



6 Weeks to Stronger Running - Basics

By Brian Kirshenbaum

The idea behind this “keep it simple” program is to help you reduce your risk of overuse injury, improve running performance and make sure you have a plan to maximize your training time, whether in the gym or at home.

PROGRAM

The following two workouts consist of some of my favorite strength exercises from which any runner can benefit. I hope you like them too. I suggest you perform each workout a minimum of 1 x weekly, usually best performed *after* your run on short run or speed day. I also suggest leaving at least one day between strength days and your long runs. Each exercise is hyperlinked to a video on YouTube. If you have any further questions as to how to perform these exercises or why I chose them, feel free to [contact me](#).

DYNAMIC WARM-UP

A proper dynamic warm-up before any workout helps stimulate blood flow, prepare your connective tissue (tendons/ligaments) and fire up your neuromuscular system for performance. After a general 5-10 min easy jog, perform 1 set of 10 reps (on each side when applicable) of each dynamic warm-up exercise. This should only take you about 7 min.

1. [Glute bridge march](#)
2. [Floor hip twist](#)
3. [Rock and reach](#)
4. [Kneeling lunge](#)
5. [Walking lunge](#) or [body weight squat](#)
6. [Walking hamstring](#)
7. [Side lunge hop](#)
8. [Inchworm](#)
9. [3 stance push-ups](#) - elevated on a bench if necessary
10. [Jumping jacks](#)
11. [Seal jacks](#)

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STRENGTH

Each workout consists of two lower body movements (push, pull, lateral or explosive), two upper body movements (pull and push) and two supplemental core exercises (a plank, rotation and/or anti-rotation).

Perform two to three sets of eight repetitions for each exercise (on each side when applicable) unless otherwise noted. Still reading? Good! While supersetting (performing two exercises back to back with no rest) is just beyond a basic level of intensity, if you've been doing some working out over the past 6 weeks, I think you can handle it. Rest 30-45 seconds between sets/supersets before moving on to the next exercise or superset.

Superset Example - Perform your squat and glute bridge back to back. Rest 30-45 sec and repeat 2 more times. Then move on to your next super set of TRX low row and push-ups.

WORKOUT 1	WORKOUT 2
<p>Lower Body</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Body Weight Squat Glute Bridge <p>Upper Body</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> TRX Low Row Push-ups* <p>CORE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Front Plank - goal 30 sec Tight Band Rotation -10 on each side 	<p>Lower Body</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Band Resisted Side Step Drop Squat <p>Upper Body</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Stability Ball Rear Shoulder Fly TRX Mid Row <p>CORE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Front Plank - 30 sec Side Plank - goal 20 sec ea side

*Think of a push-up as a moving plank. If you can't do a proper push-up on the floor, place your hands on an elevated surface such as a bench or bar.



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REGENERATION - To be performed after every training session and or run

Understanding Active Isolated Stretching (AIS)

Quite often, runners will only stretch areas that are easy to stretch, force a stretch too far on a tight muscle, or worse, not stretch at all. If we stretch a muscle too far for too long, it elicits a protective action known as the myotatic or stretch reflex, causing it to automatically fire (at about the three second mark) in an effort to protect you from over stretching. In the end, you get nowhere.

With AIS, you stretch to your natural range of motion, give a gentle assist, but for only two seconds (before that stretch reflex kicks in). Then you reset. Using this technique, the muscles exhibit a greater range of motion over the course of each set of reps.

The other key element to the AIS technique is to contract the opposing muscles to allow the muscle being stretched to relax. For example, when stretching your hamstrings, contracting your quadriceps as you raise your leg relaxes your hamstrings allowing you to get a deeper stretch. You will lie on your back, lift your leg as high as you can by using the muscles on the front of your leg, then using your stretch rope (or a yoga strap), give a gentle assist to the hamstring by lightly pulling the leg back to the point of tightness for two seconds, then reset to the start.

Each of the following exercises is hyper linked to a video showing proper form and technique. Perform 10 repetitions on each side.

Keep in mind, this is by no means an exhaustive list; however, it should give you plenty of exercises for a post run or workout routine.

If you want to really dig into AIS, I recommend [The Whartons' Stretch Book](#).

AIS Movements on next page



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1. [Bent Knee Calf/Hamstring](#)
2. [Straight Leg Hamstring](#)
3. [Hip Adductors](#) (groin)
4. [Hip Abductors](#)
5. [Piriformis](#)
6. [Quadriceps](#)
7. [Hip Flexor](#) (This is not AIS, but my favorite static stretch to be held for 30 sec on each side one to three times each.)
8. [Chest/Shoulders](#)
9. [Lats/Shoulders](#)
10. [Quadratus Lumborum or QL](#)

Foam Rolling

A little soft tissue work goes a long way. Here are just a few areas to foam roll from which just about any runner I have ever met can benefit:

1. [TFL, Quad, and Hamstring Side of the IT Band](#)
2. [Piriformis](#)
3. [Gluteus Medius](#)
4. [Ball smash of the piriformis](#)

Sample Training Schedule - Below is an example of a basic weekly schedule during which you will perform full-body strength training 2 x weekly. Granted running schedules vary so adjust your days as needed.

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
Run and Strength	Run	Midweek long run	Run and Strength	Regenerate	Long Run	Regenerate

FINAL NOTE ON EQUIPMENT: All of the equipment used in this workout (bands, balls, foam roller and TRX Suspension Trainer) should be readily available in your well-equipped gym. Also some of this is available at [Commonwealth Running](#) in store and online. I exclusively use bands

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from [RBT](#) as they are the best in the biz! All other equipment I suggest taking a look at [TRX](#), [Perform Better](#) or [Spri Products](#) so you can purchase what the pros use and train at home and while traveling, thus never having to miss a workout!

About the Author

Brian Kirshenbaum spent 16 years as a Certified Strength and Conditioning Specialist, personal training and strength coaching high school, NCAA Div 1 & 3 athletes as well as assisting the NHL's Minnesota Wild and Chicago Blackhawks with their respective training camps. Now he helps the general population of runners reduce their risk of injury and improve performance. When he's not working with runners, he's likely making pizza and watching his favorite Chicago sports teams try not to suck! You can reach him at brian@commonwealthrunning.com

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