



EDUCATIONAL MATERIALS AND MODULES



**RUNNERS
4ALL**

**European
Students
Run**



Runners4All – Educational materials and modules

Designed and developed during the implementation of the Runners4All – European Students Run project 2025-2026

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1

Foreword by the Timing Ljubljana Team

Dear readers of the educational material, created during the implementation of the Runners4All – European Students Run project

Timing Ljubljana is an organization that has been organizing various sports events for many years and providing support for the implementation of sports and other competitions both at the basic level in school and kindergarten environments, as well as at the highest national and international levels.

Among particularly important events, we can highlight the NLB Ljubljana Marathon, which will be held for the thirtieth time in a row in 2026. Timing Ljubljana is the organizer of this event, which we implement in cooperation with the Municipality of Ljubljana, numerous associations and public organizations and with the support of over 1,000 volunteers.



In 2025, in cooperation with the European University Sports Federation and numerous associated partners from other countries, we implemented a project called Runners4All – European Students Run.

By implementing the program, we raised awareness among students as the main target group about the importance of movement and regular exercise. We encouraged them to choose running as an activity, to prepare well and to take part in the first European run for students, which took place as part of the NLB Ljubljana Marathon.

The run was attended by over 1,800 students from many European countries. In addition to the run, we also held a professional conference, a running equipment fair, numerous lectures and consultations on nutrition, equipment and everything needed for running during the event.

We were very pleased that partners from 16 countries joined the project idea and, together with selected student mentors, took care of preparing the students for the run. Such behavior contributes to the safe and enjoyable enjoyment of a major running event.

The experience of the Timing Ljubljana Team and partners was extremely pleasant. The students and all other participants also confirmed through a survey questionnaire that the event was exceptional and that they would attend it many times again. For us, this is proof that we have done a good job, and as for the students, we hope that this enjoyable experience will encourage them to engage in regular physical activity.

*Barbara Železnik and
the Timing Ljubljana Team*

attended by over

1800

students



partners from

16

countries



2

Why should students be active and practice running

The transition from adolescence to adulthood is a crucial period and often challenging period.

Students, who have just left behind the carefree days of high school, embark on a journey to acquire knowledge and lay the foundation for their future careers. The focus is largely on studying and obtaining grades. The main focus shifts towards academic success and obtaining good grades, often at the expense of physical activity and sports.

Many people do not become aware of the importance of regular exercise for health and well-being until their 40s. However, by that time, health issues may have already developed, and an individual's lifestyle habits are well established. Positive experiences with sports and physical activity during childhood, youth, and one's university years can significantly contribute to sustaining an active lifestyle in later years.

Therefore, students need to be encouraged to move, and run, which is a core activity of the Runners4All project. This is of exceptional importance. Running is one of the basic sports activities – it is very accessible, and the exercise can be done independently or in groups.

Why running? Running is one of the most fundamental forms of human activity; it is a basic form of sport and a fundamental aspect of athletics.



Besides walking, running is the closest and most easily accessible form of movement, which is why it dominates various forms of sports activities, from top to recreational sports. Endurance running, if not excessive, is an excellent means of strengthening vital life functions, such as the cardiovascular and respiratory systems. To prevent injuries, runners regularly prepare for competitions and dedicate many hours to training.

Besides promoting running and regular physical activities we would also like to highlight the importance of good preparation for marathons. Unfortunately, sometimes we face difficult and life-threatening situations at the Ljubljana Marathon event.

This means that some participants overestimate their abilities and overexert themselves. This leads to possible health complications and sometimes an immediate medical intervention is necessary.

We want to avoid these kinds of situations and if students are more aware of the risks, then they will practice exercise more safely for their entire life.

In the educational materials, students and other runners can find important numbers and helpful recommendations. Therefore, we strongly recommend reading and to prepare themselves for the marathon event.



3

Idea of the Runners4All project

The idea of the project is not only to involve student runners, but to contribute to the inclusion of different segments of the population in running.

With the European Student Run event, we want to encourage students to participate in an enjoyable, large-scale event with cross-border dimensions.

Above all, we want to encourage them to motivate other young people to exercise regularly through educational workshops, joint training and encouragement through selected student mentors. This approach ensures that participants are well-prepared and can safely compete in 10 km races, half marathons, and full marathons.

The project not only addresses students, but also targets the following groups:

- inactive individuals who find it difficult to motivate themselves to exercise and need encouragement
- recreational athletes who may not recognize opportunities for running in their environment (either because of their lifestyle - long working hours, or because of the environment in which they live - exercising in the city, in the countryside or in an environment where group exercise is necessary for safety reasons, etc.)
- people with physical disabilities and people with special needs who require assistance and adapted training methods
- families, where tailored programs can be designed for individuals with different levels of physical ability.

