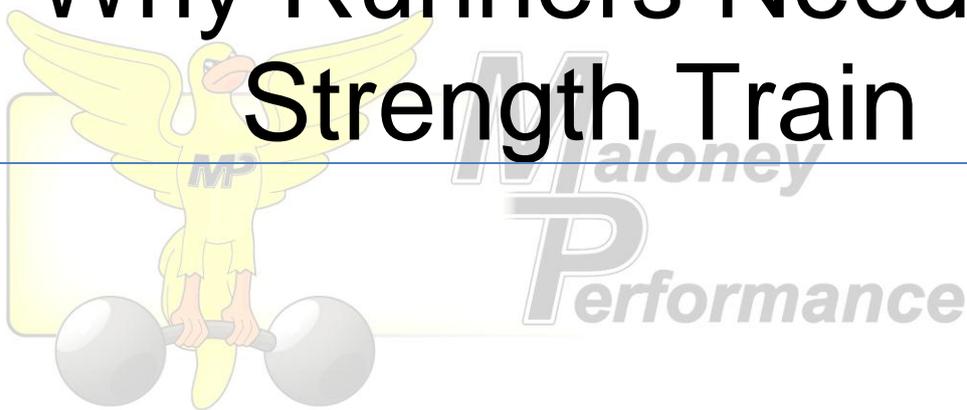




Why Runners Need To Strength Train



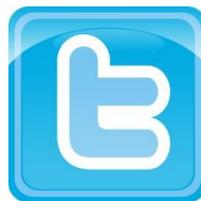
Sean Maloney MSc., ASCC, CSCS, CSCS

[Maloney Performance](#)

sean@maloneyperformance.com



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Why Runners Need To Strength Train

It appears that 'strength training' has become something of a swear within the running community. Surely you just run yourself fit, right? Let's put our preconceptions about lifting weights aside (something we'll look at in a future article) and have a look at how it may benefit your performance.

Why runners should strength train

- **Increased injury resilience**

Appropriate strength training reduces the occurrences of common injuries such as shin splints, runner's knee, Achilles tendinitis and ankle sprains.

Two of the key risk factors for running injuries are muscle weakness and muscle imbalance. Appropriate strength training addresses these issues and helps bulletproof your body. The more resilient you are, the more you more time can spend focusing on your running.

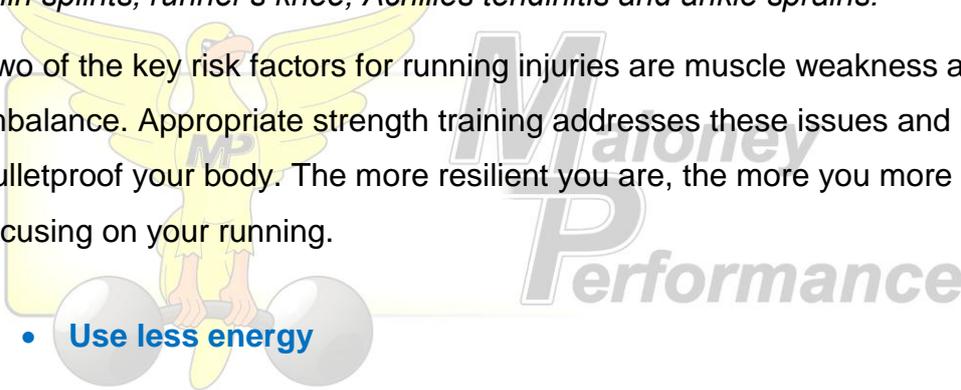
- **Use less energy**

Research has shown that strength training reduces the amount of oxygen required to run at a constant pace.

Strength training increases the total amount of force that you are able to produce. As the force required the move your body remains the same, this means running becomes a less demanding task.

- **Run faster**

As strength training makes running less demanding, you've also got the capacity to run faster.



The efficiency improvements achieved through strength training will allow you to increase your race pace without increasing the perceived intensity that you're working at.

- **Finish faster**

Getting stronger will make you faster and improve your final kick.

Getting stronger means that you are not only able to produce a greater amount of force, but also produce this force more quickly. These two factors result in greater sprint speed and a kick worthy of Seb Coe.

- **Offset muscle breakdown**

Running for long periods results in the body breaking itself down.

This isn't necessarily a bad thing, some of what the body will break down is body fat. However, prolonged exercise will also start eating into muscle tissue. Strength training will help preserve this muscle mass, crucial for health purposes.

- **Offset potential health problems**

Distance running raises cortisol (the stress hormone), impairs immune system function and causes inflammation within the body.

Strength training has positive outcomes on all these factors and works hard to offset the damage caused by your running training.

Summary

Strength training has a positive impact on health, injury resilience and performance. It should form an integral component of any runner's training regime, regardless of their level of performance.