, all protective equipment may be worn and full contact may begin. A) On days 3–5, contact with blocking sleds and tackling dummies may be initiated. B) Full-contact sports: 100% live contact drills should begin no earlier than day 6.
5. Beginning no earlier than day 6 and continuing through day 14, double-practice days must be followed by a single-practice day. On single-practice days, 1 walk-through is permitted, separated from the practice by at least 3 hours of continuous rest. When a double-practice day is followed by a rest day, another double-practice day is permitted after the rest day.
6. On a double-practice day, neither practice should exceed 3 hours in duration, nor should student-athletes participate in more than 5 total hours of practice. Warm-up, stretching, cool-down, walk through, conditioning, and weight-room activities are included as part of the practice time. The two practices should be separated by at least 3 continuous hours in a cool environment.
7. Because the risk of exertional heat illnesses during the preseason heat-acclimatization period is high, we strongly recommend that an athletic trainer be on site before, during, and after all practices.