



Alberto Salazar's Training Plan

HOW TO USE THIS WORKOUT

Add this workout—which focuses on building core strength, leg power, and improving flexibility and openness in key muscles like the hips and hamstrings—to one or two of your weekly sessions at the gym. This regimen works well with any speed training (such as interval and tempo-run workouts) you're already doing to improve your running times.

If you're new to speed training, start when you've been consistently running 20 or more miles a week for at least 2 months. To avoid overtraining, be sure to allow adequate time for rest and recovery between workouts. If you're not enjoying half or more of your workouts or runs, that's a sign you're overdoing it—and risking burnout.

THE CORE STRENGTHENERS

CRUNCH

Good for: building strength in upper and lower abdominals

Lying on your back with your feet flat on the floor and knees together, place your hands behind your head. As you lift up into a crunch, lift your knees toward your nose, drawing your head and knees up and in, then lowering both your upper and lower body. If you can, don't let your feet touch the floor. Start with one or two sets of 25 crunches, resting for a few minutes in between each set. Build up to 100 crunches in one set.



SIDE UP

Good for: strengthening obliques

This move is best done with a partner who can stabilize your hips, legs, and feet. Start by lying on your right side, with your legs together, your knees bent, and your hips stacked. Place your hands behind your head and lift up straight toward your hip as far as you can, then lower to the floor. Build up to doing 20 side-ups on each side.



BACK RAISE

Good for: strengthening upper and lower back

Lying on your stomach with your legs close together, place your hands behind your head. Lift your upper body and your lower legs, holding for at least 2 seconds then releasing down to the floor. Build up to holding for 20 seconds.



STRAIGHT-LEG RAISE

Good for: strengthening the core, especially the lower abdominals

Start by lying on your back with your legs extended along the floor. Palms down, slide your hands under your butt for support. Slowly raise both legs together to about a 45-degree angle and then slowly lower them again, keeping your heels off the floor as you lower. Continue for 30 reps.





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THE FLEXIBILITY BUILDERS

LEG KICK

Good for: stretching glutes, hips, hamstrings; side-to-side movement stretches abductor and adductor muscles

Hold onto something stable like a wall or tree. From a standing position, kick your right leg forward as high as you can. As it comes back, bend the knee and kick your foot toward your butt. Keep moving at a fast pace, kicking forward and backward, building up to 20 repetitions. Repeat on your left leg. Next, kick your right leg out to your right side and then across your body (side to side), building up to 20 repetitions. Repeat with your left leg.



SCISSORS KICK

Good for: stretching glutes, hips, hamstrings; side-to-side movement stretches abductor and adductor muscles

Start by lying on your back with your legs in the air. Using the strength of your arms, push your upper body up so it's supported by your hands and you're resting on the back of your head, shoulders, and the backs of your upper arms; your low back is supported by your hands. Begin by dropping your left leg down toward the floor while the right leg stays perpendicular to the floor. Then switch legs, quickly alternating as one leg drops back and the other stays upright. Repeat for about 90 seconds, changing directions every 15 seconds from lowering and raising each leg to opening the legs wide and crossing them in front, alternating which leg is on top.



HIP CIRCLE

Good for: increasing flexibility and range of motion in the hips and thighs

Stand with feet shoulder-width apart or a little wider and place your hands on your hips. Start to move your hips in big, controlled circles so you feel a stretch in the hips, buttocks, hamstrings, and abductor and adductor leg muscles. Continue for 15 full circles in each direction.



WALL HURDLE

Good for: increasing flexibility and range of motion in the hips and thighs

Stand with your feet hip-width apart and place your hands at shoulder-width and height against a sturdy object such as a tree or wall. Imagine there is a hurdle about 3 feet high next to you on each side. Lift your right leg behind you, then make a large circle forward as if you were clearing the top of the hurdle. Continue for 25 reps on each side.





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THE FLEXIBILITY BUILDERS (continued)

EAGLE

Good for: improving flexibility in the side muscles, hips, buttocks, hamstrings, and quadriceps
Start by lying facedown on a mat, legs together and arms spread out at shoulder height, palms down, so your body forms a T. Kick your left foot to the right to reach it as close to your right hand as possible, allowing your left hip to roll up to enhance the stretch. Return to the center and kick to the right with your left leg. Continue for two sets of 10 reps. Turn over onto your back and repeat the move, kicking your right foot as close to your left hand as you can, and then your left foot toward your right hand. Continue for two sets of 10 reps.



QUAD STRETCH

Good for: releasing tightness in the quadriceps
From a standing position, shift your weight into your left leg and bend your right foot behind you, grabbing the top of your right foot with your right hand. Gently press your foot toward your butt until you feel a stretch in the front of your right thigh. Keep your right knee pointing straight down and bend your left knee slightly. Hold a chair or wall if you need support. Hold for up to 15 seconds, then release your right foot to the floor and repeat on the left side. Do two to three repetitions on each leg.



