



6 MISTAKES RUNNERS MAKE

*That Keeps Them from Reaching Their
Peak Running Performance!*

BY MACK JONES

SoledOutTM

PERFORMANCE &
PHYSICAL THERAPY 

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Dr. Mackenzie (Mack) Jones is a physical therapist, running coach, and owner of SoledOut Performance & Physical Therapy, LLC in Clarksville, TN. Dr. Jones. He has worked in the fitness and healthcare industry for over 15 years and coached hundreds of recreational and competitive runners.

Mack earned his Bachelor of Science Degree in Exercise Physiology from East Carolina University and his Doctorate of Physical Therapy Degree from Baylor University. After Physical Therapy School, he commissioned in the U.S. Army and served 12 years on active duty as a Physical Therapist. While serving in the Army, Mack gained invaluable clinical and leadership experience in a variety assignments including Physical Therapist, Special Operations Command, Fort Campbell, KY; Company Commander, Training and Doctrine Command, Fort Leonard Wood, MO; Brigade Physical Therapist, 1st Armored Division, Fort Bliss, TX. He also had the privilege of serving on three deployments to the Middle East where he provided patient care and musculoskeletal education to men and women from all branches of the military.

Mack has advanced training in sports medicine, human performance, manual therapy, and injury prevention. He is passionate about using his skills of teaching and coaching to help others overcome their injuries. His knowledge and experience as a CrossFit coach, Running coach, and physical therapist enables him to use practical, researched based approaches to health and fitness. His combined rehabilitation knowledge and coaching experiences makes him a standout clinician that is prepared to help you optimize your performance and return to the activities you love.



During his off time, Mack enjoys playing sports, running, weightlifting, watching movies, and traveling around the world with his wife Carla. He also volunteers as a track & field coach for high school athletes, and he competes as an USATF Masters Athlete.

EDUCATION & CERTIFICATIONS

- Doctorate in Physical Therapy, Baylor University, 2012
- Bachelor of Science in Exercise Physiology, East Carolina University, 2008
- Board-Certified Clinical Specialist in Orthopaedic Physical Therapy
- Certified Strength and Conditioning Specialist
- Certified Running Technique Specialist (Romanov Academy of Sport Science)
- USA Track & Field Level 1 Coach
- CrossFit Level 1 Trainer

THE 6 MISTAKES RUNNERS MAKE...

I've been a runner my entire life, and I've been helping runners overcome injuries since 2013. Running is an easy and convenient way to exercise. It takes nearly no effort to throw on a pair of shoes, step outside your door, and run a few miles. Running is so easy that I think we take the value of this exercise for granted.

Running is a skill that requires strength, technique, and the proper training. However, many people don't take the time to develop skilled running. I believe this is one reason why we see so many running-related injuries. Most runners would take the "runners high" in exchange for a few days of muscle aches and pains. But the good news is that you don't have to do that. As a physical therapist and running coach, my goal is to help athletes run for as long as they want without the fear of getting injured. In this booklet, I'll share **6 mistakes runners make that keeps them from reaching their peak performance**. I'll also provide an opportunity for you to learn how you can avoid these mistakes and run your best.

MISTAKE #1: LACK OF STRENGTH TRAINING

The number one issue I observe with runners is a lack of strength. Running is a high impact sport, and you must be strong to handle the loads you place on your body. Now, most people don't think of running as high impact, but your body accepts up **to 3 times it's body weight** every time your foot contacts the ground. As runners, improving strength is the best way to minimize the effect this amount of force has on the body.

There are several exercises you can perform to get stronger. **Below are examples of 2 exercises you can perform at home** without any equipment. For more strength training strategies for runners, contact a strength & conditioning specialist in your area.

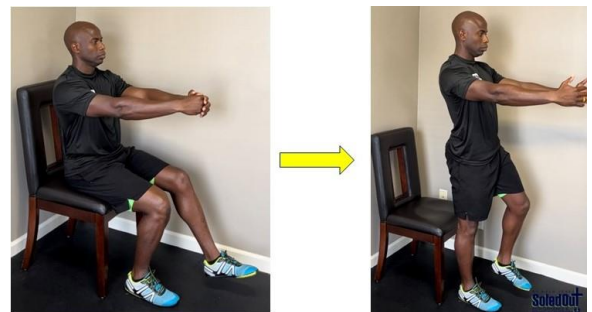
SINGLE LEG SIT TO STAND

Start by sitting in a chair. Next, using only one leg, raise up to standing without using your hands for support.

DO NOT let your knee travel over the feet

DO NOT let your knee dive inwards.

DO maintain an upright posture

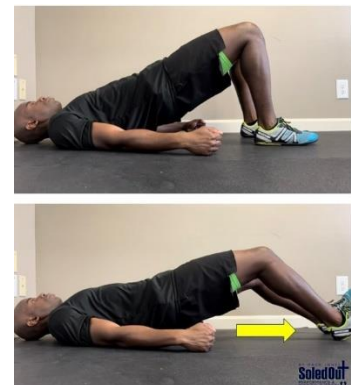


BRIDGING WALK OUTS

Start by lying on your back with knees bent.

Next, tighten your lower abdominal muscles, squeeze your buttocks and then raise your buttocks off the floor as in creating a "Bridge" with your body.

Hold this position and as you slowly walk your feet forward taking small steps until your knees are nearly straight. Then, lower your buttocks down to the floor and bend your knees one at a time to return to starting position and repeat.



