

Triathlon Run Starts

Run starts are an essential element to a good performance. Like swim starts and exits, having the right approach to starting your run off the bike is important so be sure to practice them in order to become proficient. Below are some tips and insights on how to make your run starts effective and productive.

Run Start

Pacing and staying relaxed are key element to get you off on the right foot. The first portion of the run your legs and feet will feel numb or like “tree stumps” and make for an awkward initial start to the run portion. Do not try and force your pace. Allow your legs to settle into their run. A shorter stride and relaxed pace may you to make this transition easier. Once the run is underway and the blood flow gets redirected, the legs will feel like normal. You should be able to settle in to your running goal pace within the first ½-1 mile. Once you have settled into your goal pace focus on your breathing, follow your designated pacing strategy, monitor your heart rate and manage your overall effort level.

If you find you self ahead of your goal pace, in the first miles of the race, ease off and get back on pace. However, if you are feeling strong and you feel you can hold the pace then continue, being sure to hydrate and fuel. If you find that you are behind your goal pace, gradually increase your speed to get back on pace. Do not try to make up the time immediately. Very gradually make up the time over the course of the next 1-2 miles.

Keep in mind that nearly all courses will have hills, which will automatically alter your pacing, so account for the terrain when you are setting on a goal times and pacing strategy. For gently rolling hills course mile splits are generally 5-10 seconds per mile slower than running on flat terrain. It's best to therefore establish a finishing goal time that is realistic for a hillier course and not to panic if a given mile split is off since any given hill can effect a mile split.