The project supports the common values of cooperation and solidarity. It promotes lifelong learning, the establishment of trust and respect for those who are better prepared or those who have just started their athletic activities. Above all, it encourages regular physical exercise.

The concept of the Runners4All project is that runners can be charitable and socially responsible during their preparation for a competition by actively helping individuals and groups who need support or encouragement in their training. On the other hand, the project also promotes volunteering

in sports since it is impossible to organize a major sporting event without volunteers. Students can be excellent volunteers.

The first part of the educational program includes workshops and the preparation of selected student-mentors. We can also name them promoters or ambassadors.

Their task was to learn about the fundamentals of safe and successful participation. After implemented workshops, selected students (young ambassadors) organized local workshops for colleagues from their universities.



Associated partners of the Runners4All project offered support by organizing training, local workshops and supported the promotion of running as a great sporting activity as well as preparing for the first edition of the European Students Run, which was organized as part of the Ljubljana Marathon Run in October 2025 in Ljubljana, Slovenia.

Another important part of the project idea was that also elite athletes and coaches can join the training sessions and support the implementation of the local program for students. On the other hand, maybe some elite athletes (runners) will learn how to organize training sessions and get some extra skills which could potentially help them start a professional career.

The project's long-term goals rely on the idea that students will learn and develop some new skills, which they can implement into their daily life. We hope that a large number of students will become regularly active.

Second, what we planned to achieve with the project results is the development of the educational materials and some practical cases, which students as well as all other runners can read, use and pass on to other colleagues.

We also would like to highlight that the successful implementation of the program and first edition of the European Students Run, will be a kind of basis for organization of the permanent annual event on European level – European Students Run, implemented under the patronage of the EUSA.



4

Educational materials for students, selected student-mentors and other runners

Program for Running Coaches (Student-mentors)

The Runners4All project included a task to implement the pedagogical process for students aspiring to become coaches (student-mentors) for this program. The primary goal of the program was to equip student-mentors with the skills to promote running and to organize some basic sports education. (If necessary, with the support of coaches and professional runners.) However, the program also offers some basic skills to student-mentors to help them lead in future training processes.

The program provided the acquisition of general and subject-specific competencies through the following topics:

1

All about running

(Introduction into running world, how to plan activities for running group, basic principles of sport exercise, how to start from the beginning)



2

Running technique and training planning



3

Preventing sporting injuries ("Chase Goals, Not Injuries"; "How to Stay Injury-Free While Reaching Your Running Potential")





4 The Physiology of Running (From Cellular Energy to Field Testing and Health Concerns)

5 The fundamental principles of sports nutrition (optimize performance and health through targeted fueling, hydration, and recovery)



6 Psychological preparation and motivation for exercise (How to Build Consistent Habits and Mental Strength for Physical Activity)

7

The female athlete (Health, Performance & Prevention)

The female athlete

Ana Karin Kozjek Schwabert, MD
IOC Diploma in Sports Nutrition

Thumbnail description: A presentation slide with a blue and yellow geometric pattern in the top left. The text 'RUNNERS 4ALL | European Students Run' is at the top right. Below it are logos for 'IBUSA', 'European Students Run', and 'The University of Applied Sciences'. The main title 'The female athlete' is centered, with the author's name and credentials below it. A hand cursor icon is pointing at the bottom right corner of the slide.



8

Inclusion of participants with disabilities into the Runners4All program and event

Runners4All - European Students Run
Participants with disabilities
Ales Solar

Thumbnail description: A presentation slide with a blue and yellow geometric pattern in the top left. The text 'RUNNERS 4ALL | European Students Run' is at the top right. Below it are logos for 'IBUSA', 'European Students Run', and 'The University of Applied Sciences'. The main title 'Runners4All - European Students Run Participants with disabilities' is centered, with the author's name 'Ales Solar' below it. A hand cursor icon is pointing at the bottom right corner of the slide.



5

Program for Running training preparation

Prepared by running coach
Klemen Laurenčak

The program included several exercises which athletes need to practice continuously. With exercise we can upgrade our running skills and techniques. It is also important to know how to develop a correct running technique in order to avoid possible sporting injuries.

Within the implementation of the project activities, we prepared some videos with exercises. In the videos, techniques are presented and described.



Low alternating single-leg hops



This exercise is performed with a rhythmic forward movement. The athlete performs two consecutive low, quick hops on one leg, then immediately switches to the other leg and repeats two hops. This drill is used to learn the correct initial ground contact during the running stride.



