

Seventh Edition

Basic
Biomechanics

Susan J. Hall

BASIC BIOMECHANICS

SEVENTH EDITION

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College of Health Sciences
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BASIC BIOMECHANICS, SEVENTH EDITION

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BRIEF CONTENTS

1	What Is Biomechanics?	1
2	Kinematic Concepts for Analyzing Human Motion	27
3	Kinetic Concepts for Analyzing Human Motion	59
4	The Biomechanics of Human Bone Growth and Development	85
5	The Biomechanics of Human Skeletal Articulations	115
6	The Biomechanics of Human Skeletal Muscle	143
7	The Biomechanics of the Human Upper Extremity	179
8	The Biomechanics of the Human Lower Extremity	223
9	The Biomechanics of the Human Spine	267
10	Linear Kinematics of Human Movement	309
11	Angular Kinematics of Human Movement	345
12	Linear Kinetics of Human Movement	373
13	Equilibrium and Human Movement	409
14	Angular Kinetics of Human Movement	443
15	Human Movement in a Fluid Medium	469

Appendices

A	Basic Mathematics and Related Skills	499
B	Trigonometric Functions	504
C	Common Units of Measurement	507
D	Anthropometric Parameters for the Human Body	508

Glossary 511

Index 519

CONTENTS

1	What Is Biomechanics?	1
	Biomechanics: Definition and Perspective	2
	What Problems Are Studied by Biomechanists?	4
	Why Study Biomechanics?	10
	Problem-Solving Approach	11
	Quantitative versus Qualitative Problems	11
	Solving Qualitative Problems	11
	Formal versus Informal Problems	13
	Solving Formal Quantitative Problems	13
	Units of Measurement	14
	Summary	16
	Introductory Problems	16
	Additional Problems	17
	Laboratory Experiences	19
2	Kinematic Concepts for Analyzing Human Motion	27
	Forms of Motion	28
	Linear Motion	28
	Angular Motion	28
	General Motion	29
	Mechanical Systems	29
	Standard Reference Terminology	30
	Anatomical Reference Position	30
	Directional Terms	31
	Anatomical Reference Planes	32
	Anatomical Reference Axes	32
	Joint Movement Terminology	35
	Sagittal Plane Movements	35
	Frontal Plane Movements	36
	Transverse Plane Movements	38
	Other Movements	38
	Spatial Reference Systems	40
	Analyzing Human Movement	40
	Prerequisite Knowledge for a Qualitative Analysis	41
	Planning a Qualitative Analysis	42
	Conducting a Qualitative Analysis	45
	Tools for Measuring Kinematic Quantities	48
	Video and Film	48
	Other Movement-Monitoring Systems	49
	Summary	49
	Introductory Problems	50
	Additional Problems	51
	Laboratory Experiences	53

3 Kinetic Concepts for Analyzing Human Motion 59

Basic Concepts Related to Kinetics	60
Inertia	60
Mass	61
Force	61
Center of Gravity	62
Weight	62
Pressure	64
Volume	64
Density	66
Torque	66
Impulse	67
Mechanical Loads on the Human Body	68
Compression, Tension, and Shear	68
Mechanical Stress	69
Torsion, Bending, and Combined Loads	70
The Effects of Loading	71
Repetitive versus Acute Loads	72
Tools for Measuring Kinetic Quantities	73
Vector Algebra	73
Vector Composition	74
Vector Resolution	75
Graphic Solution of Vector Problems	76
Trigonometric Solution of Vector Problems	76
Summary	78
Introductory Problems	78
Additional Problems	79
Laboratory Experiences	81

4 The Biomechanics of Human Bone Growth and Development 85

Composition and Structure of Bone Tissue	86
Material Constituents	86
Structural Organization	86
Types of Bones	88
Bone Growth and Development	90
Longitudinal Growth	90
Circumferential Growth	90
Adult Bone Development	91
Bone Response to Stress	91
Bone Modeling and Remodeling	91
Bone Hypertrophy	93
Bone Atrophy	94
Osteoporosis	96
Postmenopausal and Age-Associated Osteoporosis	96
Female Athlete Triad	97
Preventing and Treating Osteoporosis	98
Common Bone Injuries	99
The Biomechanics of Bone Fractures	99
Epiphyseal Injuries	101

Summary	102
Introductory Problems	102
Additional Problems	103
Laboratory Experiences	105

5 The Biomechanics of Human Skeletal Articulations 115

Joint Architecture	116
Immovable Joints	116
Slightly Movable Joints	116
Freely Movable Joints	117
Articular Cartilage	119
Articular Fibrocartilage	120
Articular Connective Tissue	121
Joint Stability	121
Shape of the Articulating Bone Surfaces	121
Arrangement of Ligaments and Muscles	122
Other Connective Tissues	123
Joint Flexibility	123
Measuring Joint Range of Motion	124
Factors Influencing Joint Flexibility	124
Flexibility and Injury	125
Techniques for Increasing Joint Flexibility	126
Neuromuscular Response to Stretch	126
Active and Passive Stretching	128
Ballistic, Static, and Dynamic Stretching	129
Proprioceptive Neuromuscular Facilitation	130
Common Joint Injuries and Pathologies	131
Sprains	131
Dislocations	132
Bursitis	132
Arthritis	132
Rheumatoid Arthritis	132
Osteoarthritis	132
Summary	133
Introductory Problems	134
Additional Problems	134
Laboratory Experiences	137

