

Electronic Start Usage Guide



2024 Track & Field

Updated March 10, 2024

Speaker Placement

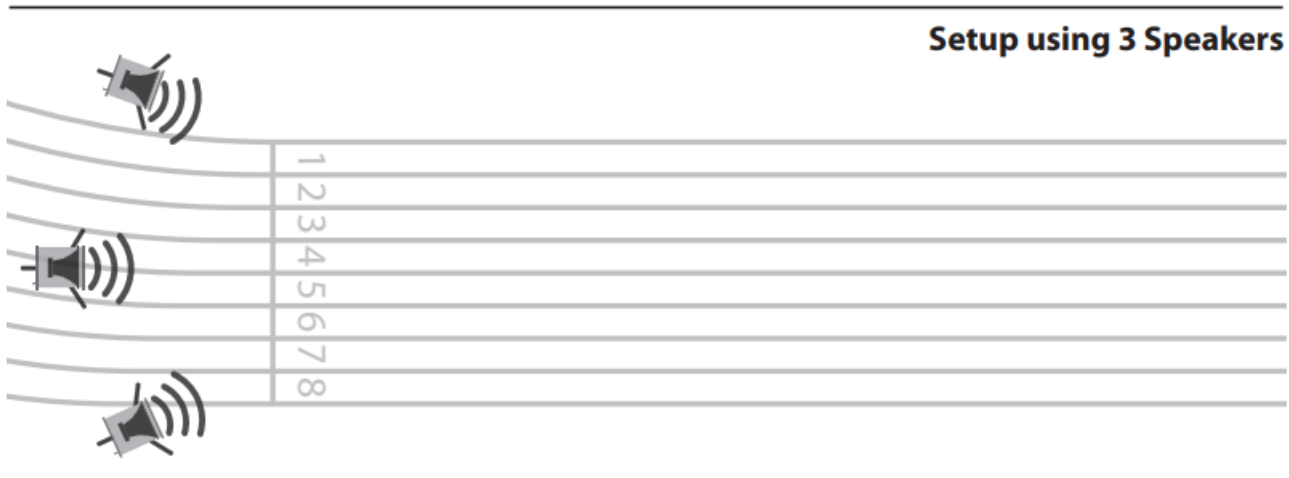
The locations of the speakers below are best practices that are recommended to be followed during the tournament and are suggested for the regular season. All of the examples below are two or three-speaker setups, as two speakers are the minimum needed to ensure all athletes hear the sound simultaneously.

The games committee may approve the movement of speakers based on the weather, technology limitations (corded vs. wireless), crowd noise, number of lanes, number of starters, number of speakers, etc. but should consult with the starters, FAT operator, and referee before making that decision.

Speakers should be placed approximately 10 ft from the starting line.

