



Spike naming convention

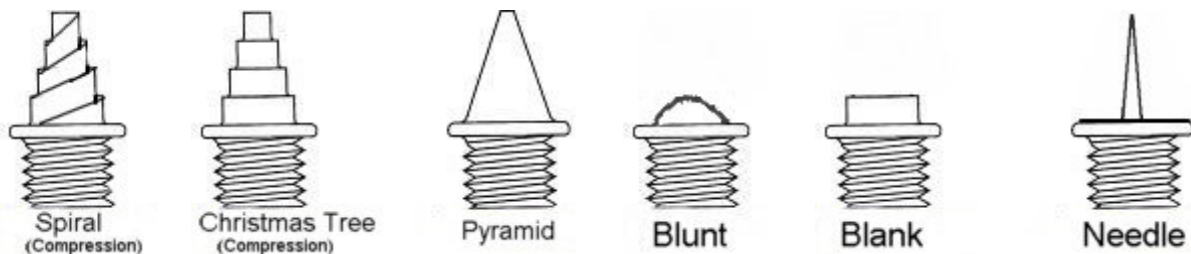
Over the last few National Championships there has been some confusion about what type of spike can and cant be used. This document was created to standardize the naming of spikes in Queensland and hopefully Australia, and to get athletes, coaches & officials all on the same page.

Firstly Christmas tree spikes and Spiral spikes are not the same, neither are Pyramid and Needle spikes.

Spiral spikes are rarely seen in Australia so having them banned on most synthetic tracks should not be an issue.

Christmas Tree spikes however are the most popular spikes for synthetic track so you can understand the confusion when officials start using the wrong name.

Below I have put together images of the spikes for reference and a short spiel on there uses, I hope this helps.



There are definite advantages and disadvantages to using each type of spike. In terms of grip or traction, the pyramid and needle are superior as the spikes will pierce the track and sink in further. This is because the tips of these spikes are much narrower.

Still, in terms of absolute performance as measured in race times, the Christmas tree or compression spike is still the better sprinting spike. The reason is a simple matter of energy return. The Christmas tree design has a much flatter end than the other spikes, and therefore is less likely to penetrate the surface of the track. As a result, the maximum amount of spring force is retained, meaning the track pushes the runner out harder and faster returning more energy. The only concern with this shape is that it can break more easily.

Traction loss of the Christmas tree spike is not a major concern, because they still sink into rubber based synthetic track surfaces enough to provide ample grip, even on tight turns and in damp conditions. For polyurethane tracks (normally blue not red) the surface is harder and does not return the same energy. For these tracks you may need to use a needle spike.



* **Blanks** - Also called "Studs". They have no spike on them. They are used to fill the holes in the bottom of your shoe to stop them filling up with dirt & so you can use your light weight shoe across more of an event range, for indoor tracks and cross country.

* **Blunts** – Can be also called "Studs". They have none or very little spike on them. They look like they have been worn down badly. Like blanks they are used for indoor tracks and cross country.

* **Christmas tree** - Also called Compression spikes. Best choice for sprinting, used for rubber based synthetic surfaces. 7mm for track, 9mm for field. For javelin most have 9mm front & 12mm Pyramid rear.

* **Spiral** - Also a Compression spike. Not normally seen in Australia. Tends to have sharp edges and cuts the track. Best not to use these spikes.

* **Needle** - Also called "Pins". Needle spikes give traction on all types of synthetic tracks. 7mm is the ideal size, any larger and they tend to stick into the track when you lift your foot. Not a good choice for grass tracks.

* **Pyramid** – Can be used on most synthetic tracks – mainly used for dirt or grass surfaces as well as cross country. Normal spike rules apply 7mm for track 9mm field should be enough for any surface except grass javelin runways, use 12mm or 16mm.

Most synthetic tracks in Australia follow the IAAF spike rule, however some event organizers have their own requirements so it is wise to check with officials & carry extra spikes just in case you need to change them.

To be safe we recommend you use the following table and you should be fine.

- Up to 7mm for synthetic track
- Up to 9mm for synthetic field
- Up to 12mm for grass track & field