

Speed & Strength- Keys to Running Fast

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There are primarily two ways that you can improve your running speed:

#1- Practice running. Run fast with the right technique and you'll be amazed at what you can do.

#2- Get stronger. Improve your strength through weight training and you'll be more powerful than ever.

Technique, flexibility, and speed

The most effective means of getting you to run faster is to improve your ability to run at high speeds. Specifically, you need to develop proper running mechanics (technique), you must increase your stride frequency (speed), and you also need to optimize stride length (flexibility). Proper technique through flexibility training is critical in reaching your speed potential.

Faster 40's

For example, football players continually ask me to help them improve their 40-yard dash times. My reply is always the same; "Keep it simple and practice running 40's...as fast as you can!" I teach athletes how to get in the right "start" position, and how to "explode" off the line and into a high-speed sprint. You need to learn where your hands should be, how to drive your knee forward, and keep your eyes focused and head level.

Try this drill at home

A great drill to help you improve your acceleration speed is to start from a push-up position on the ground. As you push yourself up off your hands start running before you stand all the way up. This will force you to be slightly leaned forward and in great position to sprint to the finish line. Perform 10 of these every day and you'll be amazed at how fast you become.

Train for maximum strength

Strength training is another effective way to improve your sprint speed. Getting stronger in the legs, hips, and abdominal areas will help maximize your speed. Squats, Leg Press, Calf Raises, Lunges, and Sit-ups are great weight training exercises that strengthen the muscles needed for fast sprint speeds.

More strength "transfers" to more speed

The theory is that the strength you gain from weight training will "transfer" to more strength and power when you run. Think of it this way, your new level of strength allows you to propel your body faster and more powerful than before training. You're stronger and more powerful with each step. Thus your stride length and stride frequency both increase, and as a result...faster than ever.