

### Arm/Shoulder Carry

Often when running, shoulders tighten and rise up and around the neck, creating very uncomfortable form. You can check how relaxed your shoulders are by how high they rise up around your neck. To make this determination, place one hand on your opposite shoulder and push down, lowering it as low as it can go. This is the point your shoulder should be at when it is relaxed. This shoulder position will then allow for a proper arm swing.

The ideal arm swing is for your hands to travel from the middle portion of the hip to the height of the lower aspect of the chest but not crossing over the center line of the body. In addition, there should always be at least 12 inches between your hands at all times during running. The forearms should be held at about 90 degrees to the upper arm when in a neutral position and when traveling backward and forward. The arms should remain close to the body. The arms are pumped front to back but allowed to pendulum forward.

### Arm Fatigue

During the course of a workout, your arms or shoulders may get fatigued. If this happens, relax your arms, lowering them to your side, and shake them for two or three seconds. Then continue normal running form. This will improve circulation, stretch out the muscles and help you continue to run comfortably. If you desire, adding a light upper body weight program will help prevent fatigue. Many runners tend to underestimate how much effort it takes to hold your arm in one position for an extended period of time.



### Hand Position

Hold your hands in a relaxed fashion, but do not allow them to dangle or flop with your arm swing. Make sure that you do not hold your hands in a tight fist. Make a very loose fist and then tuck your thumb onto your index finger. Pretend you are holding a potato chip between your thumb and index finger without breaking it to gauge the amount of pressure to be used.

### Head Positioning

Hold your head up high, looking forward. You should not have your head buried in your chest or cocked back looking upward. Additionally, look straight ahead as much as you can, not less than 5 feet in front of you at the ground. Only look at the ground if you are on an uneven surface thus preventing you from tripping. Also, maintain a relaxed face. Do not clench your teeth. Let your jaw drop slightly and let your cheeks flap as you breathe.

### Posture

The principle of good running posture is simple. Your body should generally be straight up and down throughout the entire stride with only a slight natural forward lean at the ankle and hip, not in the upper back or waist. **Run Tall.** Many runners lean too far forward, especially when they are fatigued, which can restrict breathing and forward leg movement while leaning too far back can restrict your forward momentum.