100MD, 100MH & 110MH

Setup using 3 Speakers



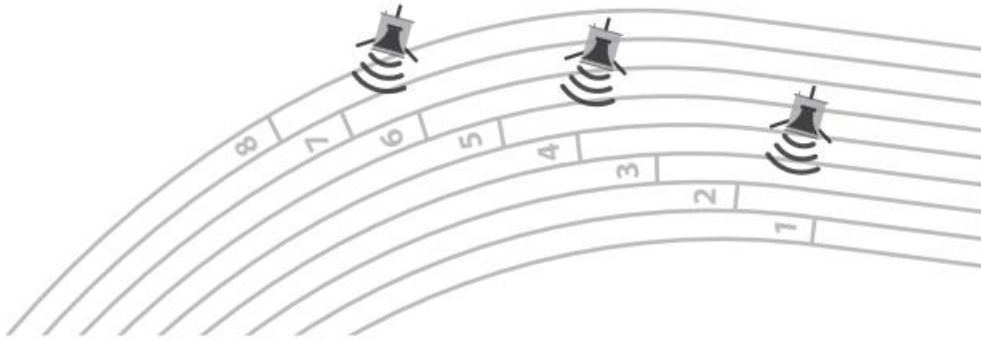
Setup using 2 Speakers



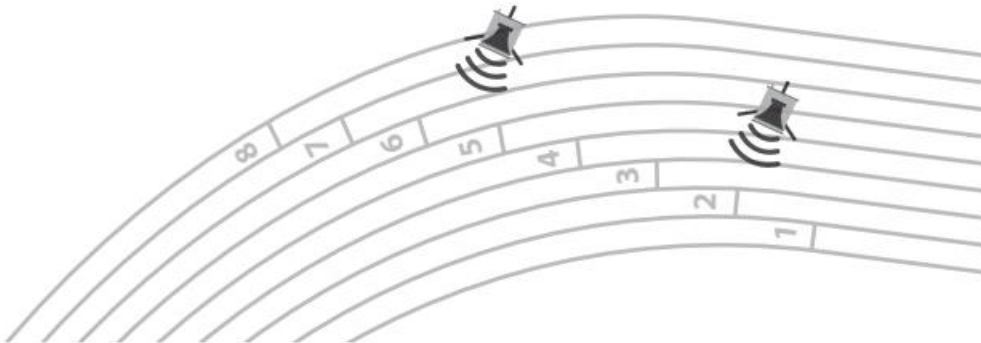
Speakers should be placed approximately 10 ft from the starting line.