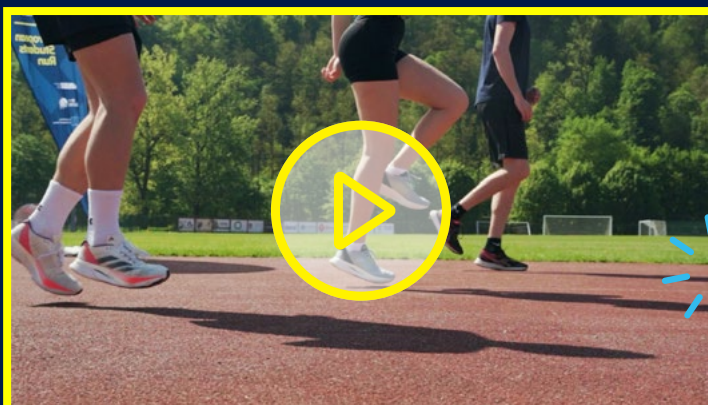
Key execution points:

- Hops should be low and quick (focus is on frequency and reactivity, not height)
- Take-off is active and short, with minimal ground contact time
- The trunk remains stable and slightly inclined forward
- Arms move in coordination with running
- Movement should be fluid, without "pausing" during leg switches



Purpose of the exercise:

- Initial ground contact in the running stride (which part of the foot contacts first)
- Control of hip position during running
- Development of elastic strength (plyometrics)
- Strengthening of feet and ankles



2

Skip with hand clap under the knee



The athlete performs a skipping motion while clapping hands under the raised knee on each stride.



Key execution points:

- Forward movement with rhythmic skipping
- Knee lifted high (approximately to hip height)
- At the highest knee position, perform a clap under the knee
- Upright trunk position
- Short ground contact time



Purpose of the exercise:

- Improvement of coordination (arms–legs)
- Activation of hip flexors
- Development of rhythm and cadence



3

Mid-height skip



A rhythmic forward-running drill where the knees are lifted to a medium height (between low and high skipping), while maintaining a quick and elastic push-off.



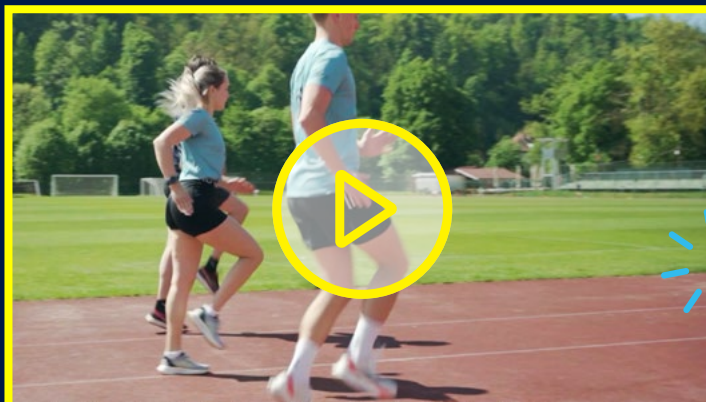
Key execution points:

- Forward movement with steady rhythm
- Knee lifted to approximately 45–60°
- Foot lands on the forefoot
- Arms move naturally as in running
- Short ground contact time
- Upright posture with slight forward lean
- Rhythm is more important than movement amplitude



Purpose of the exercise:

- Transition between technique drills and actual running
- Improvement of running economy
- Useful drill for transitioning into faster running



4

Scissor drill / running with extended legs



This drill can also be described as “running with extended legs.”



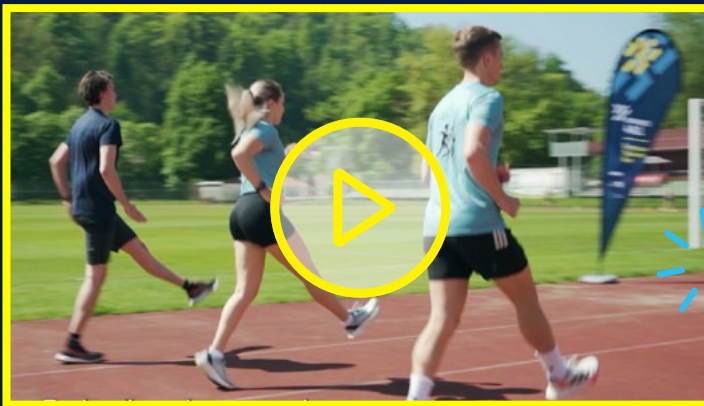
Key execution points:

- Push-off from the forefoot
- Strong backward-directed push-off
- The trunk must remain upright and should not lean backward



Purpose of the exercise:

- Improvement of running stride coordination
- Activation of posterior chain muscles
- Short ground contact time



5

Single-leg skipping



A more demanding drill used to improve coordination and hip positioning during running.