6 The Biomechanics of Human Skeletal Muscle 143

Behavioral Properties of the Musculotendinous Unit	144
Extensibility and Elasticity	144
Irritability and the Ability to Develop Tension	145
Structural Organization of Skeletal Muscle	145
Muscle Fibers	146
Motor Units	149
Fiber Types	150
Fiber Architecture	152
Skeletal Muscle Function	154
Recruitment of Motor Units	155

Change in Muscle Length with Tension Development	156
Roles Assumed by Muscles	156
Two-Joint and Multijoint Muscles	158
Factors Affecting Muscular Force Generation	159
Force–Velocity Relationship	159
Length–Tension Relationship	160
Stretch–Shortening Cycle	161
Electromyography	161
Electromechanical Delay	162
Muscular Strength, Power, and Endurance	163
Muscular Strength	163
Muscular Power	165
Muscular Endurance	167
Muscle Fatigue	167
Effect of Muscle Temperature	168
Common Muscle Injuries	168
Strains	168
Contusions	169
Cramps	169
Delayed-Onset Muscle Soreness	169
Compartment Syndrome	169
Summary	170
Introductory Problems	170
Additional Problems	171
Laboratory Experiences	173

7 The Biomechanics of the Human Upper Extremity 179

Structure of the Shoulder	180
Sternoclavicular Joint	180
Acromioclavicular Joint	180
Coracoclavicular Joint	181
Glenohumeral Joint	181
Scapulothoracic Joint	183
Bursae	183
Movements of the Shoulder Complex	184
Muscles of the Scapula	185
Muscles of the Glenohumeral Joint	185
Flexion at the Glenohumeral Joint	188
Extension at the Glenohumeral Joint	188
Abduction at the Glenohumeral Joint	188
Adduction at the Glenohumeral Joint	188
Medial and Lateral Rotation of the Humerus	189
Horizontal Adduction and Abduction at the Glenohumeral Joint	190
Loads on the Shoulder	191
Common Injuries of the Shoulder	194
Dislocations	194
Rotator Cuff Damage	194
Rotational Injuries	195
Subscapular Neuropathy	196

Structure of the Elbow	196
Humeroulnar Joint	196
Humeroradial Joint	196
Proximal Radioulnar Joint	197
Carrying Angle	197
Movements at the Elbow	197
Muscles Crossing the Elbow	197
Flexion and Extension	197
Pronation and Supination	199
Loads on the Elbow	200
Common Injuries of the Elbow	202
Sprains and Dislocations	202
Overuse Injuries	202
Structure of the Wrist	204
Movements of the Wrist	205
Flexion	205
Extension and Hyperextension	206
Radial and Ulnar Deviation	206
Structure of the Joints of the Hand	207
Carpometacarpal and Intermetacarpal Joints	207
Metacarpophalangeal Joints	208
Interphalangeal Joints	208
Movements of the Hand	208
Common Injuries of the Wrist and Hand	209
Summary	212
Introductory Problems	212
Additional Problems	213
Laboratory Experiences	215

8 The Biomechanics of the Human Lower Extremity 223

Structure of the Hip	224
Movements at the Hip	225
Muscles of the Hip	225
Flexion	226
Extension	227
Abduction	228
Adduction	228
Medial and Lateral Rotation of the Femur	229
Horizontal Abduction and Adduction	229
Loads on the Hip	230
Common Injuries of the Hip	231
Fractures	231
Contusions	232
Strains	232
Structure of the Knee	232
Tibiofemoral Joint	232
Menisci	233
Ligaments	234
Patellofemoral Joint	235
Joint Capsule and Bursae	235

Movements at the Knee	235
Muscles Crossing the Knee	235
Flexion and Extension	236
Rotation and Passive Abduction and Adduction	237
Patellofemoral Joint Motion	238
Loads on the Knee	238
Forces at the Tibiofemoral Joint	238
Forces at the Patellofemoral Joint	239
Common Injuries of the Knee and Lower Leg	239
Anterior Cruciate Ligament Injuries	239
Posterior Cruciate Ligament Injuries	242
Medial Collateral Ligament Injuries	242
Meniscus Injuries	243
Iliotibial Band Friction Syndrome	243
Patellofemoral Pain Syndrome	243
Shin Splints	244
Structure of the Ankle	244
Movements at the Ankle	245
Structure of the Foot	247
Subtalar Joint	248
Tarsometatarsal and Intermetatarsal Joints	248
Metatarsophalangeal and Interphalangeal Joints	248
Plantar Arches	248
Movements of the Foot	249
Muscles of the Foot	249
Toe Flexion and Extension	250
Inversion and Eversion	250
Pronation and Supination	250
Loads on the Foot	250
Common Injuries of the Ankle and Foot	251
Ankle Injuries	251
Overuse Injuries	252
Alignment Anomalies of the Foot	252
Injuries Related to High and Low Arch Structures	253
Summary	255
Introductory Problems	255
Additional Problems	256
Laboratory Experiences	257

9 The Biomechanics of the Human Spine 267

Structure of the Spine	268
Vertebral Column	268
Vertebrae	269
Intervertebral Discs	270
Ligaments	274
Spinal Curves	275
Movements of the Spine	277
Flexion, Extension, and Hyperextension	278
Lateral Flexion and Rotation	278

- Muscles of the Spine 279
 - Anterior Aspect 279
 - Posterior Aspect 282
 - Lateral Aspect 284
- Loads on the Spine 286
- Common Injuries of the Back and Neck 292
 - Low Back Pain 292
 - Soft-Tissue Injuries 294
 - Acute Fractures 294
 - Stress Fractures 295
 - Disc Herniations 296
 - Whiplash Injuries 297
- Summary 297
- Introductory Problems 297
- Additional Problems 298
- Laboratory Experiences 299