200MD & 200MH

Setup using 3 Speakers

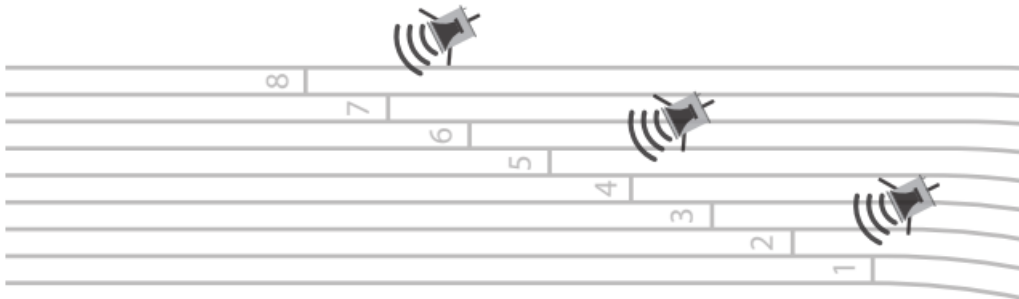


Setup using 2 Speakers



300MH

Set up using 3 speakers

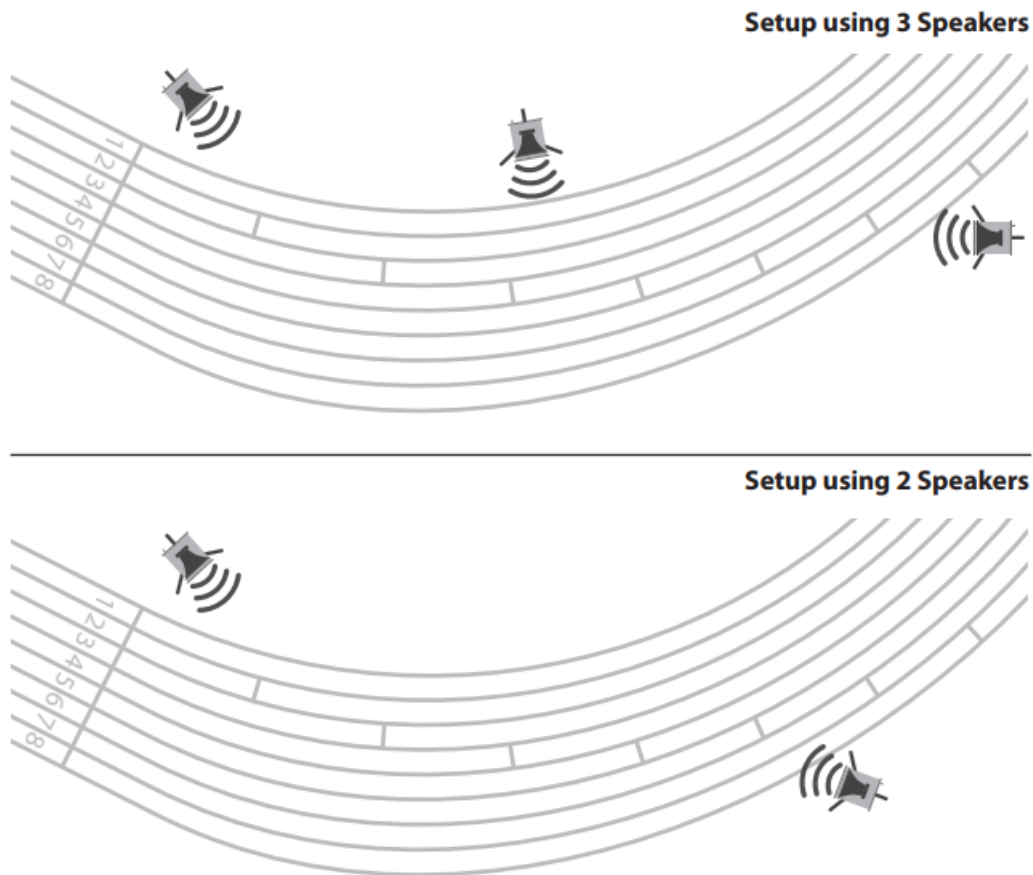


Setup using 2 Speakers



Speakers should be placed approximately 10 ft from the starting line.

All Races Using A Stagger Start Near The Common Start/Finish



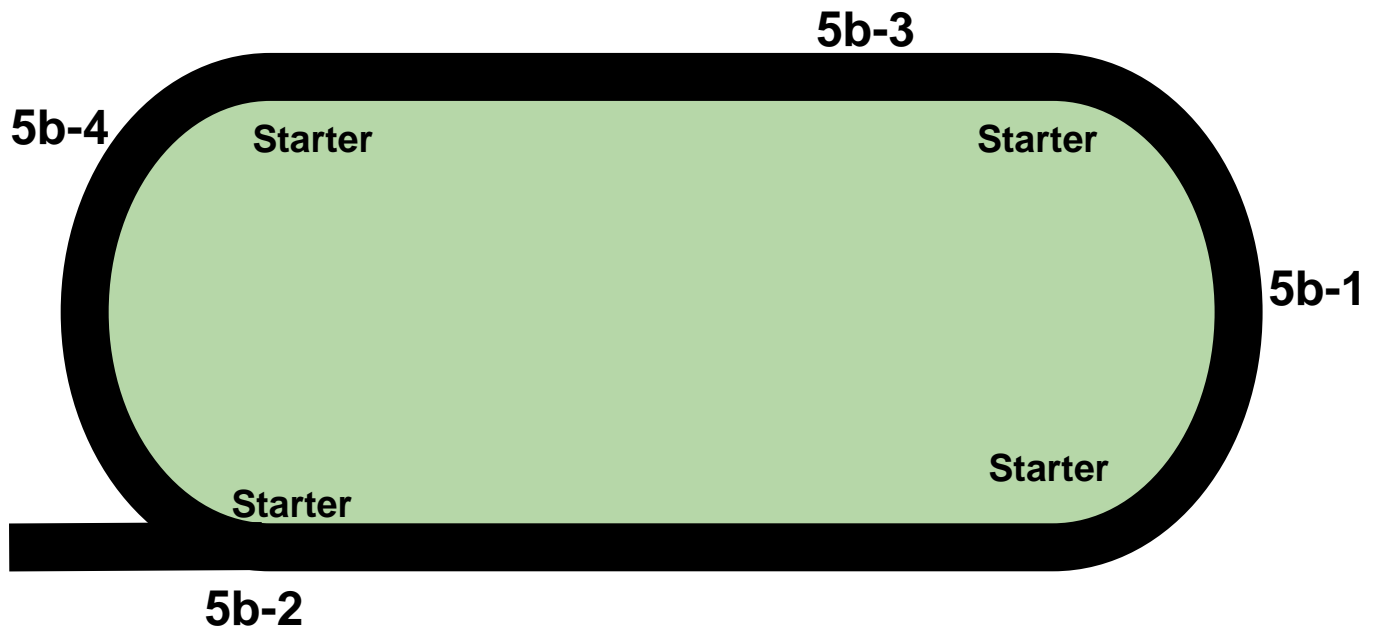
The above photo is a guide that should be followed for all races using a staggered start near the common start/finish line.

The second or second and third speakers should be shifted to the left (in the photo) for races with short staggers, decreasing the space between each. For races with larger staggers, the second or second and third speakers should be shifted to the right (in the photo), increasing the space between them.

Speakers should be placed approximately 10 ft from the sides of the track.

