

# Week 3

## Essential Maintenance



Unfortunately, running related injuries are very common in runners of all levels. A review of studies suggests that as many as 79% of runners are side-lined each year. Here are some ways to prevent you getting injured and keep you training harder, for longer.

## Warm Up

A smart running warm up enables your muscles, bones, and joints to loosen up. These warm up movements gradually brings up your heart rate and makes it easier for your body to get into the rhythm that you want to sustain whilst out running.

Follow the warm up as detailed below:

- To begin walk at your normal speed for 3-5 minutes. Walking is the ideal low-intensity activity to ease your body out of sitting mode and gently into workout mode. The motion of walking takes the muscles, tendons and joints through a range of movements which are similar to those that you will experience whilst running.
- Dynamic stretching, where you utilize controlled leg movements to improve your range of motion, loosen up muscles, increase your heart rate, body temperature and blood flow to help you run more efficiently.

## Strength Training

In the battle against injury a runner's best armour is always a strong body. This includes muscles, ligaments and tendons which guard against the impact from running and improve your form.

- **Lower body** - supplementing running with lower body resistance exercises will not only help you to prevent injury but will also make you a faster and a more efficient runner.
- **Core** - running requires a solid foundation. When you run your abdominal and back muscles fire up to stabilize your spine, so by strengthening your core and your muscles that surround it will help protect your back.
- **Upper body** - Training your upper body is essential for guaranteeing an efficient transfer of energy to your legs. Without this, the required arm technique to provide optimal support to your legs will not be achieved.

## Cool Down

The cool down after every run maintains and supports the blood flow throughout the body. Stopping suddenly can cause you to experience light-headedness due to your heart rate and blood pressure dropping rapidly. The cool down allows HR and BP to fall gradually by reducing your intensity before stopping. Begin the cool down with a slow jog for 2-3 minutes finishing with a slow walk for a further 1-2 minutes.

# Post-Run Stretches

Calves - Quads - IT Band - Hamstrings - Glutes

Performing static stretches after a run when your muscles are warm and more elastic will improve your flexibility and prevent injury. Breathe deeply and regularly throughout the stretches, aiming to stretch to the point of feeling tightness or slight discomfort. Below are 5 recommended static stretches:

1



## Standing calf stretch

1. Stand near to a wall with one foot in front of the other, front knee slightly bent.
2. Keep your back knee straight, your heel on the ground, and lean towards the wall.
3. Feel the stretch all along the calf of your back leg

2



## Standing quad stretch

1. While standing, hold onto a countertop or chair to assist your balance.
2. Bend your knee back by grasping your ankle with one hand.
3. Continue to bend your knee back as far as possible.

3



## Standing IT band stretch

1. While standing, cross your leg in front of your other leg and press firmly into both feet. Position your feet shoulder width apart.
2. Lean to your crossed leg side as far as your body will allow, feeling the stretch in your knee and outer hip.
3. To deepen the stretch, you can reach your arm overhead.

4



## Lying hamstring stretch

1. Lie face-up on the floor and loop a towel or resistance band around the ball of your foot.
2. Gently stretch the leg straight up. Keep both knees straight, with the opposite leg lying flat on the floor.
3. Relax your ankle to stretch the calf and hamstring.

5



## Lying glute stretch

1. Lie on your back with knees bent and feet flat on the floor.
2. Cross your ankle over your opposite knee.
3. Grab behind your other knee and bring your leg towards your chest.

# Workouts

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## Day 1 - Speed interval

Warm up: 5 minute brisk walk

Main session: 1 minute run

1 minute walk x6

Cool down: 5 minute walk

## Day 2 - Rest

## Day 3 - Aerobic interval

Warm up: 5 minute brisk walk

Main session: 5 minute run 2  
minute walk x5

Cool down: 5 minute walk

## Day 4 - Bodyweight circuit

30 seconds on 30 seconds off x4

- 1) Squats
- 2) Press ups
- 3) Lunges
- 4) Glute bridges
- 5) Back extension
- 6) Plank

## Day 5 - Rest

## Day 6 - Long run

Warm up: 5 minute brisk walk

Main Session: 3km run

Cool Down: 5 minute walk

## Day 7 - Rest

## Tip

Listen to your body! Niggles, aches and pains are your bodies way of telling you to slow down or change your habits.