10 Linear Kinematics of Human Movement 309

- Linear Kinematic Quantities 310
 - Distance and Displacement 311
 - Speed and Velocity 312
- Acceleration 317
 - Average and Instantaneous Quantities 320
- Kinematics of Projectile Motion 321
 - Horizontal and Vertical Components 321
 - Influence of Gravity 322
 - Influence of Air Resistance 323
- Factors Influencing Projectile Trajectory 323
 - Projection Angle 324
 - Projection Speed 325
 - Relative Projection Height 326
 - Optimum Projection Conditions 327
- Analyzing Projectile Motion 329
 - Equations of Constant Acceleration 331
- Summary 336
- Introductory Problems 336
- Additional Problems 337
- Laboratory Experiences 339

11 Angular Kinematics of Human Movement 345

- Observing the Angular Kinematics of Human Movement 346
- Measuring Angles 346
 - Joint Angles and Body Segment Orientations 346
 - Tools for Measuring Body Angles 348
 - Instant Center of Rotation 349
- Angular Kinematic Relationships 350
 - Angular Distance and Displacement 350
 - Angular Speed and Velocity 352
 - Angular Acceleration 357
 - Angular Motion Vectors 359
 - Average versus Instantaneous Angular Quantities 359

Relationships Between Linear and Angular Motion	359
Linear and Angular Displacement	359
Linear and Angular Velocity	360
Linear and Angular Acceleration	362
Summary	365
Introductory Problems	366
Additional Problems	367
Laboratory Experiences	369
12 Linear Kinetics of Human Movement	373
Newton's Laws	374
Law of Inertia	374
Law of Acceleration	374
Law of Reaction	375
Law of Gravitation	377
Mechanical Behavior of Bodies in Contact	379
Friction	379
Momentum	384
Impulse	387
Impact	389
Work, Power, and Energy Relationships	392
Work	392
Power	393
Energy	393
Conservation of Mechanical Energy	395
Principle of Work and Energy	396
Summary	399
Introductory Problems	399
Additional Problems	400
Laboratory Experiences	403
13 Equilibrium and Human Movement	409
Equilibrium	410
Torque	410
Resultant Joint Torques	413
Levers	416
Anatomical Levers	419
Equations of Static Equilibrium	422
Equations of Dynamic Equilibrium	423
Center of Gravity	425
Locating the Center of Gravity	426
Locating the Human Body Center of Gravity	427
Stability and Balance	431
Summary	433
Introductory Problems	433
Additional Problems	434
Laboratory Experiences	437
14 Angular Kinetics of Human Movement	443
Resistance to Angular Acceleration	444
Moment of Inertia	444

- Determining Moment of Inertia 446
- Human Body Moment of Inertia 447
- Angular Momentum 448
 - Conservation of Angular Momentum 450
 - Transfer of Angular Momentum 451
 - Change in Angular Momentum 454
- Angular Analogues of Newton's Laws of Motion 458
 - Newton's First Law 458
 - Newton's Second Law 458
 - Newton's Third Law 458
- Centripetal Force 459
- Summary 461
- Introductory Problems 462
- Additional Problems 462
- Laboratory Experiences 465

15 Human Movement in a Fluid Medium 469

- The Nature of Fluids 470
 - Relative Motion 470
 - Laminar versus Turbulent Flow 472
 - Fluid Properties 472
- Buoyancy 473
 - Characteristics of the Buoyant Force 473
 - Flotation 473
 - Flotation of the Human Body 474
- Drag 474
 - Skin Friction 477
 - Form Drag 478
 - Wave Drag 481
- Lift Force 482
 - Foil Shape 483
 - Magnus Effect 484
- Propulsion in a Fluid Medium 488
 - Propulsive Drag Theory 488
 - Propulsive Lift Theory 489
 - Stroke Technique 489
- Summary 490
- Introductory Problems 491
- Additional Problems 491
- Laboratory Experiences 493

Appendices

- A Basic Mathematics and Related Skills 499**
- B Trigonometric Functions 504**
- C Common Units of Measurement 507**
- D Anthropometric Parameters for the Human Body 508**

Glossary 511

Index 519

P R E F A C E

The seventh edition of *Basic Biomechanics* has been significantly updated and redesigned from the previous edition. As the interdisciplinary field of biomechanics grows in both breadth and depth, it is important that even introductory textbooks reflect the nature of the science. Accordingly, the text has been revised, expanded, and updated, with the objectives being to present relevant information from recent research findings and to prepare students to *analyze* human biomechanics.

The approach taken remains an integrated balance of qualitative and quantitative examples, applications, and problems designed to illustrate the principles discussed. The seventh edition also retains the important sensitivity to the fact that some beginning students of biomechanics possess weak backgrounds in mathematics. For this reason, it includes numerous sample problems and applications, along with practical advice on approaching quantitative problems.

ORGANIZATION

Each chapter follows a logical and readable format, with the introduction of new concepts consistently accompanied by practical human movement examples and applications from across the life span and across sport, clinical, and daily living activities.

NEW CONTENT HIGHLIGHTS

New content has been added to provide updated scientific information on relevant topics. All chapters have been revised to incorporate the latest information from the biomechanics research literature, and numerous new sport and clinical applications and examples are included. Topics added or expanded include barefoot running and running economy, stretching and performance, bone health and space flight, the golf swing, ACL injuries, muscle fatigue, and swimming technique.

