



Why Do Track Workouts?

Track workouts are the most important run of your week. There. I said it and I did not sugar coat it. That is the way it is.

Track workouts are also the easiest to avoid. They are painful and sometimes humbling. If you want to be good at running 8 minute miles then go run 8 minute miles every time you run. If you want to learn to run and race at 7 minute pace, you will need to run at a pace of 7 minutes or faster for shorter distances.

Does this ring a bell: “Most people run too hard on their easy days and not hard enough on their hard days”?

I will even go as far as to say that you could run your track workouts and long runs and walk your recovery “runs”. This strategy would be more productive than running at the same pace everyday.

Track workouts are really not that different then a [fartlek](#) run. Both types of workouts are typically at or faster then race pace. One key advantage of doing your speedwork on a track is that you have a set distance and thus can compare your times from year to year to understand your current fitness levels.

Try not to put too much importance on one track workout. You do not have to give every track work out 100%. The key is to just break the cycle of running every workout at the same pace. Just drag yourself to the track and get it done. You can always find a reason to skip the weekly workout: you’re too out of shape, it’s too early in the year, it’s too late in the year, you’re too tired from last weekend’s race, you’re tapering for this weekend’s race, you’re too fat, etc. The best strategy is to ask yourself “How is skipping this track workout going to help me run faster in the future?”

Running with a group can help make the workouts more fun and to push you past your ability to push yourself. Many towns have weekly organized track workout groups. Check with the local club in your area.

The bottom line is to just get out there and do some speed training. It will make you feel better about your training as well as improving your overall performance.