MISTAKE #2: POOR RUNNING TECHNIQUE

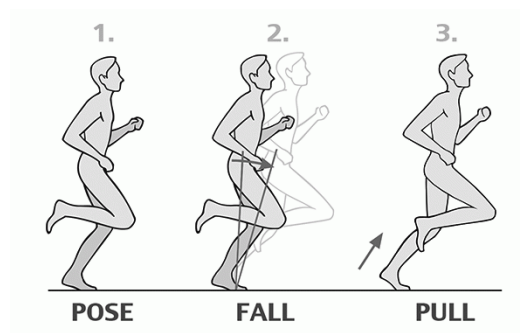


Photo adopted from Romanov, N. (2014) The Running Revolution: How to Run Faster, Farther, and Injury-Free -- For Life. Penguin Books.

. As is true with all sports, proper technique is vital to achieving peak performance and minimizing an athlete's chances of injury. Running is a skill that requires proper technique. We won't go into detail about the differences between proper and improper running technique here. However, we will share the three most common running errors: **bending at the waist, over-striding, and heel striking**. Each of these faulty movement patterns leads to inefficient running mechanics, slower run times, and excessive stress on the lower back, knees, feet or ankle joints.

Identifying and learning how to correct common running errors can be accomplished with the assistance of an experienced coach. Running coaches can teach you the basic principles of proper running mechanics. Over time you will learn exercises and technique drills to help you run more efficiently.

[Click here to find a certified running coach in your area.](#)

MISTAKE #3: INAPPROPRIATE RUNNING VOLUME

Runners often run too much or too soon after an injury or period of inactivity. If you are an elite, competitive runner, with a dedicated coach, then this may not apply to you. But for most recreational runners, I recommend keeping your volume at a manageable level that matches your goals. If you are running a marathon, give yourself plenty of time to train for it and follow a specific plan from a running coach. On the other hand, if you are running just to stay in great shape or you enjoy spending time with your local running club, then consider only running 3 days per week, never on consecutive days. Your “days off” should focus on other forms of cardio (rowing, biking, swimming) and strength training. It’s also a great idea, no matter what level you are at, to keep a running journal. Keeping track of your mileage, sleep, and diet is a great way to follow a successful training plan.

If you’re running over 35 miles per week with poor running technique, and you never strength train, then you are likely at risk of sustaining a running-related injury. So, take an honest assessment of where you are and, if necessary, seek assistance from a coach or healthcare professional. The goal is for you to recover quickly and get back to participating in the activity you love...Running!

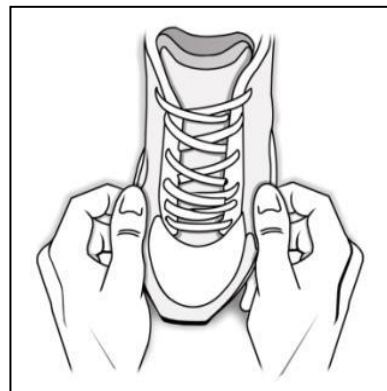
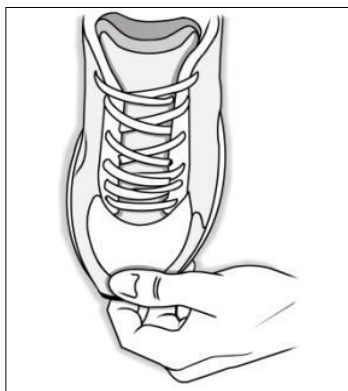
MISTAKE #4: WORRYING ABOUT THE SHOES!

It's not surprising that many runners place too much emphasis on their shoes. There are tons of options, styles, and colors to choose from. Also, there's the question of **which shoe will help you run faster or keep you injury free?** Although there are claims that certain "super shoes" exist, there remains little scientific evidence that one shoe can fix everyone's running performance or injury risks.

So, before you spend countless hours researching the best shoe, consider the most important aspect – comfort. A comfortable running shoe may lessen energy expenditure and delay muscle fatigue. On the other hand, an uncomfortable shoe could cause you to modify your gait pattern. This subsequently increases the risk for injury and energy expenditure.

Below are a 3 tips to consider when shopping for running shoes.

1. **No "break in" period!** Running shoes should be comfortable from the start!
2. **Sizes vary among models!** You may have to order a ½ to a full size up or down. Make sure to read description from the manufacturer to see if their shoes are made bigger or smaller than the average.
3. **Make sure the shoe fits correctly!** There should be ½ to an entire thumb's width between end of longest toe & end of shoe, and ½ thumb's width of material at either side of ball of foot.



MISTAKE #5: YOU DON'T WARM-UP!

The goal of a warm-up is to “wake up your system.” When you warm-up, you are trying to increase your body temperature, get blood flow to your tissues, and give your joints a better sense awareness. This simply prepares your body to run smoother.

We recommend spending at least 5 to 10 minutes to prepare your body to run. This can include dynamic movements, jumping rope, skip variations, or running in place. There's no limit to what you can do during your warm-up.

Click [here](#) to watch a short video of some warm-up exercise.



MISTAKE #6: YOU DON'T RECOVER!

Recovery does not have to be complicated. The goal is to give your muscles, tendons, and joints time to heal themselves. Here are 4 tips to keep in mind regarding recovery.

Tip #1 **Sleep! Deep sleep improves muscle recovery.** Aim for at least 7-8 hours of sleep per night and try to keep a consistent bedtime and wake time.

Tip #2 **Eat healthy!** Our body needs nutrients to perform our best. If you're not sure how to plan your meals during training, The Athlete's Plate® is a good place to start.

Tip #3 **Stay hydrated** throughout the day, including weekends. Drink plenty of water and limit sugary drinks.

Tip #4 **Practice getting stronger and flexible!** Strength and mobility training is an easy way to decrease injury risk.

THANKS FOR READING!

Connect with Us!

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