

Team JDRF to Cure Diabetes

Basic Running Form and Drills

A comprehensive training program involves more than just running miles. The more of the following suggestions you can incorporate into your training, the more success you will have. The following section will give you a basic overview of running form, and drills to improve your form.

- After a warm up, you should try to incorporate the running drills. After a cool down you can do the stretches again.
- The strengthening should be done two to three days a week with a day off in between workouts. This could be done after you finish your run. Possible strengthening days could be Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday.
- If possible, have a coach look over your form so you are performing the drills, strengthening, and stretching exercises correctly.

GOOD FORM:

- Foot placement—midfoot under your hips. If it's too far forward (most people over stride), it's in front of your center of gravity and working against you, putting on the brakes.
- Arm swing—hip to chest. Practice swinging your arms. They should be moving forward and not cross the center line in front of your body. Your leg and arm speed is linked; your legs can only go as fast as your arms will move.
- Practice moving arms and jogging in place.
- Posture—run tall with your hips beneath you.
- Lean—slight lean from the ankles. Just before the point where your toes curl/grip the ground. If you lean too far forward or back you can't drive efficiently with your legs. Too far forward causes you to under stride, too far back leads to over stride.

Drills should be done before you run so you are fresh. Do two of each drill and work up to a longer distance and then four to five of each drill. If you feel like you're getting fatigued, cut back. You only want to do them with optimal form. Keep your eyes forward and head up.

FOLLOWING ARE DESCRIPTIONS FOR

FIVE BASIC RUNNING DRILLS:

1. High knees: Increases leg turnover and improves your knee drive/hip flexors. Take as many steps as possible with a high knee drive over about 20 yards with a high cadence. You should be bringing your legs up in front of you and maintaining a nice upright posture. The aim is not to move forward quickly but to maximize the number of steps that you take; remember this one is about leg turnover, not stride length. You should feel this one in the front of your hips and thighs (hip flexors) as they will be working hard to lift your legs up in front of you. Do a few quad stretches after this one to loosen things up.

A good way to figure out how high your legs should be coming up is to do this drill a couple of times with your elbows at your side and your forearms at 90 degrees to your body, palms facing down. Your knees should come up and hit the palm of your hands; this is where you want your knees to come up to whenever you are doing the drill.

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2. Butt kicks: Butt kicks have a very similar objective to the high knee running drill—to increase leg turnover. This helps you focus on your hamstrings and the recovery phase of your leg swing. With a high cadence, concentrate on getting your feet moving as quickly as you can and getting your lower leg to swing up behind you. Your heel should literally hit your butt. Make sure to maintain good form and an upright position. Continue on for about 20 yards.

3. Skip drill: This drill is intended to help increase your stride length. Bring your knee up and in front of you like a high knee and extend your leg out in front of you like a hurdler, and then bring your leg down and through to contact the ground in a powerful fashion directly under your center of gravity. As your foot contacts the ground, drive up on your toes and swing your other leg forward and repeat. The key is to get a nice snap when bringing your leg back into position. This helps activate the hamstrings and glutes. Do about 12 to 15 steps on each leg like this.

4. Bounding: Helps to develop leg power and strength which increases your stride length. Bound (power skipping) forward and upwards with a high knee lift. Land on your other leg and repeat the movement. Continue alternating legs. Concentrate on holding good form, keeping your head up, and driving with your arms, as this will help you keep the whole movement together. Repeat for 8 to 10 steps on each leg.

5. Strides: 150 yards. Take 50 yards to build speed, maintain 50 yards, and then decelerate the last 50 yards.