

To gain a fuller development of the main training systems needed to become better distance runners, training should be divided in specific training phases, or periods. Under the LYDIARD model the greatest emphasis should be devoted to the development of the aerobic capacity in all runners. However, both strength and speed should be address when appropriate, to insure the full development of the runner abilities.

1. BASE TRAINING. This phase of training can be divided into two sub-phases - a) Easy base running, and b) quality base running. Each phase can be as many weeks as possible.

a) This is the time a runner uses to build up to their highest target mileage. Usually, add about one mile a day, each week, or less. All of this running should be at a very easy, but NOT slow pace.

b) Once the target weekly mileage is reached, the training can be intensified on two to three days each week. These harder runs are usually TEMPO, or FARTLEK runs which build higher stress to the cardiovascular system. A typical training week should include a long easy run, two tempo days and a fartlek day. Where possible these runs should be interspersed with easy, recovery days, or total rest days.

2. HILL TRAINING. (Strength phase). During this phase, hill training will replace the tempo days. Lydiard hill training is complicated, and hard to reduce to a few sentences, but 25 to 40 minutes of hard hill sprinting is generally what a runner needs. This phase is usually four to six weeks in length.

3. SPEED TRAINING. This training period usually coincides with the main racing phase for the runner. Now intervals are substituted on the hills days. Only TWO interval sessions per week should be run. All other training days should be the same as during the Quality Base Phase. As the season progresses, the speed on the interval running should be increased in order to reach the runners fastest race times.

Once the "season" ends, runners should take one to three weeks of basic rest. This should include complete days off running, and some shorts easy jogging. Once this rest is completed, the cycle above should be repeated.