

# **SPEED / 101**

by Jordan Collins 04\_03\_06

I'm sure you've been told over the years many different ploys and scams that will enable you to sprint faster in a matter of days right? Well guess what...I'm sorry to tell you that it won't be that easy. To become a better sprinter, it takes brutally hard work to enable the body to move at such a high velocity while sustaining maximal power for a certain time period. As a sprinter, one of the best methods I've found to increase my speed, strength and running form would have to be none other than the power- speed drills.

The power-speed drills, which are simplistic in nature and have a quick learning curve, are quite taxing if performed correctly. Now, the drills that I am talking about include: B Skips, C Skips, Butt Kicks and A-Skips which are also known as High Knees.

Now, one of the main problems of athletes is being able to maintain top speed throughout his/her sprint. The power-speed drills help emphasize proper form and motor patterns that are needed to maximize your speed.

**B Skip:** Skip with your lead knee coming up and down to your hip joint with some force but at an easy cadence. I personally like to have a very forceful impact upon the landing of my skips. The reason for this is speed is simply how much force you can apply to the ground. Alternate skipping motion between legs. Also ensure the proper thrusting arm action. A good rule of thumb is to thrust your arms from your chin to your hip, while maintaining a 90 degree angle.

**C Skip:** Skip with your lead knee coming up, and then extend your foot out. Sweep your foot down with force, emphasizing once again that your foot comes under your hip. As in B skip, alternate between right and left leg strikes.

**Butt Kicks:** While doing a slow jog, vigorously kick your heels to your buttocks. Your hip-to-knee joint should remain relatively still. All the action should come from your knee-to-foot lever.

**A Skip:** This drill involves a progression of B skips and is possibly the most demanding leg exercise done in the program. Lift your knees to your hip joints, and then drive them down in a fast and constant pace. This drill is simply brutal when performing over long distances. The mimicking nature of the speed of ground contacts, coupled with varying distances provides great benefits for 200/400m sprinters.

So when exactly should someone perform these drills? Well...everyday would be your best bet. These drills are one of the most important aspects for improving speed and it takes time and effort to see the results. I love to perform the drills as part of my daily warm up and then again after my sprint sessions to maximize the benefits. If done correctly, these will blow up the hamstrings, hips and core muscles that primarily used for sprinting.

Implementing these drills into your training regimen will provide amazing advantages to your speed training. Give them a try and watch your form and function shoot through the roof. As for me, time to go burn up the track...later.

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The style of the south, is a sprinter for Auburn University's track & field program. He has trained under Coach John Davies for years now and has starred in many DVD for Renegade Training. He brings a young flare and passion to the strength and conditioning community.