Balanced Coverage

The former Biomechanics Academy of AAHPERD recommended that undergraduate students in biomechanics devote approximately one-third of study time to anatomical considerations, one-third to mechanical considerations, and the remainder to applications. The integrated approach to coverage of these areas taken in previous editions is continued in this seventh edition.

Applications Oriented

All chapters in this new edition contain discussion of a broad range of updated human movement applications, many of which are taken from the recent biomechanics research literature. Special emphasis has been placed on examples that span all ages and address clinical and daily living issues, as well as sport applications.

Laboratory Experiences

The integrated laboratory manual appears at the end of each chapter with references to simulations on the text's Online Learning Center. The soft-cover design with perforation allows laboratory manual pages to be completed and turned in to instructors.

Integrated Technology

Technology is integrated throughout the text, with an Online Learning Center box appearing on every chapter-opening page and directing students to resources online, while lists of related websites at the end of each chapter offer pertinent sources to students. Problems and laboratory experiences are incorporated throughout the text and updated to reference the Online Learning Center.

The seventh edition of *Basic Biomechanics* can be bundled (for a small additional price) with *MaxTRAQ*[™] software. MaxTRAQ is a downloadable motion analysis software that offers an easy-to-use tool to track data and analyze various motion elected by the authors. The MaxTRAQ software includes video clips of motions such as golf swing and gait, 2D manual tracking, coverage of distance and angles—and more!

Visit www.mhhe.com/hall7e for more information about the MaxTRAQ software.

PEDAGOGICAL FEATURES

In addition to the sample problems, problem sets, laboratory experiences, Online Learning Center boxes, end-of-chapter key terms lists, and lists of websites, the book contains other pedagogical features from previous editions. These include **key concepts, marginal definitions, sample problems, chapter summaries, introductory and additional problems, references, and appendices.**

ANCILLARIES

Online Learning Center

www.mhhe.com/hall7e

This website offers resources to students and instructors as well as a link to the MaxTRAQ motion analysis software. It includes downloadable ancillaries, student quizzing, additional student exercises and much more.

Resources for the instructor include:

- Downloadable PowerPoint presentations with annotated lecture notes
- Instructor's manual, originally developed by Darla Smith, faculty emerita, University of Texas at El Paso
- Test bank available as downloadable word files and through EZ Test Online, which allows instructors to create and print a test or create and deliver an online and printed (Word or PDF) test.

- Interactive links
- Online laboratory manual with simulations—Image library

Resources for the student include:

- Downloadable PowerPoint presentations
- Self-grading quizzes
- Online laboratory manual with simulations

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Susan J. Hall

*Deputy Dean,
College of Health Sciences
University of Delaware*



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1

What Is Biomechanics?

After completing this chapter, you will be able to:

Define the terms *biomechanics*, *statics*, *dynamics*, *kinematics*, and *kinetics*, and explain the ways in which they are related.

Describe the scope of scientific inquiry addressed by biomechanists.

Distinguish between qualitative and quantitative approaches for analyzing human movement.

Explain how to formulate questions for qualitative analysis of human movement.

Use the 11 steps identified in the chapter to solve formal problems.

ONLINE LEARNING CENTER RESOURCES

www.mhhe.com/hall7e

Log on to our Online Learning Center (OLC) for access to these additional resources:

- Online Lab Manual
- Flashcards with definitions of chapter key terms
- Chapter objectives
- Chapter lecture PowerPoint presentation
- Self-scoring chapter quiz
- Additional chapter resources
- Web links for study and exploration of chapter-related topics



Learning to walk is an ambitious task from a biomechanical perspective.
Ariel Skelley/Getty Images.

- *Courses in anatomy, physiology, mathematics, physics, and engineering provide background knowledge for biomechanists.*

biomechanics

application of mechanical principles in the study of living organisms

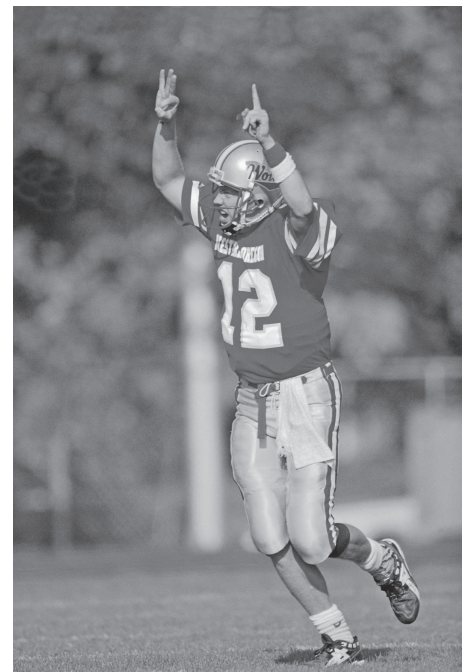
Anthropometric characteristics may predispose an athlete to success in one sport and yet be disadvantageous for participation in another. (Both photos) Royalty-Free/CORBIS.

