

## Running form

This lesson may not appear to be that important. After all, running is easy and we have been doing so since we learned how to walk. But do you know the correct distance running form?

The following will show you how to run correctly.

1. **Head** – Keep looking at the horizon in front of you. Do not look at the floor. Do not have your chin jutting out.

**Why should they be in this position?** - Looking ahead of you helps to align your neck and back.

2. **Shoulders** – For your shoulders remember the two L's – loose and low. Do not keep them high and tight. It is also important to keep the shoulders level and not have one closer to the floor than the other.

**Why should they be in this position?** – The shoulders in this position will keep your upper body relaxed while you run.

3. **Arms** – Your arms should be swinging forwards and back, not across the body. They should also be bent at a 90degree angle. Over time your arms and shoulders may tense up. Avoid this by straightening the arms and shaking for 5-10 seconds.

**Why should they be in this position?** – Your arms control the tension of the upper body. Keeping them in this position should prevent this.

4. **Torso** – The position of your head and shoulders determines the position of your torso during running. If you abide by the above guidelines for the head and shoulders, your torso should and back should naturally straighten.

**Why should they be in this position?** – When your torso is in this position it promotes stride length and optimal lung capacity.

5. **Hips** – Just as the position of the head and shoulders ensures the correct position of the torso, the correct position of the torso ensure the correct position of the hips. With your torso upright and straight, your hips fall into alignment, pointing straight ahead.

**Why should they be in this position?** – Your hips are where your centre of gravity is located. For this reason the position of your hips are the key to a good running posture.

6. **Legs** – When running in a marathon raise the knees only slightly and keep a short stride. Each time your foot hits the floor the knee should be slightly flexed on impact so it can bend. Also your feet should land directly under your body.

**Why should they be in this position?** – Raising the knees slightly and keeping a short stride conserves energy. Big strides would be pointless as they would be impossible to maintain through a whole marathon.

- 7. Feet** – When it comes to your feet remember, S and Q. Springy and Quiet. When running, you should land between your heel and your midfoot, then roll forward to your toes. When on your toes, try to spring off. This process should be as quiet as possible and there should be no loud slaps when your feet hit the ground.

**Why should they be in this position?** – If your heels were to hit the ground first running this can cause injuries on joints and shin splints. Landing on your toes can upset the calves over long periods also.