

## Training Document: Acceleration-Glider Drills

This drill is a form of speed play, or fartlek. By using it regularly, you develop a range of speeds, with the muscle conditioning to move smoothly from one to the next. The greatest benefit comes as you learn how to “glide,” or coast off your momentum.

1. Done on a non-long-run day, in the middle of a shorter run, or as a warmup for a speed session or a race—or test day.
2. Warm up with at least half a mile of easy running.
3. Many runners do the turnover drill just after the easy warmup, and then do the acceleration-gliders. But these can be done separately from the turnover drill, if desired.
4. Run 4-8 of them.
5. Do this at least once a week.
6. No sprinting—never run all-out.

After teaching this drill at my one-day running schools and weekend retreats for years, I can say that most people learn better through practice when they work on the concepts listed below—rather than the details—of the drill. So just get out there and try them!

**Gliding**—The most important concept. This is like coasting off the momentum of a downhill run. You can do some of your gliders running down a hill if you want, but it is important to do at least two of them on the flat land. Your goal is to use your momentum, if only for 5-10 strides, gliding for as many steps as you can.

**Do this every week**—As in the turnover drills, the regularity of the drill is very important. If you’re like most runners, you won’t glide very far at first. Regular practice will help you glide farther and farther.

**Don’t sweat the small stuff**—I’ve included a general guideline of how many steps to do with each part of the drill, but don’t worry about getting an exact number of steps. It’s best to get into a flow with this drill and not worry about how many steps you are taking.

**Smooth transition**—between each of the components. Each time you “shift gears” you are using the momentum of the current mode to start you into the next mode. Don’t make a sudden and abrupt change, but strive for a smooth transition between modes.

Here’s how it’s done:

- » Start by jogging very slowly for about 15 steps.
- » Then, jog faster for about 15 steps—increasing to a regular running pace for you.
- » Now, over the next @ fifteen steps, gradually increase the speed to your current race pace.
- » OK, it’s time to glide, or coast. Allow yourself to gradually slow down to a jog using momentum as long as you can. At first you may only glide for 4 or 5 steps. As the months go by you will get up to 20, then 30 and beyond....you’re gliding!