

Chasing Extraordinary

A 'How To' guide for
newbie marathoner runners

'DIY Body Movement Assessment'

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I loooooove watching people move.

I love looking out for all the slight adjustments you make – that you often don't even realise you do. These little cheats or tells are how your body hides its weaknesses.

Now running a marathon is of course all about your feet taking every single step of the whole 26.2 miles that takes you from the start to the finish line.

You can run them all.

Maybe walk a few.

Perhaps even skip along for some if you want too.

But to help keep your feet a runn'n, keeping your body as strong, as balanced and as injury free as possible, is key.

I'm going to help you get one step ahead of yourself and 'run' (ha ha) you through a few body movement exercises to see what's going on so you can deal with any weaknesses before they create injuries.

Knowledge is power.

Let's get to work.

Front plank: hold for 0-90 secs - <https://youtu.be/TZ2H1MAIVUs>



The aim of this exercise is to test your core and back strength.

1. Lay on your belly on the ground and come up onto your elbows, making sure they are directly below your armpit. Keep your hands apart and your eyes looking at the ground slightly out in front of you.
2. Come up on to the balls of your feet and get your butt, shoulders and head in a horizontal line and hold that position.
3. Time yourself - aiming for maximum 90 seconds.

When you are in the position notice if you are struggling to hold the straight line? Is your lower back dipping? Are you wobbling as the time ticks on?

Time	Score
0-30 secs	0
30-60 secs	1
60-90secs	2
90+secs	3

*A little tip. Get someone to balance a stick (or a broom) on your back making sure it touches your butt, shoulders and head. The aim is for the stick to be horizontal with the ground and maintain contact with all 3 points – this is the correct plank position.

Cobra - <https://youtu.be/wzmGwekpT5k>

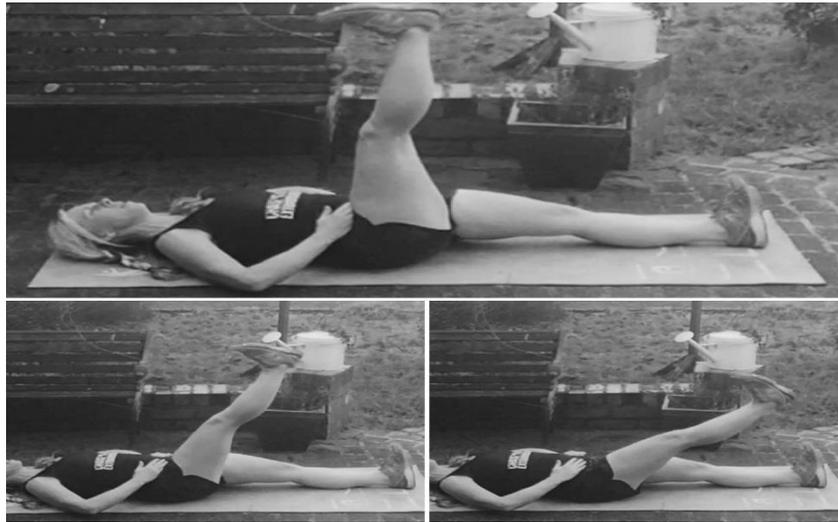


The aim of this exercise is to test the flexibility of your lower back. You may also notice tightness in your quads and lower tummy area (hip flexors).

1. Lay down on your tummy with your hands directly underneath your armpits.
2. Slowly raise your upper body aiming to fully extend your arms whilst keeping your pelvis on the ground. Keep your eyes looking out to the ground slightly ahead of you.
3. As you move into this position take note of how and where your body is feeling any tightness or stiffness.

Time	Score
Experience Pain	0
Leaning of body left/right Body raised < 45°	1
Body raised between 45° and upright	2
Body fully raised Head in line with hands	3

Straight Leg raise - <https://youtu.be/6uU9iC1UiDA>



The aim of this exercise is to test the flexibility of your hamstrings. You may also notice tightness in your calves.

1. Find the protruding part of your hip bone and your knee cap and mark on your thigh the halfway point between these markers.
2. Lay down on your back and place a marker on the ground in line with the mark you made on your thigh.
3. Pull your toes up and towards your body.
4. Keeping the leg straight, raise one leg up as high as you can. Repeat to the other side.

As you move into this position, feel and take note of how and where your body is feeling any tightness or stiffness.

