



SKILL 1: POSTURE & BODY POSITION

Build a stable running position that allows you to move forward efficiently without unnecessary tension.



1) PURPOSE

Develop a balanced running posture that supports efficient movement while allowing the hips, legs, and arms to work freely.



2) WHY IT MATTERS

- Direct movement forward
- Maintain hip position
- Reduce unnecessary braking
- Stay more efficient as fatigue increases



3) BODY POSITION

Run tall and relaxed

- Head neutral and eyes forward
- Shoulders relaxed
- Chest open, not exaggerated
- Hips underneath the torso
- Body tall rather than sitting back



4) FORWARD LEAN

Lean from the ankles

- A slight forward orientation is normal
- Lean from the ankles rather than bending at the waist
- Avoid collapsing forward through the hips or shoulders
- Do not deliberately force a large lean



5) COMMON FORM CHANGES

- Sitting back as fatigue increases
- Bending excessively at the waist
- Looking down at the ground
- Shoulders rising toward the ears
- Excessive arching of the lower back



6) PRACTICE CUES

Use 1 cue at a time

- Run tall
- Eyes ahead
- Hips forward
- Relax the shoulders
- Move forward, not upward



7) FOCUS ON

- Tall, relaxed posture
- Neutral head position
- Stable hips
- Slight whole-body forward orientation
- Maintaining posture when pace increases
- Maintaining posture when tired



8) COACHING REMINDER

Good running posture should not feel rigid. The goal is to create a stable position that allows you to move freely, not to hold your body in an exaggerated “perfect” pose.





SKILL 2: FOOT STRIKE & LANDING

Reduce unnecessary braking by paying attention to where and how your foot contacts the ground.



1) PURPOSE

Develop a controlled landing that keeps forward momentum moving smoothly through each stride.



2) WHY IT MATTERS

- Braking forces
- Stride rhythm
- Ground-contact time
- How smoothly you move from one stride to the next



3) WHERE TO LAND

Land under you, not out in front

- Look for the foot to contact the ground reasonably close to underneath the body
- Think: foot down, not foot reaching forward
- The goal is not to deliberately shorten every stride



4) FOOT STRIKE

Don't force a type

- Heel, midfoot, and forefoot contact can all occur in successful runners
- Do not force a particular foot strike
- Focus on where the foot lands
- Focus on how smoothly you accept the load
- Notice what happens immediately afterward



5) WATCH FOR OVERSTRIDING

- Foot landing far ahead of the body
- Lower leg reaching forward
- Noticeable braking with each step
- Heavy or slapping contact
- Stride feeling like a series of reaches



6) PRACTICE CUES

Choose the cue that helps

- Put the foot down
- Land underneath you
- Quick off the ground
- Run quietly
- Don't reach



7) FOCUS ON

- Landing location
- Smooth ground contact
- Limiting excessive reaching
- Continuous forward movement
- Natural foot strike
- What changes as speed increases



8) COACHING REMINDER

Do not chase a specific foot strike. A runner who changes from heel strike to forefoot strike without addressing the rest of the stride may simply move the problem somewhere else. Focus on the entire movement pattern.





SKILL 3: CADENCE & STRIDE LENGTH

Understand how turnover and stride length work together as running speed changes.



1) PURPOSE

Develop a natural running rhythm while learning how cadence and stride length contribute to speed.



2) HOW SPEED CHANGES

Stride Length × Stride Frequency

- To run faster, you generally take steps more frequently
- You also cover more distance with each stride
- Most athletes use a combination of both



3) CADENCE

Cadence = steps per minute

- Cadence changes naturally with running speed
- It is also influenced by height and leg length
- Terrain and fatigue can change your rhythm
- Individual mechanics matter



4) DON'T CHASE 180

Use cadence as information

- There is no universal cadence every athlete must achieve
- Ask whether the rhythm feels smooth
- Notice if you are reaching excessively
- Notice whether cadence changes naturally with pace
- See if you can maintain rhythm as fatigue develops



