

## **“TRAINING WITH SPEED”**

What is the benefit of using speed in your training? It can help improve your running times, make you fitter and cut down on your training time. However, it is also important to have a combination of steady runs in between your faster runs.

Fartlek running literally means ‘fast, play’ in Swedish and was used to help improve the times of elite athletes. The beauty of Fartlek is that it can be applied by anyone as it is not structured and is determined by how you feel. These runs are normally short – somewhere between 30-50 minutes. You can vary the surfaces you run on for example, on hills, grass, road which is important if you have a race following a particular course.

The basic idea is to run fast every so often in your run for a period that you feel you can sustain. After which you give yourself a recovery period, for example: allowing your pulse to return to the level it does when you jog. The recovery phase can include jogging or walking. If done effectively, training with speed is much harder work than a steady jog.

You may choose to do short sprints over say 50m or run hard over 800m interspersed with a jog or a walk. The intensity and effectiveness of the programme is down to your own strength of mind. As it is unstructured, it is easy to miss a repetition of the faster pace. It is important to keep increasing the repetitions either by speed or distance with each run. The other way the sessions can be progressed is by shortening your recovery time.

Some coaches introduced interval training as a preference to Fartlek speed training because it is structured and more measurable. With interval training, you set specific intervals that may consist of a combination of shorter sprints and longer distances up to 1200m run at a faster pace. If you are speed training with a coach, then they may use a whistle to indicate when the intervals begin, but not allow you to know when they will stop or how much recovery time you will get. This type of speed training is good to help prepare an athlete to cope with a race situation.

Fartlek or interval training adds variety to your training and should allow you to really push yourself.

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If you have any specific questions about training techniques or any other medical treatment please contact us on **0870 2000 878** or [reception@puresportsmed.com](mailto:reception@puresportsmed.com)