CALF STRETCH

Good for: releasing tightness in the calves
From a standing position, take a big step forward with your left leg, bending into the left knee and keeping the right leg straight and pressing the right heel down. (Adjust your stance as needed until you feel a stretch in the calf of your right leg.) Keep both feet pointing forward. Hold for up to 15 seconds, then repeat with your right leg forward, feeling the stretch in your left calf. Do two to three repetitions on each leg.



HAMSTRINGS STRETCH

Good for: increasing flexibility in hamstrings
Start by lying on your back with your legs together and extended along the floor. Raise your straight right leg and, using both hands, pull the leg gently toward your body. Keep your left leg flat on the floor. Hold the stretch for up to 15 seconds, and then repeat on the left leg (giving your right leg a 15-second rest at the same time). Repeat three times.





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THE FLEXIBILITY BUILDERS (continued)

SEATED TWIST

Good for: stretching hips, IT band, lower and upper back, neck and hips
Sit tall with both legs extended flat on the floor in front of you. Bend your right knee and cross your right leg over your left so the right foot is flat on the floor on the outside of your left leg. Place your right hand on the floor behind your right hip for support. Place your left hand on your left knee, pressing your right knee to the left with the back of your left arm. Twist your upper body and head toward the right. Hold for a count of 20 on each side and do two sets on each side.



GROIN STRETCH

Good for: stretching hips, IT band, lower and upper back, neck and hips
In a sitting position, place the soles of your feet together and hold your ankles. Use your forearms to press down on your legs and knees to increase the stretch in your groin. Hold for 15 seconds, then rest for 15 to 20 seconds. Repeat for a total of three times.



KNEE-TO-CHEST GLUTES STRETCH

Good for: stretching the buttocks

Lying on your back, bend your left knee, lace your fingers together and grasp your left leg just below the knee. Draw your left knee into your chest as far as you can, or until you feel a stretch in your glutes. Hold for 15 seconds, then switch legs and repeat. Do three reps on each side.





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THE SPEED BUILDERS

SINGLE-LEG SQUAT

Good for: leg strength, quadriceps flexibility
Starting in a standing position, bend your right foot behind you as you reach back with your right hand to grab the top of your right foot. Bend into the left knee slowly, lowering as far as you can and then coming back up again. Repeat 10 times on each leg, completing three sets.



CALF RAISE

Good for: strengthening and stretching calves
Stand at the edge of a step so your heels are off the back of the step. (Hold onto something sturdy if you need help balancing.) Lower your heels below the level of the step, letting the heels drop down as far as possible, then raise your heels so you're on your toes as high as you can go. Continue to raise and lower your heels using a slow, controlled motion. Complete 10 repetitions. Do two to three sets.



ANKLE FLIP

Good for: strengthening ankles; improving foot speed
Standing comfortably with your body relaxed, quickly and lightly jump in place. Use the full range of motion in your ankles with each jump by landing on your toes and rolling down to your heels briefly, then reversing the movement. Keep your jumps at a relatively fast pace and low to the ground. Continue for 10 repetitions. Do two to three sets.



ROCKET JUMP

Good for: leg strength
Start in a squatting position, then thrust your arms upward as you jump as high as you can. Land with your knees bent in a squat and immediately jump up again. Repeat for two sets of 10 jumps.





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THE SPEED BUILDERS (continued)

STANDING BROAD JUMP

Good for: increasing stride length, explosiveness of quadriceps, leg strength

From a standing position, bend into a squat as you use your arms and legs to propel you forward, jumping as high and as far as you can. Land with bent knees, ready to jump again. Repeat for two sets of 10 jumps.



BOX JUMP

Good for: leg strength, footwork speed

Standing in front of a box, the bottom stair of a staircase, a step bench, or any other sturdy, immobile platform, jump up with both feet onto the edge of the platform. Then jump back down, again with both feet. Repeat at a very fast pace for three sets of 10 jumps each.



KARAOKE

Good for: flexibility, range of motion in hips

As you move sideways at a fast pace, alternately cross one foot in front of the other for 100 feet in one direction. Be sure to bring the rear foot forward as far as you can. Repeat in the reverse direction for the same distance, moving quickly throughout. That completes one set; repeat for a total of three sets.





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THE SPEED BUILDERS (continued)

BACKWARDS RUNNING

Good for: flexibility, range of motion in hips

This move is the exact opposite of running forward: As you run backwards, kick each foot back up toward your butt and out behind you before the foot hits the ground. Run for 40 yards, building up to four repetitions.



HIGH KNEE LIFT

Good for: flexibility, range of motion in hamstrings

As you run, alternately lift each knee to at least above waist level, moving as fast as you can. Repeat for three sets of 100 feet each.



BUTT KICK

Good for: flexibility, range of motion in quadriceps

As you run, try to quickly kick your butt with each heel while at the same time keeping your knee consistently pointing straight down towards the ground. Move at a fast pace and repeat for three sets of 100 feet each.



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