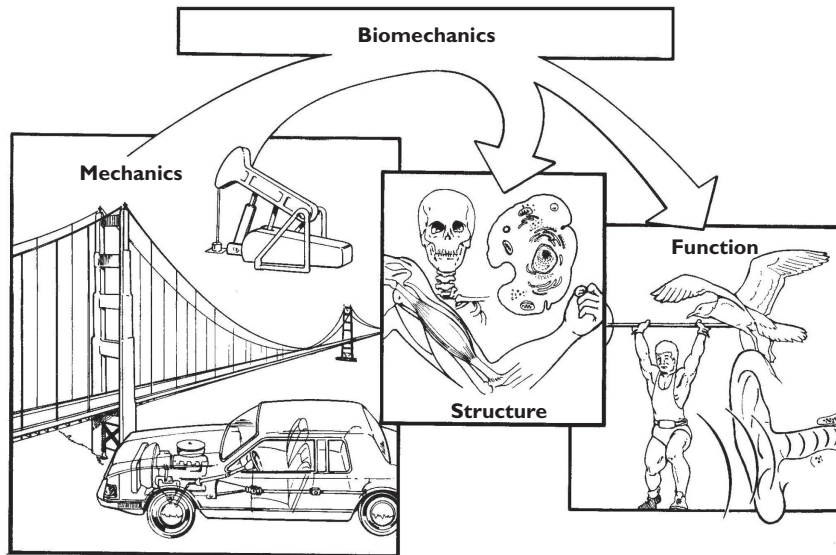
Why do some golfers slice the ball? How can workers avoid developing low back pain? What cues can a physical education teacher provide to help students learn the underhand volleyball serve? Why do some elderly individuals tend to fall? We have all admired the fluid, graceful movements of highly skilled performers in various sports. We have also observed the awkward first steps of a young child, the slow progress of an injured person with a walking cast, and the hesitant, uneven gait of an elderly person using a cane. Virtually every activity class includes a student who seems to acquire new skills with utmost ease and a student who trips when executing a jump or misses the ball when attempting to catch, strike, or serve. What enables some individuals to execute complex movements so easily, while others appear to have difficulty with relatively simple movement skills?

Although the answers to these questions may be rooted in physiological, psychological, or sociological issues, the problems identified are all biomechanical in nature. This book will provide a foundation for identifying, analyzing, and solving problems related to the biomechanics of human movement.

BIOMECHANICS: DEFINITION AND PERSPECTIVE

The term *biomechanics* combines the prefix *bio*, meaning “life,” with the field of *mechanics*, which is the study of the actions of forces. The international community of scientists adopted the term *biomechanics* during the early 1970s to describe the science involving the study of the mechanical aspects of living organisms. Within the fields of kinesiology and exercise science, the living organism most commonly of interest is the human body. The forces studied include both the internal forces produced by muscles and the external forces that act on the body.



**FIGURE 1-1**

Biomechanics uses the principles of mechanics for solving problems related to the structure and function of living organisms.

Biomechanists use the tools of **mechanics**, the branch of physics involving analysis of the actions of forces, to study the anatomical and functional aspects of living organisms (Figure 1-1). **Statics** and **dynamics** are two major subbranches of mechanics. Statics is the study of systems that are in a state of constant motion, that is, either at rest (with no motion) or moving with a constant velocity. Dynamics is the study of systems in which acceleration is present.

Kinematics and **kinetics** are further subdivisions of biomechanical study. What we are able to observe visually when watching a body in motion is termed the *kinematics* of the movement. Kinematics involves the study of the size, sequencing, and timing of movement, without reference to the forces that cause or result from the motion. The kinematics of an exercise or a sport skill execution is also known, more commonly, as *form* or *technique*. Whereas kinematics describes the appearance of motion, kinetics is the study of the forces associated with motion. Force can be thought of as a push or pull acting on a body. The study of human biomechanics may include questions such as whether the amount of force the muscles are producing is optimal for the intended purpose of the movement.

Although biomechanics is relatively young as a recognized field of scientific inquiry, biomechanical considerations are of interest in several different scientific disciplines and professional fields. Biomechanists may have academic backgrounds in zoology; orthopedic, cardiac, or sports medicine; biomedical or biomechanical engineering; physical therapy; or kinesiology, with the commonality being an interest in the biomechanical aspects of the structure and function of living things.

The biomechanics of human movement is one of the subdisciplines of **kinesiology**, the study of human movement. Although some biomechanists study topics such as ostrich locomotion, blood flow through constricted arteries, or micromapping of dental cavities, this book focuses primarily on the biomechanics of human movement from the perspective of the movement analyst.

Biomechanics is also a scientific branch of **sports medicine**. *Sports medicine* is an umbrella term that encompasses both clinical and scientific aspects of exercise and sport. The American College of Sports Medicine is an example of an organization that promotes interaction between scientists and clinicians with interests in sports medicine–related topics.

mechanics

branch of physics that analyzes the actions of forces on particles and mechanical systems

statics

branch of mechanics dealing with systems in a constant state of motion

dynamics

branch of mechanics dealing with systems subject to acceleration

kinematics

study of the description of motion, including considerations of space and time

kinetics

study of the action of forces

kinesiology

study of human movement

sports medicine

clinical and scientific aspects of sports and exercise

What Problems Are Studied by Biomechanists?

• *In research, each new study, investigation, or experiment is usually designed to address a particular question or problem.*

As expected given the different scientific and professional fields represented, biomechanists study questions or problems that are topically diverse. For example, zoologists have examined the locomotion patterns of dozens of species of animals walking, running, trotting, and galloping at controlled speeds on a treadmill to determine why animals choose a particular stride length and stride rate at a given speed. They have found that running actually consumes less energy than walking in small animals up to the size of dogs, but running is more costly than walking for larger animals such as horses (16). One of the challenges of this type of research is determining how to persuade a cat, a dog, or a turkey to run on a treadmill (Figure 1-2).

