

RUNNER'S

WORLD

Training: Workouts

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This Way Up

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Proper form helps you power up any incline.

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PUBLISHED 09/15/2008

HEAD: "Keep your head and chest up. Don't slouch," says Olympian Adam Goucher. Attempting to "grit out" a [hill](#), many runners put their head down, which wastes energy by throwing off their form.

EYES: To keep your body upright, "fix your eyes directly ahead of you, not down at your feet," says cross-country champ Lynn Jennings. "You will sleekly move up the hill."

HANDS: "Keep your hands loose, no fists," says Jim Schlentz, who coached Olympian Kate Fonshell. Loose hands help your whole body stay relaxed.

LEGS: "Push your legs off and up, rather than into, the hill," says Goucher. This helps you feel "light," as if you're "springing" up the hill.

GOING UP: Run the first two-thirds of the hill relaxed, then slightly accelerate the last part, while carrying your pace over the top, says Schlentz. "Don't push too hard at the bottom of a hill," he says. "Then you're dead at the top."

BRAIN: "Visualize the crest of a hill 20 meters beyond where it really is, so you run to the top-and keep going," says Jennings. "I would tell myself, 'Up and over, up and over,' and would not relax till past the top."

TORSO: "Lean forward," says Jennings. "It maintains momentum."

ARMS: Coach and marathon champ [Alberto Salazar](#) emphasizes accelerated arm action to drive up a hill: "Concentrate on overusing the arms to really power up, so your running almost simulates sprinting." Your arms should form a 90-degree angle at the elbow, and swing straight back and forth, not across your body.

FEET: "Get up on your forefeet and take shorter strides," says Jennings. "Run with punctuation."

GOING DOWN: "Your feet should land underneath you," says Schlentz. "This produces minimal shock on the body." A shortened armswing will help shorten the stride.

WHY BOTHER?: Strength, efficiency, endurance. A study published in the Journal of Biomechanics found running on a steep grade at a fast pace achieved greater "muscle activation" in the legs and hip area than running at a slow pace.

SHORT ON TIME: Short hills provide maximum training effect with minimum [injury risk](#), says elite coach Brad Hudson. Start with three or four repetitions up a hill about 60 to 80 meters long at top speed. Recover fully between runs.

DISTANT MEMORIES: Longer hills teach the body to recruit muscle fibers when they're fatigued. "This helps you develop a kick," says Hudson. Start with three or four reps of a hill 300 to 600 meters long. Recover fully between runs.

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