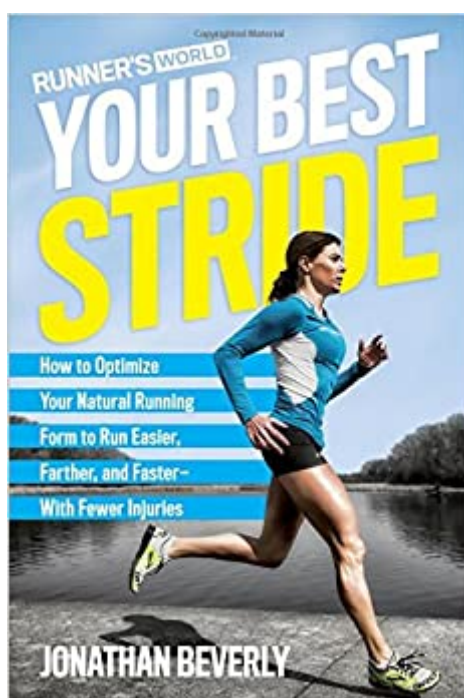


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# Runner's World Your Best Stride: How To Optimize Your Natural Running Form To Run Easier, Farther, And Faster--With Fewer Injuries



## Synopsis

Run the Way You Were Born to Run Every runner wants a smooth, light, powerful, and resilient stride. But there isn't one ideal form all runners should try to emulate. Instead, research and experience show that people can run effectively in a wide variety of patterns with some universal elements. In lively, accessible prose, author Jonathan Beverly details his search for common ground among physical therapists, podiatrists, biomechanics researchers, and coaches, and reveals how individual runners can apply those principles and improve their performance, avoid injury, and enhance their enjoyment on the run. With specific, illustrated exercises that show how to counteract tight muscles from excessive sitting, improve limited arm mobility from hunching over electronic devices, strengthen your feet for better balance, and improve speed by lengthening your stride, *Runner's World Your Best Stride* is an approachable guide to human movement and a practical tool for improved running performance.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"A practical, well-researched, no bullshit book on running technique...I'll be referencing, and recommending, it anytime form-related questions arise from here on out." -Mario Fraioli, *The Morning Shakeout* "This is the post-fad, post-backlash, post-whiplash book we've been waiting for, taking advantage of the huge surge of interest and research into running form in recent years to move beyond all the turf wars and look at what we've actually learned." -Alex Hutchinson, *Sweat Science* "Your Best Stride is every runner's..."

guide to the biomechanics necessary to make running more comfortable, enjoyable, and faster. — DEENA KASTOR, U.S. Olympian — “Your Best Stride reflects the most up-to-date research and thinking on running technique in an accessible, practical format. — ROBERT M. CONENELLO, sports podiatrist, past president of the American Academy of Podiatric Sports Medicine

Experts agree: Your body knows how to run—smoothly, lightly, powerfully, and pain-free. You run in a unique style, tailored to maximize the way you are built and how you move most comfortably. — If this is true, why do many of us struggle on the run? We watch great athletes and marvel at how comfortably they move: effortlessly, perfectly balanced, barely seeming to touch the ground as they glide by. We want to run that way, but often feel that we’re painfully pounding the ground and pulling our reluctant bodies along by sweat and will. Are some runners simply gifted with good mechanics? Did they learn how to run that way from a good coach? Is it all about the shoes? During my 15 years as editor of — Running Times, I heard every possible theory on how to run better. I watched fads come and go, listened to each new expert tout their method as the best and only way to run, and followed each trend in shoes that promised to solve all of our problems. Three years ago, when minimalism and the barefoot craze collapsed on its own promises as runners failed to adapt and continued to get injured, I felt like runners were left uncertain amid a confusing mess of conflicting voices. — I wanted to discover if there was anything that experts agreed upon, anything that we know for certain about how to run. Over the course of two years, I interviewed many of the world’s top coaches, biomechanical researchers, physicians, and physical therapists. I learned that what they agree upon is not a specific running style but a few optimal running mechanics that often get compromised by our daily habits. When you were young, you could run around a playground all day, effortlessly. If you had grown up in rural Kenya, where you walked and ran for transportation and spent much of your days playing and working outside, you’d likely still run that easily and comfortably. Unfortunately, from the time you were four or five years old, you started sitting in a chair eight or more hours a day. As you got older, you spent more time sitting during work and leisure, so that now your hips are almost constantly in a folded-forward position. You added hours hunched over computers and phones that pulled your shoulders and arms forward. These lifestyle constraints have compromised your flexibility, strength, balance, and movement patterns. Your body is still trying to become an efficient running machine—but is using parts that don’t all work like they are supposed to. The experts agree: No amount of form cues, trying to land on a different part of your foot, or new shoes will enable you

