

Training for Agility While Social Distancing
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At the time I'm writing this article, the country has been greatly affected by the COVID-19 pandemic with closures of fitness centers, recreation centers, and many sports seasons came to an abrupt ending or have been suspended indefinitely.

This has led many active people who used to go to the gym, their rec center, or their school, to get in their training. Stuck without their preferred option of working out, they are now looking quickly for at-home workout options.

I live in Minnesota, and my gym has been closed for nearly two weeks and looks to be closed for another 5 weeks. That is a big amount of time to fill in with at-home and outdoor workouts. I'm thankful I have some stuff at home to adapt my training goals to what I have at home.

However, today's athletes may or may not have ideal training tools at home. Adding to the challenge of working out for athletes is that many parks and fields have been closed. I work on a grounds crew at a school and we had to close off entrances and post signs that said they were "Closed until further notice".

I took a trip to Walmart the day before a stay-in-place order was executed in MN and ventured down the fitness aisle. Nearly every dumbbell was gone, as was a lot of home gym equipment. The one item I was looking for was a SPRI Agility Kit, sold for \$20. I was able to get the second to the last one on the shelf. It was a good assortment of agility items and includes a set of 6 hurdles, 6 cones and an agility ladder.

Having been a past sports coach, I know these items are great for setting up an assortment of speed and agility drills to do. For \$20, it is an inexpensive solution as well to help out a youth, high school, or college athlete with keeping up on the basics for conditioning.

Looking back at some of my past speed/agility programs I used to do with athletes, I used many items to develop speed and agility drill circuits for small groups I used to train privately.

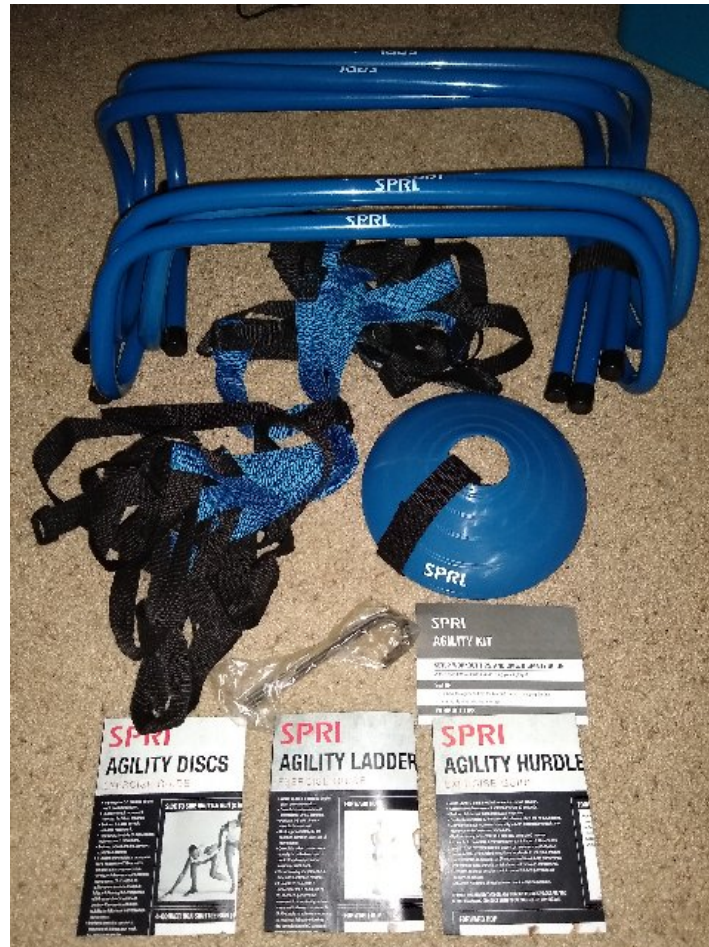
This article will help give athletes an inexpensive solution by using the items in the Agility Kit I purchased. If you already have some of these items, you can easily adapt the plans with your own choices of exercises to use.

Let's take a look at what the Agility Kit has to offer, and what exercises can be done with each.

First, it all comes in a box for you, and all the items fit into their own carry-all bag.



All of the items can be grouped together with straps that are included in the kit, as well as having three small drill sheets for each item. There are six drills showcased for each item, for 18 drills total to choose from.



6 Hurdles: Hurdle drills can offer a wide variety of options to you, depending on the space you have to work with. You don't need all six hurdles, you can just use two or three in a small footprint as well. Things like high knee drills, straddle drills and shuffling drills help you keep driving and balancing on the balls of your feet.

6 Cones: Cone drills are plenty as well, as you can use as few as two or as many as six to spread out. Cone drills are usually best on grassy areas if your sport is on grass, or on courts such as basketball or volleyball. It can be done on concrete, such as in a driveway, but keep it limited as concrete is tougher on the body with less give. In this time of staying-at-home though, driveways, parking lots of apartments, or concrete courtyards of a nearby park might be your only option. Overall, cone drills can be used for many small or large distances, such as short dashes or agility drills like cornering, pivoting and turning at many angles.

Agility Ladder: The agility ladder also takes up a small footprint for you. Similar to hurdle drills, you work on footwork patterns in a ladder formation laid out on the ground. This also helps with balance and coordination of movements and allows you to work at high intensities in a small amount of time and distance. This ladder doesn't have hard slats like other ladders may have. What is nice with this set is that there are four ground pegs to help secure your ladder for grass drills.

For the kit itself, it is a nice basic set of tools for not a lot of money. It doesn't take up a lot of space and can easily be carried in its own bag, or hauled in a backpack for a couple items like the ladder and cones.

One other small addition I would suggest to complement these items is a Jump Rope. Jump Ropes offer one more high intensity option if you wanted to do another exercise in a small space. They are also inexpensive as they are usually \$5 to \$10, depending on what you desire in a jump rope. Usually the more expensive ones have weighted handles or steel cables as the rope. A jump rope can work well as its own station in a circuit of speed and agility tools, or as a standalone workout by itself.

My suggested time frames to do these drills for basic conditioning are 15 to 20 seconds in length, with 40-45 seconds of rest between. To keep it simple, go every minute with a drill, such as 15 seconds work, with 45 seconds rest, or 20 seconds of work with 40 seconds rest. It is a simple format to follow and it simulates a 1:2 or 1:3 work to rest ratio of efforts that are common in most sports.

If you were to do all six drills in the workout sheets per exercise, this would give you an 18 minute workout to do. Take a break between and do another full circuit to about a 40 minute time span to get in some conditioning.

In closing, if you are looking for an inexpensive solution to get in some performance training in your backyard or with a neighborhood friend as a fun workout to do together, I'd check out this inexpensive package of tools to get and create your own workout circuit.

If you are unable to get to a Walmart near you, you can order one online here:

<https://www.walmart.com/ip/SPRI-Agility-Kit/598847489>

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