CROSS-COUNTRY RUNNING

LA RENTRÉE SPORTIVE
PART OF THE IS●ACTIF PROGRAM • RSEQ

WHAT IS CROSS-COUNTRY RUNNING?

Cross-country running, a **track and field** sport, is an **outdoor event** where teams and individuals can run races in the open air, rain or shine. It varies from place to place. Course length, typically a distance of 3 km to 10 km, depends on the age and gender of the runners. Popular in Quebec schools in the fall and spring, this sport requires only a pair of running shoes to get started. To enjoy this outdoor activity, students must develop their cardiovascular **endurance** and **agility** to overcome obstacles.

▶ YouTube video created by **Club des Vainqueurs**: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fH0eLtG8H1A

EQUIPMENT

Green, yellow and red cones   4 agility ladders   Hula hoops

HOW TO MAKE THIS ACTIVITY A SUCCESS

Go **outdoors** to keep the spirit of this sport alive.

Do not cross another runner's imaginary **running lane** (don't "cut off" anybody).

Look up and ahead to see any **obstacles** on the course.

Make sure that young children have the **proper footwear** (laces tied and running shoes).

THE INTRODUCTORY SESSION

Based on the time you have available, design a session to the skills and preferences of your students. Pay attention to the following pictograms:

E Elementary school level   **H** High school level   Outdoors

No equipment   Distancing   Solo

---

WARM-UP

ROCK-PAPER-SCISSORS DRILL   E H ● ● ●

EQUIPMENT: +

OBJECTIVE: Preparing the leg muscles for running.

Place **two teams face to face** near the centre line. Ask the participants to play "ROCHE-PAPIER-CISEAUX" with the players in front of them. The winner of each round must try to **tag the other player** before he reaches the end line (cones). If he tags him, the other player joins his team. The goal is to finish with as many teammates as possible.
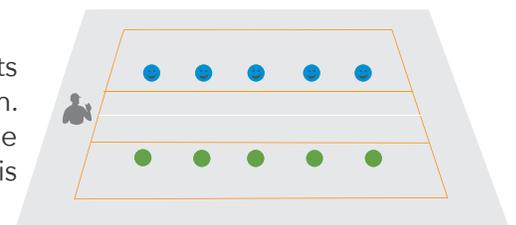
👉 Require students to **move in a specific way**: strides, stretched legs and heels close to buttocks, for example. Add hula hoops to jump through, if you want, to replicate obstacles on an outdoor field.

GAZELLE DRILL

E H 😀 ✋ 👥 👤

EQUIPMENT:

OBJECTIVE: Preparing the leg joints for running.

Divide the group into **two lines**, one at the back of the field and the other in the middle. At the signal, experiment with different dynamic movements over **10 m**. Focus on performance, not on speed (this is not a race). Finish with sprints. If you prefer, challenge your students with a sequence of movements.

START   10 m   20 m
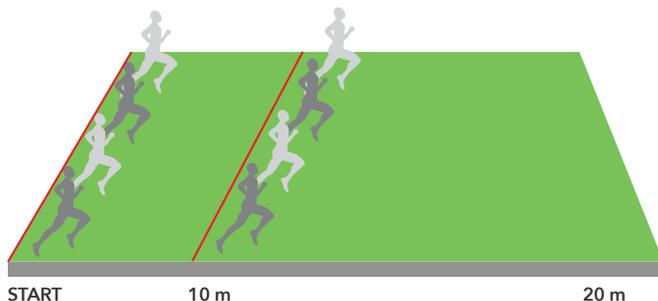
👉 To properly prepare your ankles for uneven terrain, walk **on your toes and heels**, jog with your **knees high** and your **heels close to your buttocks**, run with your **legs stretched out** and take **short strides**.

10-SECOND DRILL

E 😀 ✋ 👥 👤
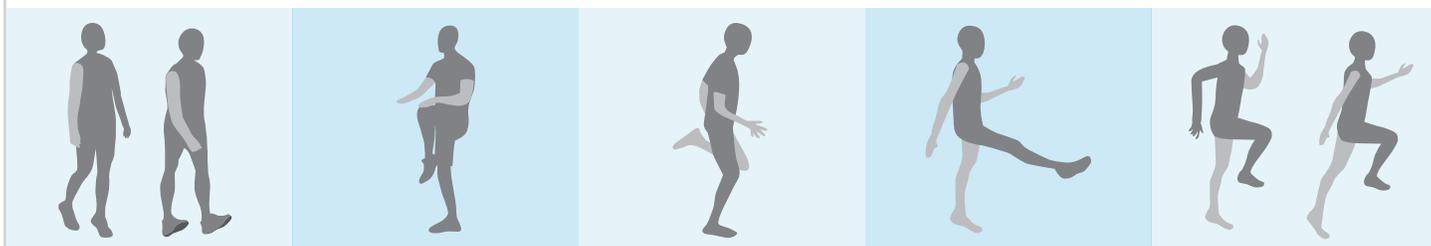
EQUIPMENT:

OBJECTIVE: Giving meaning to the words speed, pace and endurance.