to run the way you were born to run without addressing the underlying issue of how you've carried your body the last several years. Experts also agree: there are no secrets that will instantly transform how you run. Regaining your natural running form requires integrating stretches, exercises, drills, and new posture and movement patterns into your training and lifestyle. You won't be alone in adopting these activities. The gracefully flowing runners at the front of the pack work on their mechanics every day--it is what gives them their beautiful strides, which you can have as well. Here's the good news: Restoring your best stride will come naturally once you've corrected the imbalances created by a modern, mostly-sedentary lifestyle. It's not about changing your stride to match a one-size-fits-all ideal. In fact, trying to make changes without correcting your mechanics usually ends up making things worse, as many have found out. You need to restore your full range of motion, then break out of habitual ruts to allow your body to once again find your optimal, personalized stride. In *Your Best Stride*, I describe in more detail what I found in my search for common ground regarding running form and present the steps that can help every runner restore his or her most comfortable and efficient running pattern. I've also included ideas on how to integrate the necessary work into daily life to ensure it gets done despite busy schedules--even 5 to 10 minutes a day can make a big difference over time. And I've added advice on the role of shoes and how to choose them. I hope *Your Best Stride* will help you enjoy your running more as you run easier, farther, faster, and with fewer injuries. Run Tall, Jonathan Beverly

This book provides a wonderful collection of insights and advice from various coaches, physical therapists, biomechanists, and other running specialists. The premise of the book is that good running form is individualized, but that there are things we can do to improve the way we run. With some smart work, we can become more efficient, stronger, and more resistant to injury.

I've been running for many years, and I found several concepts and exercises in this book that will be helpful for my improvement journey.

Excellent book written for us non-elite (and never will be) runners. This book compiles a lot of information I've read in other places but it fits all the pieces together in a much better and understandable fashion. If you're new to running or have experienced an overuse type injury (ITBS, plantar fasciitis, etc.) then it's worth the money.

Extremely thorough and informative collection of research, anecdotes, thoughts on running form and

how to best improve it from some of the best minds in the business. Runners of all levels of experience and ability really must read this book and act its advice to give themselves the best chance of running further, faster, easier and with less injuries (and way more enjoyment!). As a running form coach myself I look forward to expanded on my current approaches using the material presented in this book. Thank you and Run Better!

So far I'm really loving this book. Haven't finished reading it yet, though.

Great information, well presented. It incorporates the latest in research - internationally and US, from runners, sports medicine specialists and podiatrists.

This book is a fantastic guide for understanding and improving your own running technique. It offers a balanced blend of proper biomechanics, cross cultural analysis, and individuality to running form. The research and wisdom supplements my own changes in running form in effort to eliminate my nagging Runner's Knee (Patellofemoral pain syndrome). Included are instructions and diagrams for stretching and balancing exercises. I strongly recommend this resource for any runner with goals to run stronger, faster, and pain free.

Full disclosure: The author and I used to work together at Running Times. From this, I know that Jonathan is a fellow student of the sport, lifelong lover of running and hater of BS. That's to say that Jonathan has produced exactly the excellent guide to the whys and hows of running form that I thought he would. This deeply researched and informative book tells you everything you need to know about why good running form is so important, no matter what your running goals, and it provides clear guidelines on how to improve your form. Two things that really separate this book from others on the topic: Jonathan's focus on how the way that most of us spend our non-running hours harms how our bodies want to run, and simple do-at-home tests to determine where your body is most in need of improvement. The how-to, prescriptive information is, like Jonathan, grounded in the real world, where most of us fit in our running the best we can around the many other pulls on our time. Jonathan's main message here is that, like investing for retirement, small but frequent efforts compound over time to great effect. If you're like me, you probably often feel limited in your running not because of a lack of energy, and maybe not even time. Rather, you feel constrained mechanically, like your body is sometimes working against you rather than for you. Jonathan's book will show you how to find and address your particular weaknesses so that, at the same level of

effort, you'll feel smoother, faster and freer while running. Who wouldn't want that?

Your Best Stride is arguably the most pragmatic and up-to-date book there is on running technique. This comprehensive guide explores all aspects of optimal running form, with a rich education on why our movement patterns dictate how we run. Loaded with solid information and advice from some of the top names in running, this book is useful for any level of runner. As a yoga teacher, run coach, and trainer, I appreciate the focus on functional body alignment, and the elucidation that all bodies are not created equal; with no golden standard in which to adhere to or strive for. The exercises in the book are intelligently sequenced, and presented in a way that are clear and easy to follow, with advice on how to fit them into your day. (squats while grinding coffee?? Genius!) I find this book to be not only an extremely valuable resource, but a great motivator to add some of the practices and benchmarks into my running. Immediately after finishing, I handed my copy to my 15 year old son, as he embarks on his sophomore season of cross country, and plan to give the coach a copy, too!

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