Why Strength Training Helps Runners

Why add strength alongside marathon training?

- Improves running efficiency (less wasted energy)
- Helps maintain form when fatigued
- Reduces injury risk as mileage increases
- Builds confidence and physical robustness

What strength training is (for runners):

- Supportive, not dominant
- 1–2 short sessions per week
- Focused on quality movement

What it is not:

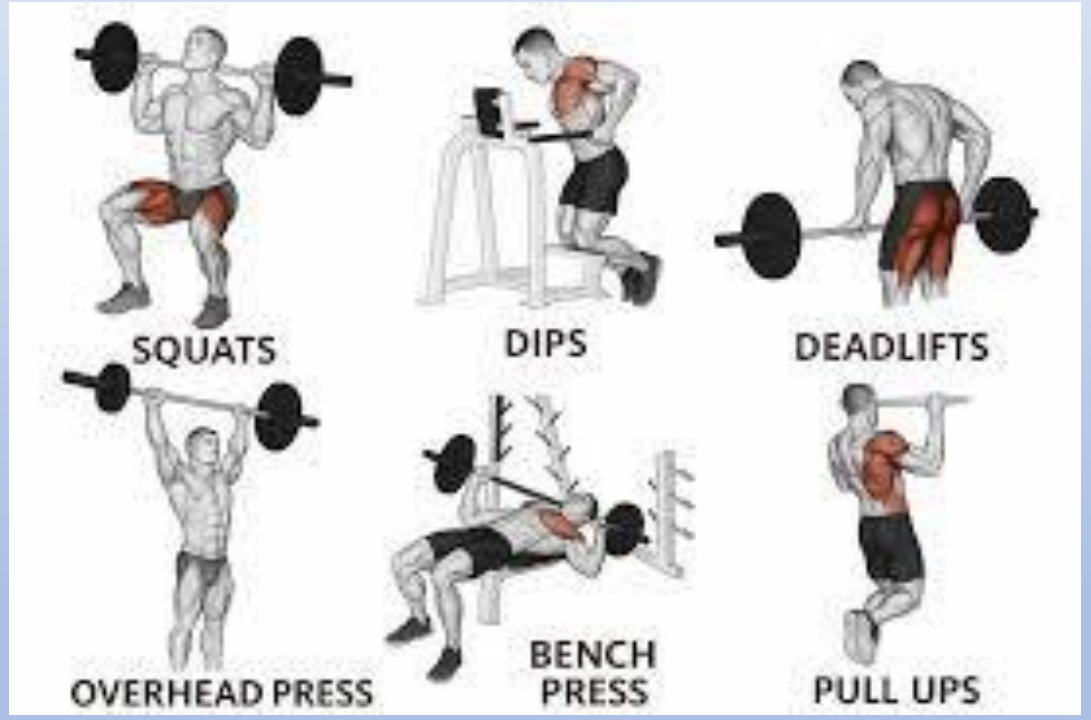
- ~~Bodybuilding~~
- ~~Maximal lifting~~
- ~~Something that should leave you exhausted~~

The 5 Key Movement Patterns for Runners

- **Squat** – builds leg strength
  e.g. bodyweight squat, goblet squat, barbell squat
- **Hinge** – strengthens hips & posterior chain
  e.g. Romanian deadlift, hip hinge
- **Push** – supports posture & arm drive
  e.g. press-ups, dumbbell press
- **Pull** – balances shoulders & upper back
  e.g. dumbbell row, band row
- **Brace (core)** – maintains form under fatigue
  e.g. plank, dead bug

Unilateral & bilateral both matter

- Bilateral → general strength
- Unilateral → balance & injury resilience



Gym-Based Strength Template for Runners

Session structure (45–60 mins)

1 Main lift (choose one)

- Squat or deadlift variation
  3–4 × 4–6 reps (controlled, not maximal)

2 Unilateral lower-body

- Split squat / single-leg RDL
- 3 × 6–8 reps per side

3 Upper body push + pull

- e.g. DB press + DB row
- 2–3 × 6–10 reps

4 Core / brace

- Planks, dead bugs, carries
- 2–3 sets

How to progress

- Add reps before weight
- Increase load slowly (every 2–3 weeks)
- Strength should not harm run quality

A simple rule

If gym sessions make running worse, they are no longer serving the goal.

Pilates & Yoga — where they fit

- Improve core control, mobility & breathing
- Useful on recovery or easy days
- Complement strength training, don't replace it