



RUNTEX UNIVERSITY

## IT TAKES ALL KINDS

VARIETY IS THE SPICE OF LIFE AND THE KEY TO RUNNING SUCCESS. Too many people run 3 miles, 3 times a week. If this describes your running program, you are missing out on the finer points of running. There are different types of running workouts that, if added to your schedule, will keep your running interesting and fun. If you run at different paces, distances and elevations you will use your muscles in different ways. Everyone talks about cross training. If you vary your running workouts, you will be cross training. When you begin these new workouts you will feel like a new runner.

There are many types of workouts but the main ones are **hill repeats, overdistance, intervals (date pace and goal pace), steady state, and technique and form drills**. Each of these help you become a better runner. While many runners are only concerned with their mileage, adding quality and maintenance workouts to your schedule will give you the balance you need to keep progressing and reduce your chance of injury and burnout.

**Hills** are often avoided. I say charge them. Find your most feared hill and run up it 3-5 times. Running up hill places you on your forefoot, works your hamstrings, butt and calves and increases your vertical lift which lengthens your stride. Be sure to listen to your lungs to avoid hurting your legs. The dangerous part of running hills is the stress on the back of the heel and lower legs. Hill repeats are considered resistance training. When you start hills only do a few and do them slowly. A proper hill workout consists of an easy warm-up and light stretching. Then run up the hill and jog or walk down. You should do 2 hill workouts a month, and one should be long gradual hills and the other short steep hills.

**Overdistance** builds endurance. In this program, overdistance will be 8-10 miles. By running farther than your race distance, you will have a mental and physical edge. Overdistance runs shouldn't be fast, they should be easy and relaxed. We will gradually increase your long run so don't worry. It may seem overwhelming now, but will be easily done in 4-6 weeks. When getting ready for an overdistance run, you will need to get extra rest a couple of days before and after the run. By doing this, you will be strong when you start and will take the time to recover after. This keeps you from increasing your overall mileage too much.



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**Intervals** are necessary to introduce faster pace training into your program. We discussed last week the difference between goal pace and date pace. You need to “push the pace” to help you relax at your goal pace.

**Steady state** runs are simply 2-3 miles at your best effort (date pace). This prepares you for the reality of race day, and gives you a good idea of what pace is realistic for the 10k. Your steady state runs will become more frequent and faster as the race approaches. This run isn't long but it will feel long. This is the run where you do everything wrong. You go out too fast, feel uncomfortable, and try to sustain it. You will be very happy to finish and very proud of yourself for enduring.

**Technique and Form Drills** are your preventative medicine. Like any sport, there is technique involved. These drills will get you on your toes and strengthen your lower legs and feet. You need to practice your technique and form to improve it. I highly recommend a visit to our Technique classes. Strides are running the length of a football field 4-6 times at a quality pace (not a sprint). Strides help your muscles and joints become able to handle a faster pace.

### Drills

consist of lateral slides, over-and-unders, butt kicks, skips, quick feet and running backwards. These are hard to get unless you are coached through them. Your running schedule should have a good balance of the above runs as well as nice relaxing recovery runs. Advance runners will be able to do these types of workouts in a one week rotation, while others will do them on a monthly cycle, depending on your fitness, history and goals. Since these types of workouts are new to most runners it is very important understand them before you start them.

