



Being a Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu ATHLETE

It has been a positive move forward in the realm of BJJ that the importance of strength and conditioning has been educated from people like us and the high level competitors as well. It has benefits in performance but also from an injury risk management side of things that us physical therapists are involved in. However, BJJ athletes are still ATHLETES. Strength training is just one piece of the puzzle when it comes to athleticism, and does not include ATHLETIC movements.. Below are some of the athletic patterns that should be included in your regimen to further improve performance and injury risk management on and off of the mat.



Linear Acceleration - How quickly an athlete can increase the speed of a movement. This is typically trained through short distance bursts of speed training from a forward lean position (ie. block start for a sprint event in track & field)

Benefits

- Explosiveness with your takedowns
- Increased rate of force development (how fast you can produce force)

Example

- 5 sets of 20 yards / 2-3 min rest / 90-100% effort





Change of Direction - A whole body movement with change in speed or direction of the movement. It can be more reactive in nature (agility) or pre-programmed.

Example

- Cross over stepping to linear acceleration: 2 sets x 5 reps x 5 yards in each direction / 30-60 sec rest
- Reactive side shuffle (verbal start): 2 sets x 5 reps x 5 yards / 30-60 sec rest

Benefits

- Improves transitions during takedowns/throws and defending takedowns and ability to maintain a strong base upon re-establishing your stance



Plyometrics - An exercise technique that aims to link speed and strength during fundamental movement patterns. The movement patterns include leaps (2 feet), bounds (1 foot to the other foot), and hops (1 foot to the same foot). What makes plyometrics special is that it is completely scalable and can be done with a light intensity (pogos) to highest intensity (depth jumps).

Example

- Forward leaps 2 sets x 10 yards
- Slalom bounds 2 sets x 10 yards
- Depth jump (20 in box) 3 sets x 3 reps

Benefits

- Improving quickness and tendon stiffness needed for fast transitions in different directions and different conditions
- Improving tendon strength to reduce risk of tendinitis (patellar, achilles, etc)



Throwing - Exercises that typically use medicine balls to improve full body power in different directions in different stances. We typically use 4-6lb medicine balls for horizontal throws and 8-10 medicine balls for vertical throws (also depends on body weight). The most important key to medicine ball throwing is how FAST you move the ball and not how heavy it is.

Example

- Standing rotational scoop toss to wall (4-6lb MB): 3 sets x 5 reps each
- Standing overhead throw (8-10lb MB): 3 sets x 5 reps

Benefits

- Linking your lower body to the upper body to create fluid transitions of movement
- Improve power with takedowns and throws

Just remember that the exercises do not have to look exactly like the movement you do in BJJ. That's not the point. We are trying to build the relevant qualities of movement by using **GENERAL** patterns to enhance your **SPECIFIC BJJ techniques** and movements.