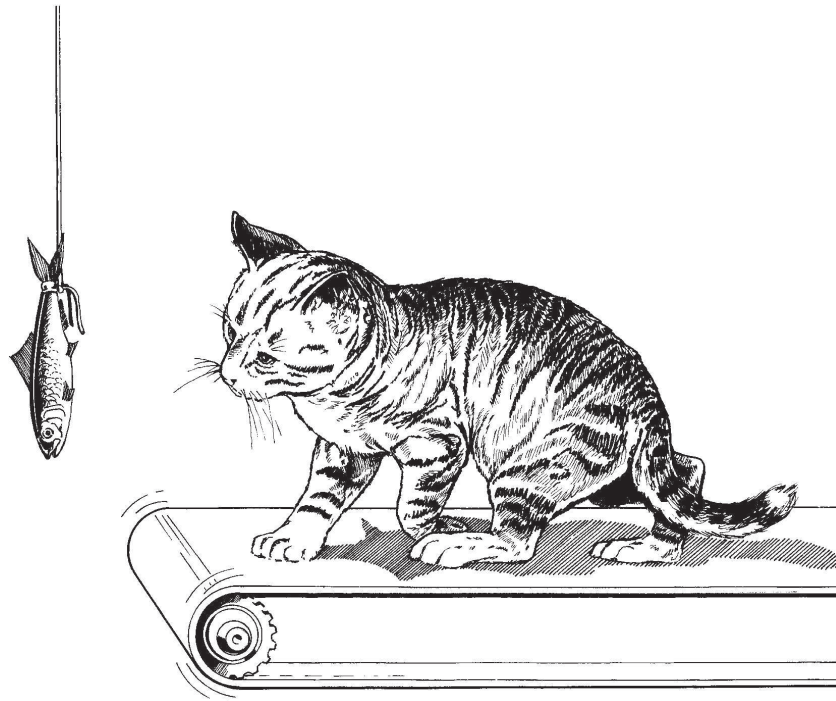
Among humans, the energy cost of running increases with running speed, as well as with the amount of weight being carried by the runner. Beginning runners have been observed to develop more economical running kinematics over a period of weeks as they become accustomed to training (13). Interestingly, researchers have shown that barefoot or minimally shod running is more economical than running in running shoes, possibly due to storage and return of elastic energy in the foot (14).

The U.S. National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) sponsors another multidisciplinary line of biomechanics research to promote understanding of the effects of microgravity on the human musculoskeletal system. Of concern is the fact that astronauts who have been out of the earth's gravitational field for just a few days have returned with muscle atrophy, cardiovascular and immune system changes, and reduced bone density, mineralization, and strength, especially in the lower extremities (20). The issue of bone loss, in particular, is currently a limiting factor for long-term space flights. Both increased bone resorption and decreased calcium absorption appear to be responsible (see Chapter 4) (19).

Since those early days of space flight, biomechanists have designed and built a number of exercise devices for use in space to take the place of

FIGURE 1-2

Research on the biomechanics of animal gaits poses some interesting problems.



normal bone-maintaining activities on Earth. Some of this research has focused on the design of treadmills for use in space that load the bones of the lower extremity with deformations and strain rates that are optimal for stimulating new bone formation. Another approach involves combining voluntary muscle contraction with electrical stimulation of the muscles to maintain muscle mass and tone (25). So far, however, no adequate substitute has been found for weight bearing for the prevention of bone and muscle loss in space.

Maintaining sufficient bone-mineral density is also a topic of concern here on Earth. Osteoporosis is a condition in which bone mineral mass and strength are so severely compromised that daily activities can cause bone pain and fracturing. This condition is found in most elderly individuals, with earlier onset in women, and is becoming increasingly prevalent throughout the world with the increasing mean age of the population. Approximately 40% of women experience one or more osteoporotic fractures after age 50, and after age 60, about 90% of all fractures in both men and women are osteoporosis-related. The most common fracture site is the vertebrae, with the presence of one fracture indicating increased risk for future vertebral and hip fractures (8). This topic is explored in depth in Chapter 4.

Another problem area challenging biomechanists who study the elderly is mobility impairment. Age is associated with decreased ability to balance, and older adults both sway more and fall more than young adults, although the reasons for these changes are not well understood. Falls, and particularly fall-related hip fractures, are extremely serious, common, and costly medical problems among the elderly. Each year, falls cause large percentages of the wrist fractures, head injuries, vertebral fractures, and lacerations, as well as over 90% of the hip fractures occurring in the United States (17). Biomechanical research teams are investigating the biomechanical factors that enable individuals to avoid falling, the characteristics of safe landings from falls, the forces sustained by different parts of the body during falls, and the ability of protective clothing and floors to prevent falling injuries (17). Promising work in the development of intervention strategies has shown that the key to preventing falls may be the ability to limit trunk motion (7). Older adults can quickly learn strategies for limiting trunk motion through task-specific training combined with whole-body exercise.

Research by clinical biomechanists has resulted in improved gait among children with cerebral palsy, a condition involving high levels of muscle tension and spasticity. The gait of the cerebral palsy individual is characterized by excessive knee flexion during stance. This problem is treated by surgical lengthening of the hamstring tendons to improve knee extension during stance. In some patients, however, the procedure also diminishes knee flexion during the swing phase of gait, resulting in dragging of the foot. After research showed that patients with this problem exhibited significant co-contraction of the rectus femoris with the hamstrings during the swing phase, orthopedists began treating the problem by surgically attaching the rectus femoris to the sartorius insertion. This creative, biomechanics research-based approach has enabled a major step toward gait normalization for children with cerebral palsy.

