

## Friday Night Speed Sessions

Friday nights are aimed at beginners to experienced runners of all abilities giving you a introduction to speed work. If you stick with it you will see the results in your racing. Club members like Pete Jakeman and Annie Ashmead have improved a lot from their speed sessions. Other members from the club that have turned up regularly have also seen a lot of improvement with a good group spirit in these sessions. Tim Hawkins and Peter Darton have now been running the Friday nights for a couple of years passing on their vast knowledge and experience with their coaching knowledge. We also regularly do handicap race/runs which are great fun and very good training sessions.

Contact Peter or Tim at the following addresses for more info about Friday nights.  
Peter [petedarton@hotmail.com](mailto:petedarton@hotmail.com), Tim [runnerhasbeen@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:runnerhasbeen@yahoo.co.uk)

See Club Runs page on website for details of Friday night sessions  
<http://www.yeoviltownrrc.com/clubruns.shtml>

## Read below for a brief introduction to speed training.

### Speed Work

Speed work consists of several runs of a mile or less at race pace or faster with slow recovery jogging between hard runs. Specific speed work training runs include intervals, fartleks, and tempo runs.

Speed work is an important component of any advanced training program. The benefits include:

- Training the physiological system to adapt to the additional stresses placed on it. The legs learn to turnover faster, the heart learns to work harder for a sustained period, the lungs learn to process more oxygen and the mind learns how to handle discomfort.
- Regenerating the body to run faster for a longer period after completing speed work.
- Maintaining a faster race pace.

Some final points regarding speed work:

- Complete one speed workout per week while building up for a race.
- To maintain motivation, focus on your race/personal goal while training.
- Do speed workouts with a group. Accountability and companionship do wonders for continued motivation.

Now that we've looked at speed work basics, let's take a look at some specific speed workouts.

### Intervals

Interval workouts are made up of a set of short, faster paced runs over fixed distances from 200 meters to one mile, interceded with periods of light recovery jogging. Although there are many variations of intervals, the three basic types are:

1. **Repeats** - the distance of the repeating running segment does not change (ex: four 400 meters repeats with a 200meters recovery jog in between each)
2. **Pyramids** - the distance of the repeating running segments peaks and then returns to the beginning distance (ex: repeats of 200 meters, 400 meters, and up to 1600 meters before returning to 400 meters and then 200 meters)
3. **Ladders** - the distance of the repeating running segments either steadily increases or decreases (ex: 200 meters, 400 meters, 800 meters, up to 1600 meters or run in the reverse order of 1600 meters down to 200 meters)

Looking to improve your speed in a certain distance? The table below should help you pick the interval you need to run.

Distance	Interval
5K	200m and 400m
10K and Under	800m
10K to Marathon	One Mile

Regardless of the type of interval training workout you do, the long term goal is to improve speed on distances ranging from one mile up to a marathon.

Some final interval training tips:

- Interval workouts are typically run on a track due to the ease of running predefined distances.
- Pacing for interval training should be determined in short distance races or runs such as a 5K. Use you're calculated pace information to design appropriate speed workouts.
- Remember to do a recovery jog following your session. The distance should be half of your interval distance or more depending on whether you are a beginner or have some interval training experience.

## Fartleks

Sounds like an intestinal disorder, doesn't it?

Actually, fartlek is Swedish for **speed play**. Fartleks are an unstructured, fun way to introduce speed training into your workout and consists of **bursts of speed** in the midst of a training run. There are a variety of ways in which to do fartleks and they can be run almost anywhere.

The advantages of fartlek training include:

- Training your body to run anaerobically (meaning without oxygen).
- Preparing your legs to absorb and feel a variety of paces.
- Enhancing your awareness of your ability to maintain varying paces at different distances.

To complete a fartlek workout you need to:

1. Warm up.
2. Run at an easy training pace.
3. Interject bursts of speed for differing distances throughout your run.

4. Speed should vary as well as burst times. Bursts should be maintained from 15 seconds up to 2.5 to 3 minutes.
5. Recovery time should equal two thirds of your burst time but needs to be faster than an interval recovery jog.

Some final fartlek training tips:

- Pick out a landmark and run your fartlek at a consistent pace until it is reached.
- Choosing a landmark to mark the end of a fartlek burst should continue until the end of the training run.

## **Tempo Runs**

Tempo runs are the easiest of all the speed workouts to implement. No distances to keep up with and no split times to remember. Just run faster than your usual training pace and maintain a single sustained effort.

Tempo training is useful because it:

- Increases the body's anaerobic limit in order to maintain a faster pace over a longer period of time.
- Boosts speed as the body becomes accustomed to running at close to its upper limit.

Steps to complete a tempo run are:

1. Complete your normal warm-up routine.
2. Once you have warmed up, pick up your pace to a level you can maintain for predesigned time or distance. Your pace should be 80-85% of your maximum heart rate (if using a heart rate monitor) or your 10K race pace.

## **Hill Repeats**

Hill repeats are basically what you believe they would be, fast-paced efforts to run up hills. They are considered strength training and are typically implemented following the completion of a base/mileage-building stage.

The benefits of hill repeats include:

- Combining cardiovascular training (heart) with strength training (legs).
- Running uphill lessens the impact force of each footfall which significantly reduces the risk of an overuse injury.
- Enhancing mental toughness for upcoming workouts and races in hilly terrain.

Hill repeats are completed by:

1. Warming up appropriately.
2. Running the hill at a 5K effort pace. Maintain a good running form and don't worry about sacrificing speed. Just keep the effort at a 5K pace.
3. After reaching the top of the hill, walk or lightly jog back down the hill and repeat the process.

## **Conclusion**

Are all these special workouts necessary?

**Absolutely not.**

You are still a runner even if you decide to do the same distance at the same pace day after day. However, if you want to improve both your speed and endurance, doing at least some of the specialized training listed above will help you reach your goals. Stick with it and be the best you can be!