Alternate Speaker Placement Options

Below are other options for placement to consider when the above-mentioned placements cannot be accommodated. These options are a great alternative especially when the first speaker is wired and needs to be adjacent to the starter.



It's recommended that the "Starter" have the 'primary' speaker near the location noted on the map above. The secondary locations could be speakers set up before the meet that the starter plugs into or 'syncs' (Bluetooth) with once they go to that event. If advanced setup is not available, they should be moved and set up as quickly as possible so as not to delay the start of the event.

5b-1.) Parallel to lane six, approximately 10-15 feet outside the track.

5b-2.) Outside of the track by just a few feet, next to lane eight or nine, approximately 10-15 feet down from the start of the 100 m dash.

5b-3.) Parallel to lane six, approximately 10-15 feet outside the track for the start of the 300m hurdles.

5b-4.) Parallel to lane six, approximately 10-15 feet outside the track for the start of the 200m dash.

Approved Sound

The tone sound that is created by the electronic starting device is the only approved sound that can be used at the tournament level. It is recommended that this sound be used during all regular-season contests. The imitation gun sound CANNOT be used in the tournaments.

Before The Meet

- When electronic starting is going to be used during the regular season, and if a district site is going to be using it in 2024, all schools participating shall be notified of this in advance of the meet.
- The meet referee shall review the use of electronic starting during the coaches' meeting.
- Prior to the meeting, PA announcements shall be made several times, notifying everyone of its use. These PA announcements should include language notifying fans that the sounds may not be heard in the stands and that the devices are designed to direct the sound to athletes and recommending quiet at the starting line.
 - Sample PA Announcement: "Attention track and field fans, the officials assigned to today's meet will be using fully integrated electronic starting devices for our races today. The sound emanated from the speakers is directed to the athletes and, therefore, may not be heard in the stands. The electronic starting devices used today meet all NFHS competition regulations as well as OHSAA regulations related to the amplification of sound. The sound used today will be a tone similar to that used in swimming. Thank you for being quiet at the start of each race to help ensure fair competition."

Before The Race

Prior to the start of each event, starters shall test the sound for the athletes. This should be done consistently throughout the meet. If competitors for multiple events are gathered at the starting line, for example, the 100D and 100/110H, you can test the sound once for all of those athletes. If each event is brought to the line separately, the sound shall be tested for each event. It is estimated that this will add around 10 minutes to the length of the meet.

- This should be done at all regular season meets using electronic starting in 2024 & 2025 as well as all districts using the device in 2024.
- In 2025, this should be done at all regular season meets using the device and all district meets, but it does not need to be done at the regional or state level.

The Start, Recalls & “Gun Laps”

- The starter must ensure the speakers are positioned correctly prior to the start of each race.
- Starters **MUST** continue to use the “wheel” two-arm starting motions for all starts.
- As we adjust to the use of the tone, the starter **MUST** recall the race as an unfair start if an athlete fails to respond or reacts slowly.
- Starting in 2025, all recalls in the tournaments must be done with a second sounding of the electronic device or air horns. It is highly recommended this be done during the regular season. The official is responsible for purchasing air horns.
- Starting in 2025, all “Gun Laps” must be done with a bell or air horn during the tournaments. It is highly recommended for the regular season.

Testing The Device

Ensuring the starting device meets the required decibel readings (90 decibels at 15 ft) is the responsibility of meet management and should be done well in advance of the meet. Decibel reading devices are readily available for purchase and are the primary way to ensure the amplification is correct. The decibel test should be provided to meet management, either in person or a time-stamped video recording well in advance of the meet and done for each meet. The verification should be available on the day of the meet if needed by the referee.

Additional Notes

- We recognize that a mandatory shift to electronic starting at the tournaments in 2025 and a push to utilize them during the regular season when FAT is used is a dramatic shift for the sport in our state. We understand and recognize that changes may occur as technology advances. The adoption of electronic starting was made primarily because of an ongoing shortage of starting shells and the high costs for those that are available. The move to electronic starting also helps to drastically reduce the number of missed starts.
- Black powder shells will continue to be allowed and used during the regular season.
- The purchase and maintenance of electronic starting equipment is the responsibility of the FAT provider for our tournaments.
- Starters shall **NOT** utilize a separate system for sound amplification of starting commands as it may cause interference; they **MUST** utilize only the systems provided by the FAT providers.