Time	Score
Experience Pain	0
Knee does not reach your halfway marker	1
The knee but not ankle pass halfway marker	2
Knee and ankle pass halfway marker	3

Single leg lunge: test the right side and the left side - <https://youtu.be/poJkjalJIOI>



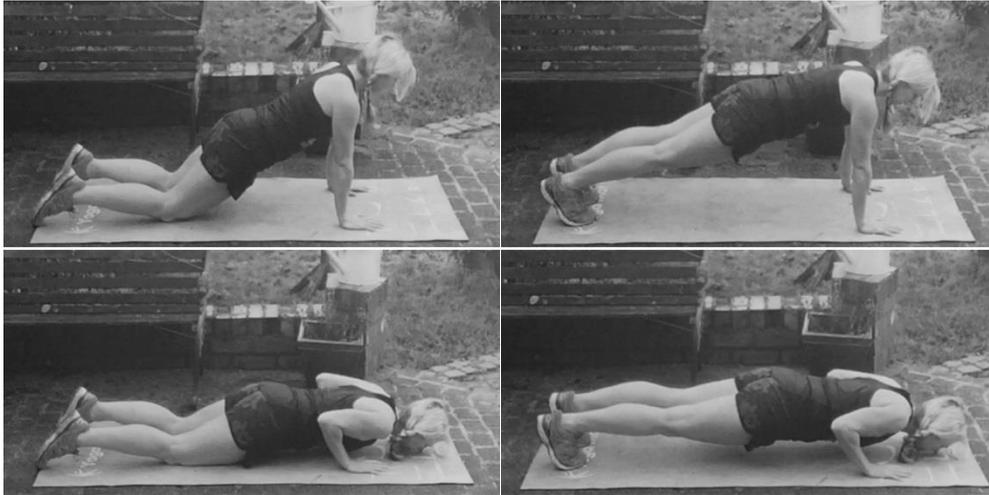
The aim of this exercise is to test the strength and stability of your quads and ankles. If you are doing this on your own, do it in front of a mirror. If you have someone to help, get them to watch your knees, ankles and upper body as you move.

1. Mark a straight line on the ground (use a mat, or mark a line) and grab a pole, stick, broom – you are going to hold this behind your back.
2. Put your feet along the line, right foot out front, left behind and practice a lunge so that your left knee touches the heel of your right foot – your feet are now the right distance apart.
3. Take the stick behind your back, right hand above your head, left hand at your waist.
4. Lower slowly into the lunge aiming to keep your front knee in line with your toes, then rise up.
5. Repeat to the other side - Hold the stick, left arm above the head, right hand at the waist.

As you move into this position, feel and take note of how and where your body moves. Do you wobble about? Does your upper body lean to one side? Does your knee drop across the centre line instead of staying in line with your toes.

Time	Score
Experience Pain	0
Loss of balance. Big movement of spine forwards or sideways	1
Alignment is lost between knee and foot	2
Knee and feet in line. No movement of spine.	3

Push up: half, full - <https://youtu.be/hz13hiT5lxQ>



The aim of this exercise is to test your core, back and upper body strength.

1. For the **Half push up**, start on your knees, take your arms out in front so that your body weight is on your arms and make sure your hands are directly beneath your arms pits. Eyes looking out slightly in front of your hands.
2. Keeping your tummy tucked in and your back straight, lower your body down towards the ground leading with the chest and aiming for your nose to hit the ground.
3. Keeping the tummy tight and the back straight (don't let the lower back move or dip), bring the body back up to the starting position.
4. For the **Full push up**, start on the balls of your feet, your arms extended and make sure your hands are directly beneath your arms pits. Eyes looking out slightly in front of your hands.
5. Repeat steps 2 & 3.

As you move into this position, feel and take note of how or where your body moves. Do you wobble about? Can you get down, but not get back up again? Does your lower back dip to get back up?

I'm not going to get you to score this exercise, but I do want you to take note of how strong or weak you feel. You'll be doing a lot of push ups in the body strength workouts as part of your marathon training plan. The stronger your whole body becomes then the better you will hold your body throughout your marathon run.

My goal is for you to be able to do full push ups as well as run a marathon by the end of your training.

I'm a pushy little coach, but I've always got your best intentions at heart.

'Create the day that creates your success'

~ Nikki Love

Keep in touch

Like I said, I'd love to hear how you get on, so why not come on over and say howdy on:

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/nikkijlove>

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