



"NRXC is a group of friends that have fun running together and are excellent in our integrity, teamwork, and fitness."

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CROSS-COUNTRY HOW-TO GUIDES

[Threshold Training]

- Threshold runs are either continuous efforts from 15 to 30 minutes in length or intervals of 90 seconds to 6 minutes that are run at our lactate threshold pace. Threshold runs are generally run by time rather than distance.
- Threshold runs generally have a limited recovery of around one-half of the work interval or less.
- Lactate threshold pace is the pace at which we can continuously run for a long period of time before our body begins to accumulate blood lactate faster than it can metabolize it. Every runner has a different lactate threshold pace, and it can be difficult to determine. The most accurate way is to test it in a lab. But for our purposes, your lactate threshold will be the effort at which you are breathing hard but feel no burning or excess heaviness in your leg muscles. The work at lactate threshold pace should be felt principally in your lungs and not in your muscles. With practice you will be able to identify the correct effort most effectively by feel rather than by pace.
- It is better to run slightly slower, as opposed to slightly faster, than lactate threshold pace. When we train at or a little below lactate threshold pace, we can sustain this training for a significant amount of time and improve our body's ability to deal with the consequences of hard efforts without placing an undue amount of stress on the body. This allows the body to absorb the benefits of this training with minimal recovery.
- Threshold runs may be run on courses with hills or other terrain variation (grass, dirt, etc.). When this is the case, it is doubly important to focus on effort rather than worrying about pace.
- When we train faster than lactate threshold pace (or harder than lactate threshold effort), we cannot sustain these paces for any significant length of time without placing heavy, race-like, stress on our bodies that requires a lengthened recovery period.
- Done correctly, threshold runs are the single-most important training tool for distance runners. Done incorrectly (i.e., too fast) they quickly lead to excess fatigue, burnout, and injury.