Research by biomedical engineers has also resulted in improved gait for children and adults with below-knee amputations. Ambulation with a prosthesis creates an added metabolic demand, which can be particularly significant for elderly amputees and for young active amputees who participate in sports requiring aerobic conditioning. In response to this problem, researchers have developed an array of lower-limb and foot prostheses that store and return mechanical energy during gait, thereby

Exercise in space is critically important for preventing loss of bone mass among astronauts. Photo courtesy of NASA.



reducing the metabolic cost of locomotion. Studies have shown that the more compliant prostheses are better suited for active and fast walkers, whereas prostheses that provide a more stable base of support are generally preferred for the elderly population. Microchip-controlled “Intelligent Prostheses” show promise for reducing the energy cost of walking at a range of speeds (3). Researchers are currently developing a new class of “bionic” prosthetic feet that are designed to better imitate normal gait (21).

Occupational biomechanics is a field that focuses on the prevention of work-related injuries and the improvement of working conditions and worker performance. Researchers in this field have learned that work-related low back pain can derive not only from the handling of heavy materials but from unnatural postures, sudden and unexpected motions, and the characteristics of the individual worker (12). Sophisticated biomechanical models of the trunk are now being used in the design of materials-handling tasks in industry to enable minimizing potentially injurious stresses to the low back (1).

Biomechanists have also contributed to performance improvements in selected sports through the design of innovative equipment. One excellent

carpal tunnel syndrome

overuse condition caused by compression of the median nerve in the carpal tunnel and involving numbness, tingling, and pain in the hand

example of this is the Klapskate, the speed skate equipped with a hinge near the toes that allows the skater to plantar flex at the ankle during push-off, resulting in up to 5% higher skating velocities than were obtainable with traditional skates (9). The Klapskate was designed by van Ingen Schenau and de Groot, based on study of the gliding push-off technique in speed skating by van Ingen Schenau and Baker, as well as work on the intermuscular coordination of vertical jumping by Bobbert and van Ingen Schenau (4). When the Klapskate was used for the first time by competitors in the 1998 Winter Olympic Games, speed records were shattered in every event.

Numerous innovations in sport equipment and apparel have also resulted from findings of experiments conducted in experimental chambers called *wind tunnels* that involved controlled simulation of the air resistance actually encountered during particular sports. Examples include the aerodynamic helmets, clothing, and cycle designs used in competitive cycling, and the ultrasoft suits worn in other competitive speed-related events, such as swimming, track, skating, and skiing. Wind tunnel experiments have also been conducted to identify optimal body configuration during events such as ski jumping (22). Sport biomechanists have also directed efforts at improving the biomechanical, or technique, components of athletic performance.

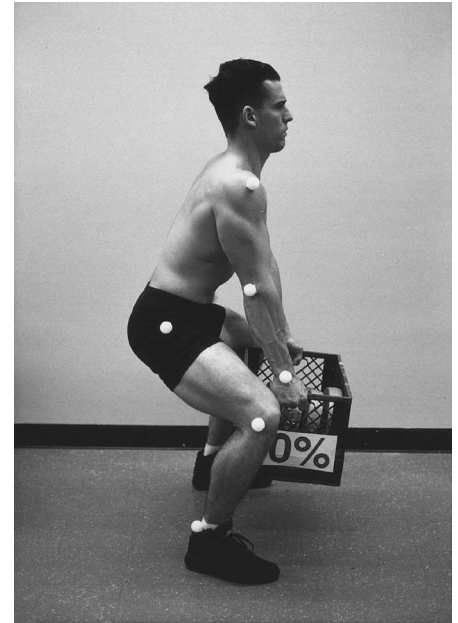
One rather dramatic example of performance improvement partially attributable to biomechanical analysis is the case of four-time Olympic discus champion Al Oerter. Mechanical analysis of the discus throw requires precise evaluation of the major mechanical factors affecting the flight of the discus. These factors include the following:

1. The speed of the discus when it is released by the thrower
2. The projection angle at which the discus is released
3. The height above the ground at which the discus is released
4. The angle of attack (the orientation of the discus relative to the prevailing air current)

By using computer simulation techniques, researchers can predict the needed combination of values for these four variables that will result in a throw of maximum distance for a given athlete (10). High-speed cameras can record performances in great detail, and when the film or video is analyzed, the actual projection height, velocity, and angle of attack can be compared to the computer-generated values required for optimal performance. At the age of 43, Oerter bettered his best Olympic performance by 8.2 m. Although it is difficult to determine the contributions of motivation and training to such an improvement, some part of Oerter's success was a result of enhanced technique following biomechanical analysis (18). Most adjustments to skilled athletes' techniques produce relatively modest results because their performances are already characterized by above-average technique.

Some of the research produced by sport biomechanists has been done in conjunction with the Sports Medicine Division of the United States Olympic Committee (USOC). Typically, this work is done in direct cooperation with the national coach of the sport to ensure the practicality of results. USOC-sponsored research has yielded much new information about the mechanical characteristics of elite performance in various sports. Because of continuing advances in scientific analysis equipment, the role of sport biomechanists in contributing to performance improvements is likely to be increasingly important in the future.

The influence of biomechanics is also being felt in sports popular with both nonathletes and athletes, such as golf. Computerized video analyses



Occupational biomechanics involves study of safety factors in activities such as lifting.

© Susan Hall.



Aerodynamic cycling equipment has contributed to new world records.

Getty Images.

