

# The Sports Academy's Weekly Fitness Tip

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- 1. Run Tall.** Gravity and weak core muscles often cause runners to sink into a hunched, “sitting down” position which wastes energy. Think of lifting through the chest and shoulders and thrust your hips forward a bit to become more stable. Increase your core strength to improve your posture.
- 2. Relax.** Tension reduces efficiency. Loosen up your arms and fingers and let your jaw jiggle. Relax your shoulders, neck and face.
- 3. Breathe right.** Breathe rhythmically and deeply, feeling your diaphragm, not chest, doing the work. Exhale with a controlled force and don't let your breathing get shallow as you increase speed.
- 4. Land on.** Shorten your stride to land on top of your feet. Heel first landing acts as a brake; if you extend your leg out too far in front of you it takes more energy to move forward. Plus, it's shaky so instead of working on a forward motion your muscles are trying to stabilize you. Shorter strides will feel odd at first, but focusing on thrusting backward with force will make your running more efficient.
- 5. Run softly.** The louder you run, the less efficient you are. Run more quietly for a shorter, quicker stride.
- 6. Swing.** Watch your form in the mirror while running on a treadmill. If one arm swings more or is more bent, you have an imbalance that can slow you down. Improve the weaker side with strength and flexibility exercises.

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