

# Running Workshop

► **Over the last 12 months LimbPower have been working with UK Athletics and British Athletics to deliver Learn to Run Workshops. We wanted to share what we have learnt with you.**

I once had a prosthetist in America tell me that you can run on any leg above or below knee, so I thought I would give it a go. In my opinion the answer is that if you are physically fit and don't have any stump problems (please check this with your rehabilitation consultant) you can certainly follow the steps and techniques that lead to running, but other factors may prevent you from actually running. As an above knee amputee I tried running at the first clinic on a c-leg and while I was able to run (I use the term loosely) it was not a fluid movement, as the knee didn't swing through fast enough.

Below are a list of physical exercises that will prepare you for running. Ideally do these on a mat or carpet to prevent injury.

**1. Walk** taking large strides forwards and then repeat going backwards for 6-10 repetitions (reps).

**2. Side step** leading with your prosthetic limb. Ensure that as you move your hips are level and not dipping and your elbows remain on your hips and don't twist throughout the movement. Repeat for 6-10 reps.

**3. Side step leading with the sound limb.** Ensure that as you move your hips are level and not dipping and your elbows on your hips and don't twist throughout the movement. Repeat for 6-10 reps.

**4. Grapevine,** this is like weaving with your feet. Side step by bringing the back, prosthetic leg across in front then step to

the side with the sound limb and bring the leg across and behind and step to the side. Repeat for 6-10 reps.

**5. Grapevine, leading with the other leg.** Side step by bringing the back, sound leg across in front then step to the side with the prosthetic limb and bring the leg across and behind and step to the side. Repeat for 6-10 reps.

**6. Stand on the spot** with your legs slightly apart and bounce from one leg to the other trying to put weight equally through both legs, repeat for 20 reps.

**7. Stand on the spot and bounce** up and down on both legs, again putting weight equally through both legs, repeat for 20 reps.

**8. Place the sound limb** out in front of you and bounce backwards and forwards from the sound limb onto the prosthetic limb, repeat for 20 reps.

**9. Place the prosthetic limb** out in front of you and bounce backwards and forwards between the prosthetic limb and the sound limb, repeat for 20 reps. *If you have a free knee be careful that the knee doesn't give way.*

If you can do these exercises without pain you are ready to start running. Always consult your rehabilitation consultant before trying to run. Keep doing these exercises and make the steps longer and the feet faster as you improve.

Now you have mastered the techniques it's time to give running a go. Make sure you are wearing comfortable clothing and that your leg is fitting properly and then take a deep breath and go... If you feel a pain in your stump you must stop!

***LimbPower advocate that if you want a running leg you need to prove that you are serious by attending a clinic and trying to run on your current leg or joining an athletics club.***

**Written by: Kiera Roche**  
**Programme by: Siobhan Strike**  
*Principal Lecturer in Biomechanics, Sport and Exercise Science Research Centre, University of Roehampton*



## Health benefits of running

- Running regularly improves circulation, reduces the risk of a heart attack, high blood pressure and stroke.
- Running on a regular basis stimulates the bones to remain strong.
- The average runner burns 1,000 calories an hour during a training session.
- Endorphins released during exercise can also improve happiness.
- Running can help relieve mild depression.

You can attend a LimbPower running clinic ([www.limbpower.com](http://www.limbpower.com)) or join a local club through <http://clubfinder.englandathletics.org> If you would like to talk to someone about competition opportunities please contact **Liz Purbrick**, National Disability Manager (Community Participation)

**E:** [lpurbrick@englandathletics.org](mailto:lpurbrick@englandathletics.org)  
**T:** 07850 514936

