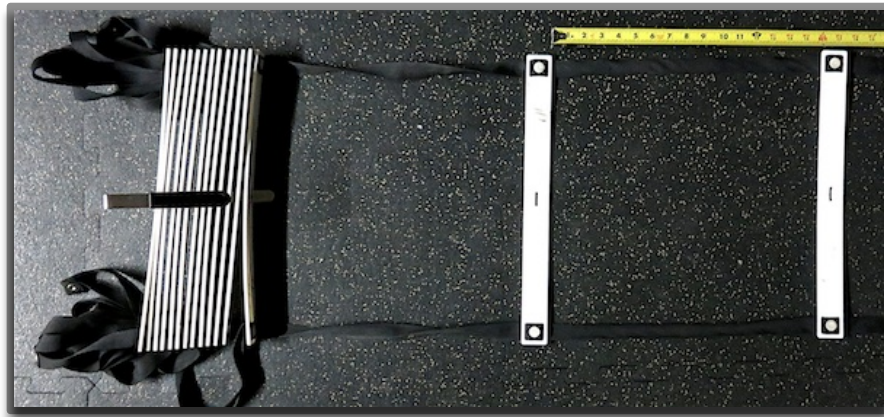


# ***“Speed/Agility Ladders”***



**Speed, Agility, & Quickness Drills:** “SAQ” drills are great for teaching proper running form and biomechanics. SAQ drills are also great for cardiovascular training. Some SAQ drills use cone markers and some use ladders or other equipment. But first, let’s define the SAQ terms.

- **Speed: “maximum velocity”** Speed takes time to develop. If you are running as fast as you can, it is going to take 4-6 seconds to build up to your maximum velocity. Most of the SAQ drills I use do not prioritize max speed as I focus more on agility and quickness.
- **Agility: “coordinated movement”** The more coordinated you are, the better you move, the safer you move, and the less likely you are to have an injury from moving badly. Agility is important for everyone whether athlete or a person who just wants to get through the day without falling or tripping. Most of my SAQ Agility drills focus on the feet as a priority.
- **Quickness: “explosiveness”** Think of quickness as “burst” or a rapid-fire movements that occur in very brief amounts of time. Sports require quickness and often in life we are forced to move quickly in an emergency.

**“Speed Ladders”** are often called *“agility ladders.”* These are special ladders designed to lay flat on the ground for foot training. They are simple and fun to use. Modern speed ladders use cross pieces called “rungs” that are made out of plastic that are similar to a flat ruler. The rungs are held together by flat webbing. This “low profile” removes most of the tripping hazard of having a ladder that sticks up into the air. You can also make your own by using sidewalk chalk on your patio, driveway, sidewalk, or an area of the street that is safe from cars. The ladder pictured and used in video has rungs 16” apart. Each rung is 17” wide.

**Foot Placement:** ALL SAQ drills including the ladder should use the front parts of your feet—also called the “balls of your feet.” You absorb shock better and move better from the front part of your feet. Stay light on the FRONT of your feet!

*Here are the sample drills we did in our Speed Ladder video demonstrations. Start slowly until you learn the patterns then you can increase speed and challenge. If you cannot do it well fast, just slow down and practice more.*

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# ***“Speed/Agility Ladders”***

- **Bunny Hops**
  - Keep feet together and hop into each square using balls of feet.
- **Both Feet In**
  - Step into each square one foot at a time so both feet are inside the square before you step into the next. Use one foot to lead all the way through then use the opposite foot to lead on the way back so both feet are used equally.
- **In-In/Out-Out**
  - Start with both feet split apart and outside of the square then put both feet inside the square then step both feet outside the square as you move up the ladder.
- **In-In/Out-Out (from side)**
  - Similar to previous drill but now you are standing on one side of the ladder and moving to your left or right instead of moving straight forward like the last drill. This drill is harder because you have to also move backwards and to the side for each square. Face the same direction on the way back so you use the other leg to lead.
- **In-In/Out-Out + Sprint Finish**
  - You can add a special finish to any of the drills, but on this one, just sprint straight off the end of the ladder as quickly as possible.
- **Single-Leg Hop**
  - You can go sideways like in our video or go directly down the ladder straight forward. There are lots of variations, but single leg hopping is great for feet, ankles, and balance.
- **Side Shuffle**
  - This is a more challenging drill because you are shuffling all the way across. Each time you cross the ladder, both feet must be in the same square then you put your one foot out while the inside foot stays inside the square. Return going back across the other way while you also work your way forward on the ladder. It's challenging but fun and has its own rhythm.
- **Creating Your Own!**
  - Take the fundamentals and create a new pattern or explore some YouTube videos on other patterns. The idea is to use your feet and body well to improve your Speed, Agility, and Quickness! 😊

**Purchase Link:** [First Place Agility Ladder] Here's a commercial ladder made by a good fitness company. It's 28' feet long and has 20 rungs.

- <https://www.performbetter.com/First-Place-Agility-Ladder>

**Demonstration Video:** <https://youtu.be/6ElbdNwuMFY>

**\*PE Content Standards:** Proper instruction and application of speed ladders for speed, agility, and quickness address all the PE standards of 1,2,3,4,5.

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