Set up **three wide running lanes** (**20 m**, **30 m** and **40 m**). Divide the runners equally in each lane. At the signal, they must complete a lap while adjusting their speed within 10 seconds, regardless of the course.Experiment with each lane and determine the speed for each one ("**slow**," "**medium**" and "**fast**").
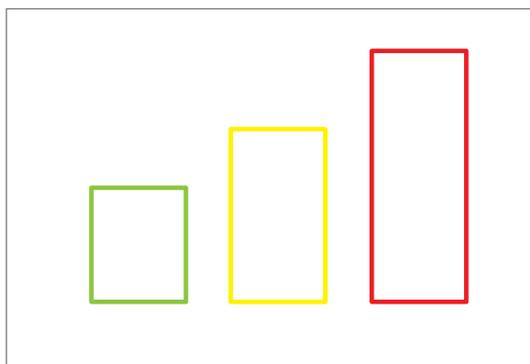
👉 On the way back, **look up** to make sure you don't collide with another runner. **Stay to the right** of the lane on the way in and out of it (like driving on a road).
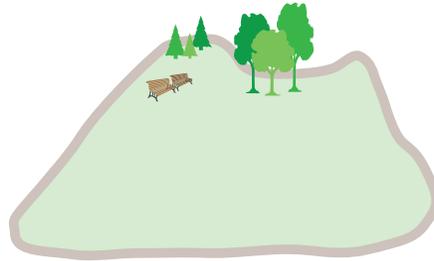
10-LAP DRILL

EQUIPMENT:

OBJECTIVE: Running 500 m within three minutes.

With cones, set up three courses. At the signal, students must try to complete **10 laps** within **three minutes**.

👉 The longest course should be **50 m**. To be successful, runners must maintain a pace of six minutes per kilometer. Adjust the parameters based on the abilities of the students.

IRREGULAR COURSE DRILL

EQUIPMENT: 4 ▱▱▱▱▱ or 1 stairway

OBJECTIVES: Taking long strides and maintaining a steady pace.

Cross the **agility ladder** or go up and down the **stairway** in a variety of ways: **running back and forth** (normal), on **one foot**, **hopscotching** (two feet and one foot alternatively), **feet together**, for example.

👉 Take **long strides** in preparation for climbing small hills and jumping over **obstacles** (stumps, roots, puddles, for instance).
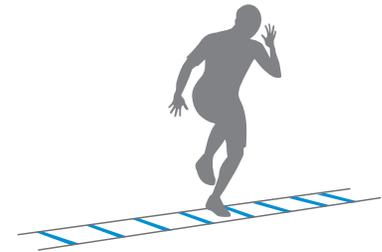
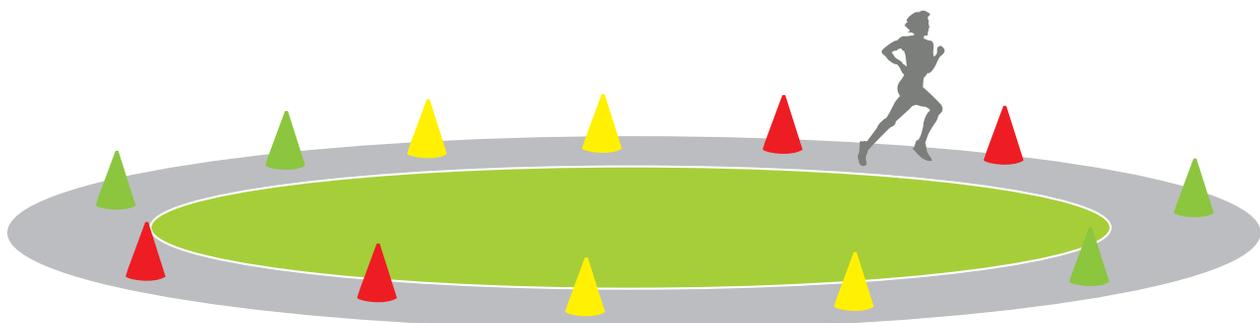# SPEED DRILL

EQUIPMENT:

OBJECTIVE: Experimenting with different running speeds on a continuous course.

