



10 REASONS WHY YOUR ATHLETE HAS AN

AWKWARD RUN



Hey Parents,

I realize it can be a little unsettling to see your athlete struggle to simply run. You know something is not right with their form, but you just can't figure out what it is... the running just looks, weird.

You should know you're not alone. "My athlete has an awkward run" is something I've heard dozens of times. And as a parent myself, I get it- you just want to provide your child with every opportunity to be successful.

I've worked with nearly a thousand athletes from elementary school to high school, from D1 Collegiate Teams to (several) professional sports teams. I've also helped countless parents, just like you, by helping their athlete run better. And I'm going to help you, too.

In these next few pages, we will look at 10 common mistakes athletes make when running that can create that 'Awkward Run'. I'll also give you quick suggestions on how to fix these common errors.

Wherever your athlete's sports career takes them, I'm grateful you allowed me to play a part. Thank you.

God Bless,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mark Keil', with a stylized, cursive script.

Mark Keil

10 COMMON MISTAKES MADE DURING RUNNING THAT CAN CREATE THAT 'AWKWARD RUN'

**AND how to
correct them!**

#1 DO THEY CROSS THEIR BODY WITH THEIR ARMS?

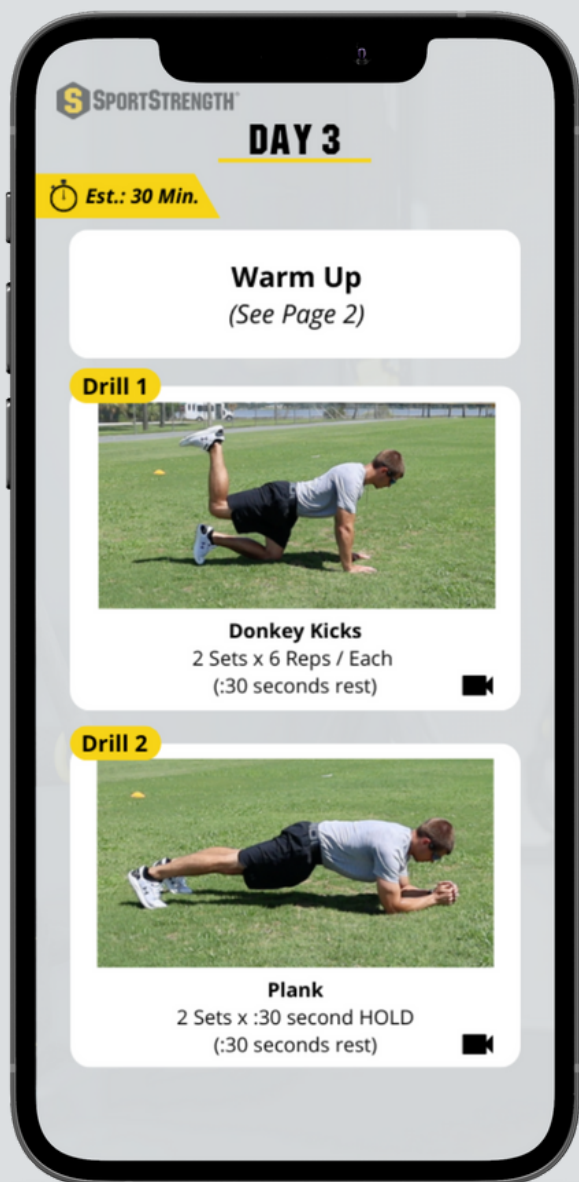
Your athlete needs to drive their arms from front-to-back. When the arms cross the body, it can slow the athlete down as they are likely to throw their body from side-to-side while trying to run straight ahead.

#2 DO THEY STAND UP TALL?

During the Acceleration Phase (those initial few steps of a sprint) they should have a good forward lean. As they reach near maximal velocity, they will transition to a more upright position. However, if they stand up too tall too quickly, then they will struggle to generate speed.

#3 IS YOUR ATHLETE SLOW TO TRANSITION BETWEEN CHANGES IN DIRECTION?

This could be the result of them loading one leg too much rather than 'staying light on their toes'. If they overload one leg, then it will take longer for them to push themselves out of that position.



