



# Read, Right & Run Marathon®

Presented by:



By the GO! St. Louis standards, 12-15 minutes of continuous activity is the equivalent of 1 mile. Listed below are suggested games and activities to promote children's running. Try giving students choices in workouts. Some students will enjoy running a mile, while others will prefer various games.

**Ready, Set, Spell** (courtesy of Carol Goodrow: <http://www.kidsrunning.com/school/readysetspell.html>)

Create a starting line and place clipboards and crayons 25 yards directly across from the kids. The instructor yells: Ready, Set, Spell "marathon". The kids sprint across to their clipboard, spell the word, and sprint back to the starting line.

## Ladder Runs

Have a team of 6 children jog at a solid pace, while the last person in line sprints to the front and so on and so forth.

## Rabbits & Hounds

Send the slowest child out on the track first. When they've run halfway around, send a faster child out to chase him/her, continue on until all children are out running.

## Soccer Drills

Provide a soccer ball for every two students. Have each pair of two students stand one behind the other. The first person in line should have the ball and should "dribble" the ball in straight or long, curved pathways, not zigzags. The second person follows the leader. After one minute of the activity change positions. Continue to change positions every minute.

Variation: Have the first person in the line run in straight or long curved pathways.

Have the second person in line dribble the soccer ball to follow the leader. Continue the practice of changing positions every minute.

Suggestion: Incorporating low level, sports skill building drills, that have a cardiovascular conditioning component, can incorporate fun and variety while developing a training base.

## Cross Country Team Run

Do a one-mile run (or other distance). Prior to the run, create cross-country teams. As runners finish, award them a number that matches their finish order in the run. Add the total for each team. The goal is to have the lowest team total.

## Short Rope Jumping

Give each student a short (8' or 9') jump rope. Have the students run while turning the rope. Be certain to allow sufficient space between students so no one gets hit by a rope. How far can students go doing this activity? How long can they perform the activity?

### **Cross Country Golf**

Set up a nine-hole golf course. Each hole should be 75 - 100 yards long. Have a "tee" at each hole that serves as the starting point for the hole. The tee will have the directions for how the hole should be completed. Also have a "flag" for each hole. Participants will start at the "tee" on each hole and complete the hole at the "flag". After completing the hole at the flag, the tee for the next hole should be nearby. Suggested directions for each hole are:

First Hole - Walk quickly to the flag.

Second Hole - Run to the flag at half speed.

Third Hole - Run to the flag at your "race pace".

Fourth Hole - Do "Karaoke" (grapevine step) to the flag.

Fifth Hole - Sprint to the flag.

Sixth Hole - Run slowly to the flag.

Seventh Hole - Do an "increasing" to the flag.

Eighth Hole - Do "strides" to the flag.

Ninth Hole - Run with knees up and strong arms to the flag.

Return to the First Hole to restart or continue the course.

Notes: "Increasing" - run progressively faster from the start of the hole to the middle of the hole so you are running your fastest in the middle of the hole. At the halfway point, decrease your speed gradually all of the way to the finish line

"Strides" - Run with elongated strides the length of the hole.

Variations: If your playground or field space includes hills, you might want to incorporate running up and/or down hills. Students can be started on each hole as individuals, in two-somes, or foursomes. All students can begin by groups at the first hole, or a "shot gun" start can be used; start all groups simultaneously, one group at each hole. In addition to doing the running activities, strengthening and flexibilities can be incorporated when the runners reach the "flags" before they move to the next hole.

### **Luck of the Draw Run**

Do a one-mile run (or other distance). Prior to the run, have half of the students place their names on individual slips of paper. At the end of the run, have each student, whose name is not on a slip of paper, draw the name of a partner, whose name is on a slip of paper. Thus you create two-person teams by "the luck of the draw". Team scores can be created by adding the times of the two runners together. Lowest total time wins. Or, students can be awarded a number that matches their finish order in the race. Partners can then be chosen and the finishing places added together. The goal is to have the lowest total of the two added places.

### **Side-By-Side Running**

Run side-by-side with a partner for a prescribed distance. The goal is to run the entire distance together and encourage your partner to run the entire way as well. This activity can be performed as a "Buddy Run": Pair some of your faster children with your slower children and tell them to run together the entire time of your planned run. It helps the faster kids slow down a bit and enjoy it and it helps the slower kids speed up a bit and work harder.

### **Relay Running**

Relay running can be a great motivator. The goal in using relays to develop cardiovascular fitness is to raise the heart rate for a specified length of time and provide periods of rest. It is not to race the other teams. Encourage students to run at their "race pace", not faster.

Try this: On a  $\frac{1}{4}$  mile track, divide students into groups of 3. Place two runners from each team at the starting line and one runner on the opposite side of the track. Runners run  $\frac{1}{2}$  laps of the track and tag the next runner (the first runner runs to the second, who runs to the third at the original starting line, who runs to the first, who runs to the second, etc.) on their team for a specified distance or time.

### **Turnstile**

You will need a 16-foot jump rope. This activity can be done in many ways; as a cooperative activity, as a skill building activity, as a physical fitness activity or in combinations of two or all of the components.

Turnstile: Place one turner at each end of a 16' jump rope. Remaining participants should form one line facing the rope. The rope should be turned away from the line to allow students to run in "front doors". When the rope is turned, students run through the rope one after the other and then return to the end of the line. The goal is to get through without having the rope touch you or without having the rope turn without having anyone run through. If the rope touches a runner, or a runner misses her turn to run through, she must exchange places with one of the turners on the end of the rope. Try keeping score to determine how many students can consecutively run through the rope without being touched by the rope or missing a turn. When trying to develop improved physical fitness, this activity should be done in groups where there is constant movement and little standing or waiting in line; students should have to "hustle" to get back in line to go through the "turnstile" again.

### **Walk/Run for Distance**

On an established track, set-up walking and running distances. Participants will walk on sections of the track and run on others. For example, on the first day of an after school Read, Right and Run Marathon practice, students may be asked to complete a one mile walk/run, during which they walk 110 yards, run 110 yards, walk 110 yards and run 110 yards of a  $\frac{1}{4}$  mile track. In subsequent practices, reduce the length of the walking sections until students can run longer and longer.

### **Walk/Run for Time**

Do the same activity listed above for time. Walk for a specified time and run for a specified time. The teachers should have a whistle; one blast of the whistle means "walk", two blasts means "run". Start with lengths of 30 seconds of walking and 30 seconds of running (or adjust to the skill and physical fitness level of your students). Gradually decrease the length of the walking interval and increase the length of the running interval.

**Read, Right & Run Marathon® – THE START LINE FOR THE FUTURE.**