

Racewalking for Beginners

Art Klein - PAUSATF Racewalk Chair

Racewalking is a learned skill. It utilizes your natural walking ability coupled with specific techniques.

To help you learn to walk with less effort you must develop "muscle memory" Here are a few tips:

- Keep your head level, avoid bouncing and lean forward slightly from the ankles, not the waist.
- Keep your shoulders down and relaxed.
- Allow your arms to swing naturally back & forth (bent at the elbow in a 90 degree angle)
- Strike the ground first with your heel, then roll to the ball of the foot, pushing off from the toes.

F.I.T. tip

Frequency, Intensity and Time (FIT) are the elements you need to put together an effective beginning racewalking program.

The best way to halt a racewalk program in its tracks is to do too much too soon. A minimum of 20 to 30 minutes, three days per week (with days off in between) at an intensity of 50 percent to 85 percent of maximum heart rate is the standard recommendation, but may be manipulated to suit individual speed or endurance goals.

Here are a few more things to keep in mind:

- Take time to warm up before, and cool down after, a racewalk.
- Never increase mileage more than 10 percent per week.
- If anything hurts, take time off until it feels better.
- Follow a strength-training program on alternate days to help reduce upper-body fatigue.
- Racewalking is for everybody. You don't have to race to racewalk. Focus on the techniques, take your time, progress slowly and allow your muscles to adapt to the rigors of racewalking.

Note: Individuals who are in good shape may progress at a faster rate by increasing time and intensity simultaneously, while those who are less fit may opt to progress more gradually.

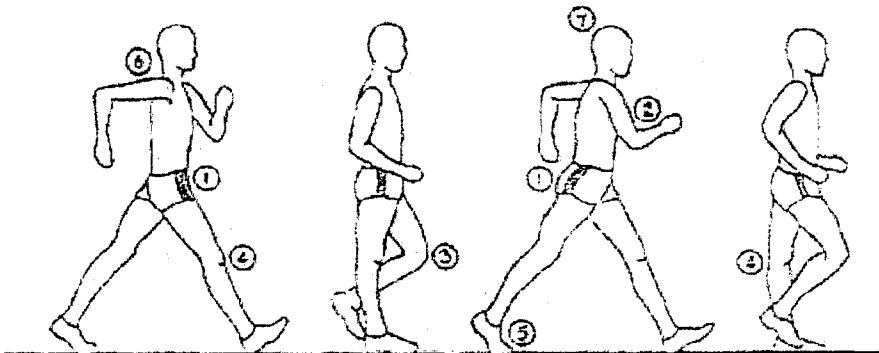
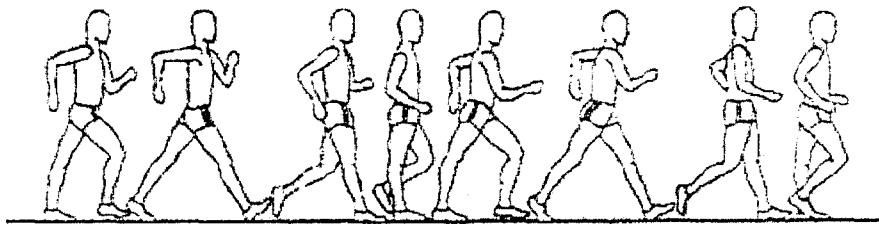


Racewalk Clinics

**Is your club interested in
hosting a youth racewalk
clinic in 2007?**

Contact PA-USATF Racewalk Chair Art Klein at: kleinwalk@comcast.net

CORRECT RACEWALKING TECHNIQUES

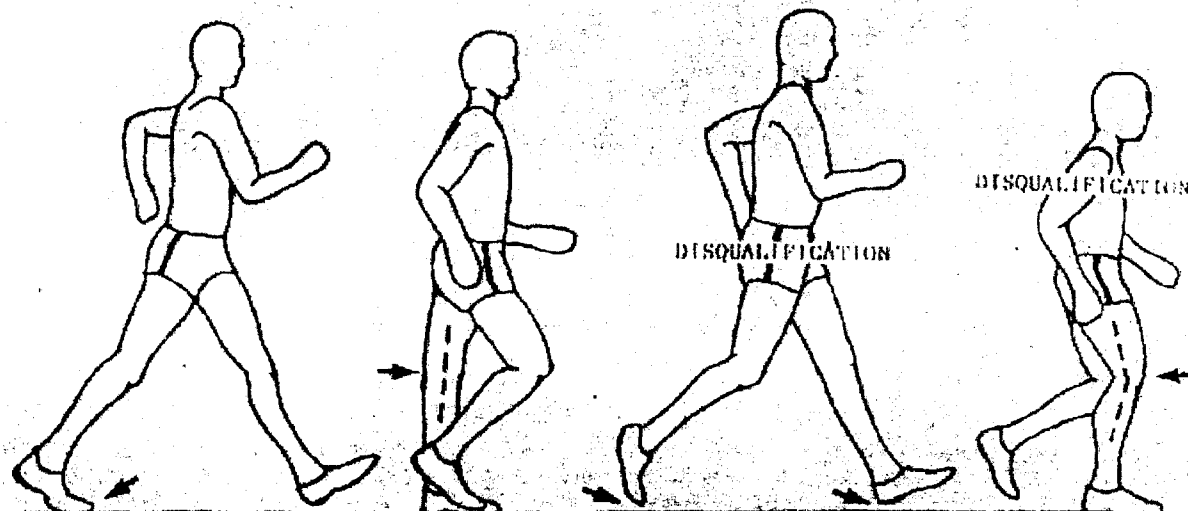


1. Hips drop and roll while twisting back and forth. This allows your legs to move faster and easier, and gives you a longer stride. Note how stripe on side of shorts moves from front to rear.
2. Arms always bent at ninety degree angle and pumped vigorously. Let them swing across your chest as they move back and forth.
3. Knee bends as leg is swung forward. This allows toes to clear ground.
4. Knee straightened all the way back at this point

- and pulling ground as heel touches.
5. Toes and calf muscles push body forward. Feet land on a straight line with toes pointed directly forward.
6. Keep neck and shoulders relaxed.
7. Body and head in upright position at all times.

Always concentrate on correct technique. This helps time pass more quickly and makes you feel and look better.

RULES OF RACEWALKING



Contact must be maintained with the ground (i.e., at least one foot must be on the ground at all times).

In the vertically-upright position the supporting leg must be straightened.

Contact with the ground not being maintained.

Supporting leg bent in the vertically-upright position.

efficient racewalking form

H - Shoulders rotate in transverse plane (Parallel to the ground) in opposition to the hips. A low and relaxed motion. No tension between shoulder blades nor hunching.

K - Head and Neck upright and relaxed. Eyes on horizon, not ground. No Neck craning.

G - Elbows bent at 90°

J - Hands swing waist band to sternum. No cross over in front of the body. Hands gently closed, not flapping or clenched.

F - Flat lower back

E - Hips rotate in transverse plane. No excess side to side or up and down motion. The hip, knee and ankle reach full extension at toe off.

Optimum path of the body's center of gravity

D - Driving leg straight until a moment before foot leaves the ground

C - Landing leg is straight or slightly bent at heel strike. It is straightened before reaching the vertical. The landing heel is much closer to the body's center of gravity than are the toes of the trailing foot.

B - Drive forward not upward. Toes roll to vertical. Swinging foot close to the ground.

A - Heel strikes the ground first with toes up. Feet land along a line without toes pointing in nor out.