On a **100 m** course, set up a few well identified sections (with cones) that mark a **change in speed**: green for slow, yellow for medium speed and red for fast. In **pairs**, take turns completing the course, staying within the cones. Run a total of **400 m** and **800 m**.
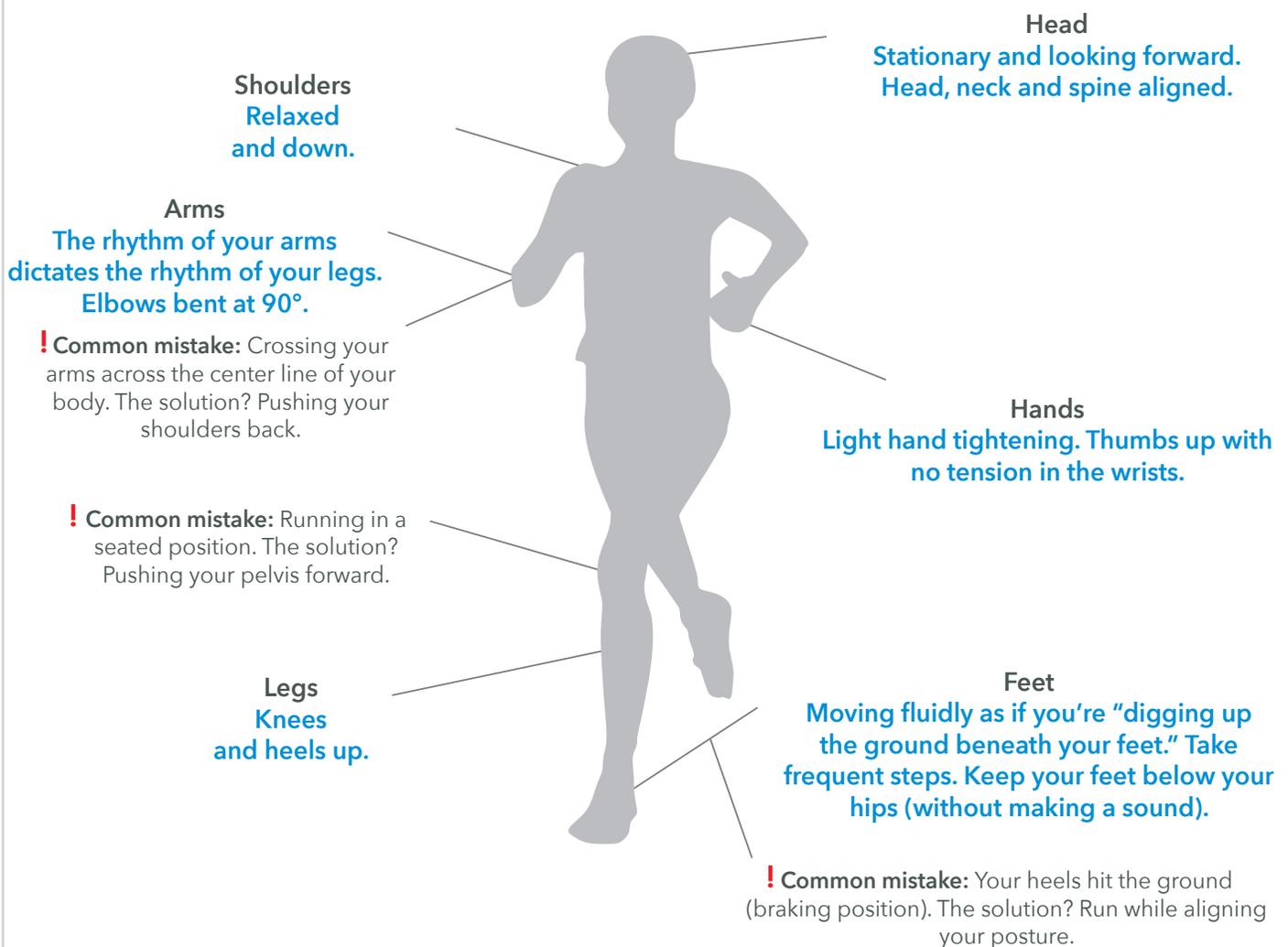
3

10-MINUTE DRILL

E H

EQUIPMENT: 🪀 + obstacles in a natural setting

OBJECTIVE: Completing a long sprint as a team.

In **teams of four runners**, complete as many laps of the **course** as possible in 10 minutes. Choose a **marked course of about 200 m in the forest**. Count the number of laps completed by each team. On the course, start with **two runners (from each team) at a time**, while the **other two** count the laps and wait for the relay. Place each team's start at different spots on the course to prevent them from running into each other (if necessary).

👉 If you decide to go into the woods, **walk the entire course** before giving the starting signal. To **run for a long time**, follow these simple tips:

Head
Stationary and looking forward. Head, neck and spine aligned.

Shoulders
Relaxed and down.

Arms
The rhythm of your arms dictates the rhythm of your legs. Elbows bent at 90°.

! Common mistake: Crossing your arms across the center line of your body. The solution? Pushing your shoulders back.

! Common mistake: Running in a seated position. The solution? Pushing your pelvis forward.

Hands
Light hand tightening. Thumbs up with no tension in the wrists.

Legs
Knees and heels up.

Feet
Moving fluidly as if you're "digging up the ground beneath your feet." Take frequent steps. Keep your feet below your hips (without making a sound).

! Common mistake: Your heels hit the ground (braking position). The solution? Run while aligning your posture.

👉 For more details on the **cross-country running** programs in your area, visit the RSEQ website.

RSEQ.CA

* The RSEQ is not responsible for the content shown on any of the linked sites.