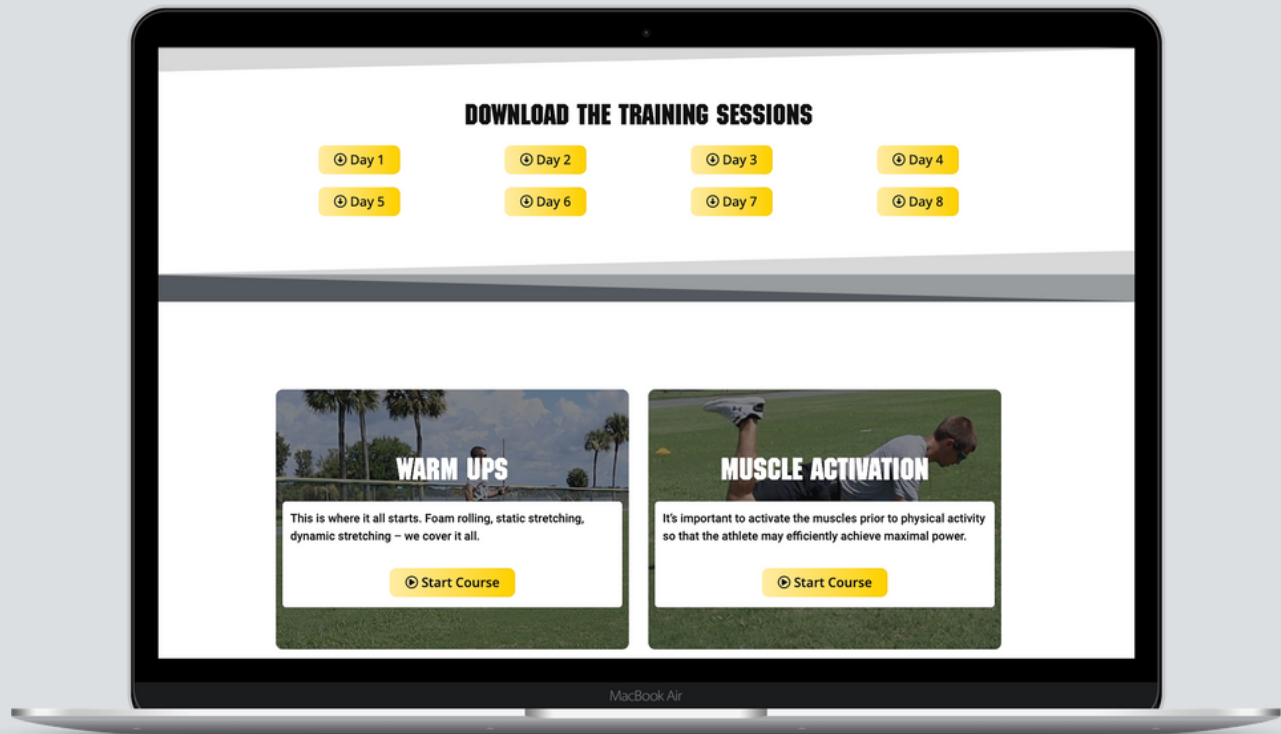
#4 DO THEY CHOP THEIR ARMS AT THE ELBOWS?

I tell athletes all the time, 'You can chop at the elbows all day and not increase your speed'. Speed comes from driving the arms at the shoulders, NOT chopping (bending / flexing) at the elbows.

Training Sessions (.PDF)

#5 DO THEY COMPLAIN OF THEIR MUSCLE(S) BEING TIGHT?

If they do, then they need to spend longer warming up. Warm Ups are so important, especially if your athlete is going to generate maximal speeds. When muscles are tight, they cannot be used through the full range of motion (which hinders the athlete's ability to achieve maximal speeds).



'Fix the Awkward Run' Course - On-Demand Videos & Downloads

#6 DOES YOUR ATHLETE 'PUNCH THE AIR' WHEN THEY RUN?

Running with closed fists does not help your athlete's speed. Have your athlete open their hands to a 'loosely cupped' position.

#7 DO THEY STRIKE THEIR HEELS OUT IN FRONT OF THEM AS THEY RUN?

If they strike their heels out in front of them, then they are slowing themselves down. That's because this 'heel strike' is essentially acting as a brake (which is obviously what we don't want).

#8 DO THEY RUN WITH STRAIGHT ARMS?

Your athlete should run with a bend at the elbow. Ideally, they should try to maintain a 90-degree angle at the elbow at all times.



Training Sessions (.PDF) - Video Demonstration of a Ladder Drill

#9 DOES YOUR ATHLETE RUN WITH FLAT FEET?

Running flat-footed will reduce their ability to generate speed and make it more difficult for your athlete to efficiently change direction.

#10 DO THEY FULLY EXTEND THE DRIVING LEG?

The 'Driving Leg' is the leg with which they are pushing off from. If they do not extend that leg, then they are missing out on speed for which they have the potential to create. This error is likely a result of 'tight muscles'.

**TO FIX YOUR ATHLETE'S
RUN, YOU NEED A PLAN
THAT WORKS.**

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