
4 Quick Moves for Smooth Running



by Kristina Pattison, DPT, CSCS

Kristina Pattison running Lolo Peak, Montana. Photo by Ben Herndon Photography

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Runners use large muscles in the legs and hips to forcefully propel the body forward with one leg and land on the other leg to move quickly overground. Without adequate stabilization by deep hip and ankle muscles, the body relies more readily on passive structures for lateral support during this process, such as ligaments and tendons. Overuse of these passive structures by repetitive stress leads to most common running injuries including: achilles tendinopathy, plantar fasciitis, runners knee, and iliotibial band syndrome.

The keys to decreasing risk for running injuries include gradually progressing running volume to prepare these tissues for stress, and to consistently strengthen the active stabilizer

muscles supporting these passive structures. Here are 4 quick moves that will keep the ankles and hips strong and stable, ensuring decreased risk for injury and improved running speed.

1) ANKLE PLANTAR FLEXION/DORSIFLEXION WITH LATERAL RESISTANCE



With a resistance band anchored on a stable object, place the looped end around the forefoot. Keep the foot pointed straight forward and move foot up and down. Repeat on opposite foot, then face the opposite direction and repeat.

2) ANKLE INVERSION/EVERSION WITH LATERAL RESISTANCE



Keeping the shin still, move foot in and out to work muscles on the side of the shins. Repeat on opposite foot, then face the opposite direction and repeat.

3) SIDE KICKS WITH LATERAL ANKLE AND HIP RESISTANCE



Keeping the leg straight and foot pointed straight forward, move the whole leg in and out to work the hips. Repeat on both sides, then face the opposite direction and repeat.

4) HEEL RAISES WITH KNEE STRAIGHT AND BENT



Keeping the leg straight raise up onto the ball of the foot. Repeat with knee bent. Then repeat on the opposite side.

****FIND VIDEOS OF THESE EXERCISES AND MORE BY KRISTINA PATTISON, DPT, CSCS AT MISSOULA BONE AND JOINT PHYSICAL THERAPY ON YOUTUBE****



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*Kristina Pattison running Lolo Peak, Montana.
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