

by John Stanton

# Running Form



Improved running form will yield faster running times and enjoyment. Here are some tips to improve your running posture, form and enjoyment.

## Run Tall

Envision a string at the top of your head pulling you up. Try to run as erect as possible; have gravity work with you not against you. Your head should be held high with your eyes focused down the road ahead of you. Keep your facial muscles relaxed or better yet—smile!

## Shoulders

Give your shoulders a couple of rolls. On the third roll allow your shoulders to drop back and relax.

## Chest

From the center point of your chest, lean very slightly forward and imagine a string attached to the center of your chest pulling you forward.

## Core Strength

Your torso is along for the ride; by running erect you will stay relaxed and keep your breathing more efficient. Doing so will divert the energy into the driving muscles of your legs. Tighten your abdominal muscles and clench the cheeks of your butt to maintain core strength and balanced posture.

## Arms

Keep your hands relaxed. Your thumbs can rest gently on the cupped hand. Keep your arms in coordination with your legs. The arm swing should be relaxed and focus on the elbow moving back and the forearms following. Your hands should swing no higher than your heart and back as far as your hip.

## Hips

Tighten your abdominal muscles and keep your hips shifted forward in line with your head and shoulders. Run tall; do not slouch or allow your butt to drop.

## Legs

Long-distance runners can improve their speed by shortening their stride length and increasing the leg turnover rate. Keep your leg turnover rate high. The ankle is well designed, and the proper stride length will allow you to use the efficiency of your ankle and save energy in your hamstrings and large muscle groups.

## Breathing

Breathing is a good thing. The most efficient athlete is likely the swimmer. You should breathe like a swimmer: purse your lips and exhale and focus on "belly breathing"; you will better absorb oxygen. Keep your breathing relaxed and rhythmic, in time with your powerful strides.