



5 Resistance Sprint Drills to Increase Your Speed

by [Kevin Gray](#)

June 8, 2020

Just as there are many different kinds of runners, there are many different running workouts, including [intervals](#), [tempo runs](#), [hills](#) and [sprints](#). While most runners naturally focus on workouts that most closely align with their discipline and distance, everyone can benefit from improving their speed.

“Sprint drills help runners to increase efficiency and power in their stride, regardless of their desired race distance,” says Sandra Gallagher-Mohler, coach at [I Run Tons](#). That applies whether you’re competing in the 100 meters, running a marathon or just want to knock a couple of minutes off your 10K time. Enhance those sprints with a [resistance band](#) or a sled, and you’ll add even more oomph to your workout.

FIVE RESISTANCE SPRINT DRILLS

Below, Gallagher-Mohler shares her favorite resistance-based sprint drills. “Top priority is proper form,” she says, “so, be sure to master these foundational movements prior to advancing them with resistance.”

Gallagher-Mohler also advises that these exercises should be done only after you’ve performed a full warmup, and you should build in adequate rest time between sets and between workouts.

1 PARTNER BAND RUNS

To perform this popular two-person training drill, place a strong band around the lead runner’s hips. The trailing partner holds the band to keep it tight, while the lead runner sprints with strong, optimal form. The partner can jog behind the runner to extend the exercise over a greater distance. “These are great because the resistance can continue for longer than most anchored band run-outs,” says Gallagher-Mohler.

2 SMALL LOOP BAND SUPINE RUNS

Lie on your back with your knees over your hips and shins parallel to the floor. With your feet flexed, and a small resistance band looped around your feet, push one foot forward and straighten your leg right above the floor, then alternate. Continue these steady and intentional run strides like you’re running with your back and ribs on the ground. This move encourages proper core incorporation with each knee drive, says Gallagher-Mohler.

3 PARTNER BAND WALL KNEE DRIVES

Facing a wall, loop a medium band around one ankle and place your hands on the wall. With your ankle in dorsiflexion (foot flexed) and your glutes and core firmly engaged, perform knee drives toward the wall as a partner holds the band behind you. This move targets run-specific hip-flexor activation.

4 ANCHORED STRONG BAND LATERAL HIGH KNEES



La Salle
COLLEGE PREPARATORY

Track and Field

Coach C. Ring '01

3880 E Sierra Madre Blvd
Pasadena, CA 91107
626.351.8951

Fix a strong band to an anchor point, or have a partner hold it, and loop the band around your waist. Perform quick, strong high-knees as you move laterally away from the anchor point. “This is an advanced move that helps engage the calves, glute max and glute medius, and obliques very well,” says Gallagher-Mohler.

5 PROWLER RUNS AND PLATE PUSHES

You’ve probably seen a prowler screaming across a parking lot or gym floor. It’s a sled that’s distinguished by having three points of contact with the ground, rather than two long skis. Give it a strong push, and you can work your posterior chain (i.e., your back, glutes, hamstrings, etc.), which increases strength and running speed.

“Prowler runs are great for glute and calf engagement and can offer higher levels of resistance,” says Gallagher-Mohler. In addition to engaging your muscles, you’ll get a dose of [metabolic training](#) to work your conditioning. But they’re a seriously taxing workout, so ample rest is required between sets, and Gallagher-Mohler suggests performing the exercise no more than twice per week.

PRO TIPS BEFORE STARTING A RESISTANCE PROGRAM

Both sprinters and distance runners can benefit from resisted run drills and strength exercises as long as the work is well balanced and maintains adequate sport specificity, explains Gallagher-Mohler. As with all exercises, the above drills should be performed as part of a progressive, well-structured program. “Master the basics with non-resisted moves prior to moving to the more advanced resisted moves in order to avoid injury and gain the most from your workout.”