Key execution points:

- Upright trunk with slight forward lean
- Heel is pulled under the body's center of mass
- Foot is in dorsiflexion



Purpose of the exercise:

- Improvement of running stride coordination
- Activation of hip flexors
- Control of hip position during running



6

“Grabbing” drill / B-skip



The athlete first lifts the knee forward (as in skipping), then actively extends the lower leg forward and “pulls” the foot down underneath the body. The key focus is avoiding kicking forward and ensuring ground contact occurs under the body, not in front of it.



Key execution points:

- Emphasis on active downward and backward pull of the foot
- Ground contact under the center of mass
- Upright trunk with slight forward lean
- Arms move as in running



Purpose of the exercise:

- Learning correct ground contact under the body
- Improvement of running stride coordination
- Activation of hamstring muscles



7

High skip (A-skip)



One of the most fundamental and important running drills. The athlete moves forward with alternating high knee lifts (to hip height), combined with a rhythmic and elastic push-off from the ground.



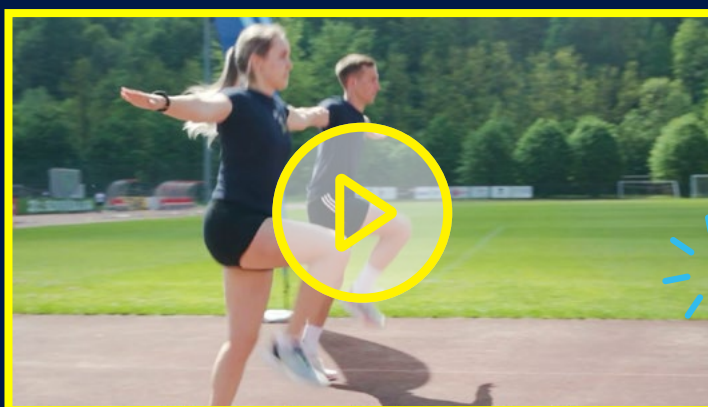
Key execution points:

- Forward movement in short steps
- Knee lifted to approximately 90° at the hip (hip height)
- Forefoot ground contact
- Quick and short push-off
- Arm movement coordinated with running
- Upright posture with slight forward lean



Purpose of the exercise:

- Improvement of running technique
- Activation of hip flexors
- Development of rhythm and coordination
- Short ground contact time



8

Jogging hops



A series of low, elastic hops that resemble a soft bouncing motion over the ground.



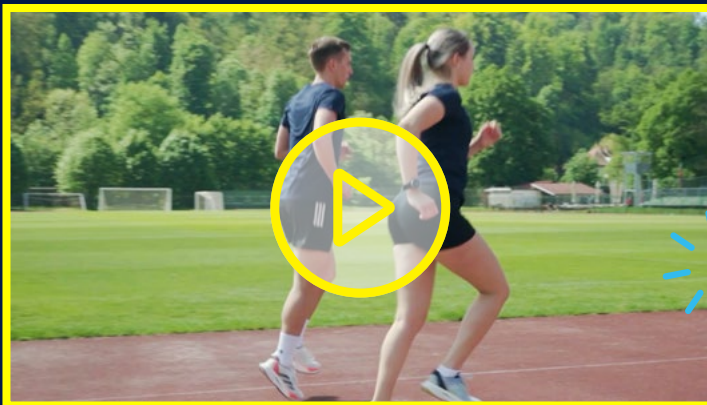
Key execution points:

- Minimal height (very low hops)
- Very short ground contact time
- Elastic "spring-like" feeling
- Upright trunk with slight forward lean



Purpose of the exercise:

- Activation of feet and ankles
- Improvement of elasticity in the running stride



9

Running with emphasized push-off



A highly useful technical drill, mainly used as activation before more intense training. Suitable for well-prepared runners. This drill involves consciously emphasizing a strong and active backward push-off, resulting in a slightly longer stride. It is important to emphasize knee lift during push-off, which allows proper foot placement under the body for efficient running mechanics.



Key execution points:

- Stronger push-off with each step
- Full extension of the rear leg
- Slightly longer flight phase compared to normal running
- Forefoot landing under the body



Purpose of the exercise:

- Development of push-off strength
- Improved use of the final phase of the stride
- Increased running efficiency
- Neuromuscular activation before intense training



10 Strides



Strides are one of the simplest yet most highly effective running drills. They consist of short running segments where the athlete progressively accelerates to a fast but controlled pace, followed by deceleration. Strides are typically 80–120 m long.

They are mainly used for developing specific strengths and activation before intense training sessions.



Execution:

- ~30–40 m gradual acceleration
- ~30 m maintaining high but relaxed speed
- ~20 m controlled deceleration



Key execution points:

- Upright posture with slight forward lean
- Relaxed but fast running
- Very short ground contact time



Purpose of the exercise:

- Improvement of running economy
- Neuromuscular activation before intense training

