

TREADMILL WORKSHOP

OTF CH-Timberlyne's guide to treading with intention.

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INTRODUCTIONS

5 minutes

What's your **name**?

Why are you **here**?

What's one thing you're hoping to **learn**?

What's one **problem** you're hoping to **solve**?

AGENDA

Why Should You Stay?

The Four Toos

Upper Body: Arm Swing

Upper Body: Posture

Lower Body: Strike Point

Lower Body: Cadence

Lower Body: Hip Stability

Power Walking to Jogging & Running

WHY SHOULD YOU STAY?

Build **strength** and **efficiency** to **run smarter**.

Improve posture and **stride mechanics** to **reduce impact** and **injury risk**.

Enhance blood flow to **working muscles** for **better endurance** and **recovery**.

Increase joint stability and **range of motion** for **more powerful movement**.

Reduce muscle fatigue and **post-run soreness (DOMS)**.

Improve cadence, balance, and **control at all speeds** and **inclines**.

Train your body to **absorb force more effectively** with **each step**.

Develop mental focus and **confidence** to **stay present on the tread**.

THE FOUR TOOS

Most running-related injuries don't come from running itself, but from doing too much, going too fast, training too often, or starting too soon.

1. Too Much Speed

Pushing pace before your body is ready increases stress on muscles, tendons, and joints. When speed progresses faster than strength or technique, form breaks down—leading to overstriding, excess impact, and a higher risk of injury. Speed should be earned through efficiency and control, not forced.

2. Too Much Duration

Running longer than your current capacity places repetitive stress on the body. Without adequate muscular endurance and joint resilience, fatigue sets in and mechanics suffer. Gradual increases in time on the treadmill allow tissues to adapt and reduce overuse injuries.

THE FOUR TOOS

3. Too Much Frequency

Running too often without enough recovery limits the body's ability to repair and rebuild.

Adaptation happens during rest, not just during effort. Balancing run days with strength, mobility, and recovery is essential for sustainable progress.

4. Too Soon

Beginning running before establishing a foundation of strength, stability, and mobility sets the stage for compensation and breakdown. A strong base—especially in the hips, core, and lower legs—helps the body absorb force efficiently and run with intention.

Smart running isn't about avoiding challenge—it's about progressing at the right time, in the right way. Managing the Four Toos helps runners stay consistent, resilient, and injury-free.

UPPER BODY

Arm Swing

When your arms swing across your body while running, it can throw off your posture and waste energy. **This extra movement makes running feel harder than it needs to be.**

Aim to keep your **arm swing relaxed** and **purposeful**. Your **elbows should be bent at about 90 degrees**, with your **arms moving forward and back**, not side to side. This helps you stay balanced, efficient, and in control on the treadmill.

Fighting or Flying Drill

- **Fighting:** Elbows pulled in tight and tense
- **Flying:** Elbows bent at 90 degrees, swinging smoothly forward and back

UPPER BODY

Posture

Many runners unknowingly **hunch their shoulders** or **overarch their lower back**, which can **waste energy** and **create unnecessary strain**—especially in the shoulders and low back.

Focus on maintaining a **neutral spine** while you run. Imagine a straight line running from the top of your head down through your spine. **Your chest stays tall, shoulders relaxed, and core gently engaged.**

Wall Alignment Drill

Stand with your back against a wall and make contact with your heels, glutes, upper back, and head. This helps you feel proper posture and alignment, so you can recreate it on the treadmill.

Your strike point is where your foot lands each time you run. Where your foot lands can affect how efficiently you move and how much stress your body absorbs. Certain strike patterns can increase your risk of injury over time.

There's no single "best" way to strike. Research shows no significant difference in injury risk between heel striking and forefoot striking as long as your foot lands underneath your body. **The goal isn't how your foot hits the ground—it's where it hits.**

What to Avoid

- **Overstriding:** When your foot lands too far out.
 - This increases impact forces and can lead to knee pain, hip discomfort, and bone stress injuries.
- **Crossing Over:** When your foot lands across your body's midline.
 - This creates instability and can throw off balance.

LOWER BODY

Strike Point

Cadence is how many steps you take per minute (SPM). A cadence that's too slow increases the time your foot stays on the ground, which can lead to overstriding and added stress on the joints, tendons, and bones. **Many runners—new and experienced—run below 165 SPM without realizing it.**

Studies show injury risk decreases when cadence falls between 165 – 175 steps per minute.

How Do I Find My Cadence?

Use a metronome app (like Metro Timer) or your treadmill/fitness tracker to check your steps per minute.

Metronome Running Drill

Set a metronome to 170–180 beats per minute and practice matching your steps to the beat. Focus on quicker, lighter steps—not running faster.

LOWER BODY

Cadence

Your hips are the powerhouse of your lower body. Weak hips can affect how your knees, pelvis, and even your back move, potentially leading to discomfort or injuries over time.

What to Avoid

- **Knee Collapse (Valgus)**
 - If your knees tend to cave inward during movement, it may be a sign of weak hip muscles. Strengthening your hips can help improve stability and stride balance.
- **Pelvic Drop (Hip Drop)**
 - Notice if your pelvis dips on one side as you walk or run. This can indicate weak glutes, which may contribute to knee or lower back pain.
- **Hip Rotation**
 - Your hips should move naturally forward and backward during motion. If they feel “locked” or restricted, targeted mobility and strength exercises can help restore fluid movement.

LOWER BODY

Hip Stability

POWER WALKING TO JOGGING & RUNNING

Phase 1

Run or Jog **BASE**
Power Walk **PUSH**
Power Walk **ALL OUT**

Phase 2

Run or Jog **BASE**
Run or Jog **PUSH**
Power Walk **ALL OUT**

Phase 3

Run or Jog **BASE**
Run or Jog **PUSH**
Run or Jog **ALL OUT**

****BASE**, **PUSH**, and **ALL OUT** parameters are a starting point. Begin at your self-selected speed, then gradually increase by **0.1 mph** at a time until you reach your fastest walk. As it begins to feel natural, continue increasing by **0.1 – 0.3 mph** to transition into a jog. The goal is to build smoothly and confidently, working up to **running continuously for up to 4 minutes**.*

QUESTIONS?