● *The USOC began funding sports medicine research in 1981. Other countries began sponsoring research to boost the performance of elite athletes in the early 1970s.*

Biomechanists Develop a Revolutionary New Figure Skate

What do 1996 U.S. figure skating champion Rudy Galindo and 1998 Olympic gold medal winner Tara Lipinski have in common besides figure skating success? They have both had double hip replacements, Galindo at age 32 and Lipinski at age 18.

Overuse injuries among figure skaters are on the rise at an alarming rate, with most involving the lower extremities and lower back (4, 12). With skaters performing more and more technically demanding programs including multirotation jumps, on-ice training time for elite skaters now typically includes over 100 jumps per day, six days per week, year after year.

Yet, unlike most modern sports equipment, the figure skate has undergone only very minor modifications since 1900. The soft-leather, calf-high boots of the nineteenth century are now made of stiffer leather to promote ankle stability and are not quite as high to allow a small amount of ankle motion. However, the basic design of the rigid boot with a screwed-on steel blade has not changed.

The problem with the traditional figure skate is that when a skater lands after a jump, the rigid boot severely restricts motion at the ankle, forcing the skater to land nearly flat-footed and preventing motion at the ankle that could help attenuate the landing shock that gets translated upward through the musculoskeletal system. Not surprisingly, the incidence of overuse injuries in figure skating is mushrooming due to the increased emphasis on performing jumps, the increase in training time, and the continued use of outdated equipment.

To address this problem, biomechanist Jim Richards and graduate student Dustin Bruening, working at the University of Delaware's Human Performance Lab, have designed and tested a new figure skating boot. Following the design of modern-day Alpine skiing and in-line skating boots, the new boot incorporates an articulation at the ankle that permits flexion movement but restricts potentially injurious sideways movement.

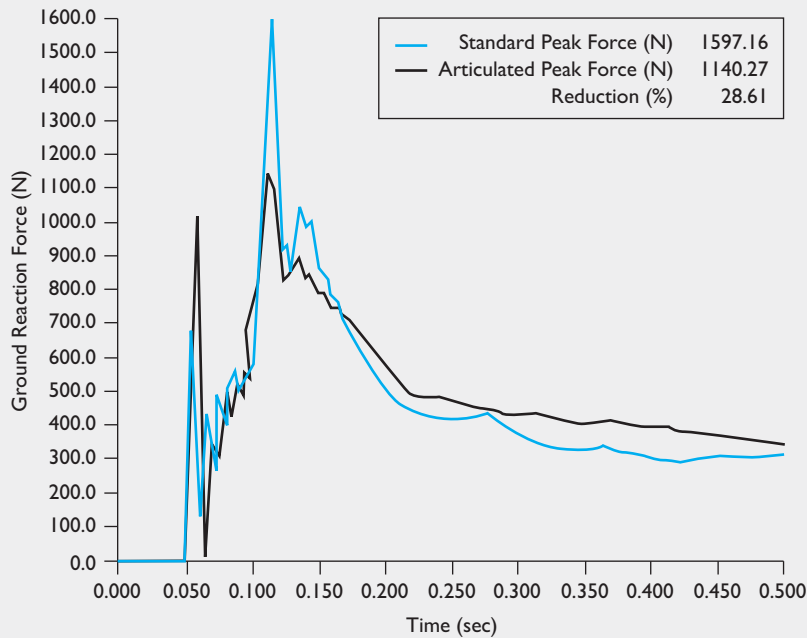


New figure skating boot with an articulation at the ankle designed by biomechanists at the University of Delaware. © Susan Hall.

The boot enables skaters to land toe-first, with the rest of the foot hitting the ice more slowly. This extends the landing time, thereby spreading the impact force over a longer time and dramatically diminishing the peak force translated up through the body. As shown in the graph, the new boot attenuates the peak landing force on the order of 30%.

Although the new figure skating boot design was motivated by a desire to reduce the incidence of stress injuries in skating, it may also promote performance. The ability to

move through a larger range of motion at the ankle may well enable higher jump heights and concomitantly more rotations while the skater is in the air.



The new figure skating boot with an articulation at the ankle reduces peak impact forces during landing from a jump on the order of 30%.

Graph courtesy of D. Bruening and J. Richards.

Skaters who adopt the new boot are finding that using it effectively requires a period of acclimatization. Those who have been skating in the traditional boot for many years tend to have reduced strength in the musculature surrounding the ankle. Improving ankle strength is likely to be necessary for optimal use of a boot that now allows ankle motion.

of golf swings designed by biomechanists are commonly available at golf courses and equipment shops. The science of biomechanics can play a role in optimizing the distance and accuracy of all golf shots, including putting, through analysis of body angles, joint forces, and muscle activity patterns (24). A common technique recommendation is to maintain a single fixed center of rotation to impart force to the ball (11).

Other concerns of sport biomechanists relate to minimizing sport injuries through both identifying dangerous practices and designing safe equipment and apparel. In recreational runners, for example, research shows that the most serious risk factors for overuse injuries are training errors such as a sudden increase in running distance or intensity, excess cumulative mileage, and running on cambered surfaces (6). The complexity of safety-related issues increases when the sport is equipment-intensive. Evaluation of protective helmets involves ensuring not only that the impact characteristics offer reliable protection but also that the helmet does not overly restrict wearers' peripheral vision.

An added complication is that equipment designed to protect one part of the body may actually contribute to the likelihood of injury in another part of the musculoskeletal system. Modern ski boots and bindings, while effective in protecting the ankle and lower leg against injury, unfortunately contribute to severe bending moments at the knee when the skier loses balance.

● *Impact testing of protective sport helmets is carried out scientifically in engineering laboratories.*