5) STRIDE LENGTH

- A longer stride does not mean reaching farther in front of the body
- Effective stride length comes from forward propulsion
- Hip extension helps create useful stride length
- Force applied into the ground matters
- Let the stride happen as you move through the step



6) PRACTICE CUES

Find a smooth rhythm

- Quick and light
- Smooth rhythm
- Push, don't reach
- Let the pace create the stride
- Turn the legs over underneath you



7) FOCUS ON

- Natural rhythm
- Cadence changes with pace
- Avoiding excessive reaching
- Smooth turnover
- Maintaining rhythm under fatigue
- Letting stride length happen behind you



8) COACHING REMINDER

Cadence is information, not a score. Do not change your running simply to hit an arbitrary number. Use cadence alongside what you see, feel, and experience while running.





SKILL 4: ARM SWING & UPPER-BODY CONTROL

Use relaxed, controlled arm movement to support rhythm and balance without wasting energy.



1) PURPOSE

Develop an arm swing that complements the movement of the legs and helps keep the upper body relaxed and controlled.



2) WHY THE ARMS MATTER

- Counterbalance movement from the legs
- Control rotation
- Support running rhythm
- Coordinate changes in speed



3) ARM POSITION

Relaxed and compact

- Elbows comfortably bent
- Hands relaxed
- Shoulders down
- Arms moving naturally forward and backward
- Movement coming primarily from the shoulder



4) THINK BACKWARD

Elbows back

- Instead of aggressively driving the hands forward, think about allowing the elbows to travel backward
- This can keep the swing compact
- It can reduce reaching across the body
- It helps coordinate the arm swing with the opposite leg



5) COMMON ISSUES

- Hands crossing excessively across the torso
- Shoulders shrugged upward
- Clenched fists
- Very stiff arms
- Arms held too far away from the body
- Excessive upper-body rotation



6) PRACTICE CUES

Keep tension low

- Relax your hands
- Shoulders down
- Elbows back
- Pocket to pocket
- Let the arms match the pace



7) FOCUS ON

- Relaxed hands
- Relaxed shoulders
- Forward/backward arm movement
- Minimal unnecessary rotation
- Rhythm between arms and legs
- What changes when effort increases



8) COACHING REMINDER

You do not need to manufacture a perfect arm angle. The goal is a relaxed arm swing that supports your running rather than creating additional tension or movement.





SKILL 5: RUNNING RELAXED AT SPEED

Learn to increase effort and pace while maintaining rhythm, control, and efficient movement.



1) PURPOSE

Develop the ability to run faster without allowing unnecessary tension to disrupt your mechanics.



2) WHY IT MATTERS

- Tension can waste energy
- It can disrupt rhythm
- It can change posture and arm swing
- It often becomes more obvious as pace increases



3) COMMON RESPONSES

Trying harder can create extra tension

- Tensing the shoulders
- Clenching the hands
- Reaching with the stride
- Increasing vertical movement
- Forcing the arms
- Holding the breath



4) CONTROL THE TENSION

Remove the unnecessary

- Some muscular tension is necessary to run fast
- The goal is to remove unnecessary tension
- Periodically check the jaw
- Check the hands and shoulders
- Check the arms and breathing



5) LET SPEED BUILD

- As pace increases, cadence may increase
- Stride length may increase
- Arm movement becomes more active
- Ground contact may become quicker
- Allow these changes to occur without forcing them



6) FORM UNDER FATIGUE

Fatigue exposes patterns

- Posture beginning to collapse
- Stride reaching forward
- Arms crossing the body
- Shoulders becoming tense
- Rhythm becoming inconsistent



7) FOCUS ON

- Relaxed face and hands
- Shoulders staying down
- Controlled breathing
- Smooth cadence
- Stable posture
- Maintaining mechanics as effort rises



8) COACHING REMINDER

Effort and tension are not the same thing. Running faster requires more work, but it should not require every muscle in your body to become tense. Learn to work hard while staying composed.

