

## RELAYS

A relay is a foot race that involves a team - usually four members - that each run a "leg" of the race. From my experience in track and field, a relay could be 440 or once around the track, or 1 mile or four times around the track.

During the Olympics, a monumental relay occurs over a large distance as the torch is passed from runner to runner culminating with the lighting of the Olympic torch. This

ceremony has historical significance, of course, with its origin dating back to the first recorded events in Greece.



The baton is usually made out of metal (aluminum) or plastic – it is very light-weight. A good relay team must have speed, of course, but also excellent exchange of the baton whereby each runner does not lose stride or speed during the hand-off. Needless to say, when an exchange goes bad so too does the whole relay, and in the worst case, can result in poor performance for even the fastest of runners. Among the exchanges:



1. A bad receiver or attempt to take the baton because the receiver is not paying attention, has not assumed his stride or does not extend his hand for the exchange



2. A willing and able receiver who is waiting patiently though realizing that the deliverer is not trying, has dropped his hand, or refuses to give up the baton for some unknown reason

3. A balance of delivery and receiving that is smooth, clean, and precise without breaking stride, stumbling or worst yet, dropping the baton

If you have had, or do have an opportunity to participate in a relay, do not attempt to throw the baton to the receiver – this is not a recognized form of exchange, though my high school 440-relay team attempted to do on one occasion.



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