

# HILL WORKOUTS FOR RUNNERS

Love them or hate them, there's no getting away from it; hills are good for you!  
The beauty of hill work is that it can come in many guises, you can choose the gradient, the distance covered in each rep and the total number of reps, depending on your goals.



Whichever aspect of training you wish to work on - [speed](#), power, endurance, hills are a fantastic way to obtain the desired training effect whilst reducing the impact on your legs. Going for gradients will also help to develop leg strength and running economy too.

## Hilly run

Including one or two hilly runs into your schedule each week is a wonderfully simplistic way to improve your strength and endurance. Choose an undulating loop and run at a steady pace but simply work the uphill. This type of run is best placed at the start of a training block or during a base phase when you are predominantly working on general endurance and don't need to recover between high intensity workouts.

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## Kenyan hills

Kenyan hills are so called because yep, you guessed it, they are often used by some of the best Kenyan distance runners. This form of hill workout is continuous in that it involves an 'active' recovery, with the

aim being to keep blood lactate levels and heart rate elevated throughout the workout.

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Find a hill with a moderate gradient and run up it for 60-90 seconds at a pace that is 'comfortably hard', not an eyeballs out effort. Once at the top turn around and run back down the hill at a steady pace to actively recover. Repeat this sequence 5-6 times. You can gradually build the number of efforts as you become fitter.

Remember, the aim of this workout is to run each uphill segment hard, yet controlled so that you are able to maintain a steady pace during the downhill segments. If you're forced to stop and walk you're running too hard!

## Power hill sprints

Short hill sprints are a fantastic way to increase the number of fast twitch muscle fibres that you can recruit. By simply recruiting more muscle fibres you will be able to run at a faster pace without tiring. This workout is a great bolt-on at the end of an easy run. Focus on maintaining good form, driving your arms and lifting your knees. If

you're looking to develop strength then opt for a steeper hill. If it's speed you're aiming for then go for hill with a gradient that's less severe.

Try 6-8 x 10 second hill sprints with a slow walk back recovery.

## Uphill tempo

Unless you have the privilege of training in the mountains, where the length of the incline isn't a barrier, this workout is best reserved for the [treadmill](#). If you're becoming a little bored of regular [tempo runs](#) then an uphill tempo run is a fantastic way to spice things up a bit and to introduce a different stimulus.

After warming up for 5 minutes, set the treadmill at an incline of 5 per cent. Increase the speed so that you are running at a comfortably hard pace, but not flat out. Effort wise you should be able to say about three or four words, but be unable to hold a full conversation. Aim to complete 20-25 minutes of continuous running, or if this is too challenging then split the work into blocks such as 2 x 10 minutes or 4-5 x 5 minutes with a short, 1 minute recovery. The key to this workout is to err on the side of caution and to start a little slower than you feel

you need to as the hill will start to bite! Reduce the gradient and cool down with 5 minutes of easy jogging.

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