



Racewalking advice

Bulletin board

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What is the rule and how to walk this way

The rules of racewalking and what to do if you the judges caution or red card you.

Rule 230 from the IAAF (International Amateur Athletics Federation) states:

Race Walking is a progression of steps so taken that the walker makes contact with the ground, so that no visible (to the human eye) loss of contact occurs. The advancing leg shall be straightened (i.e. not bent at the knee) from the moment of first contact with the ground until the vertical upright position.

Cautions

Athletes shall be cautioned when, by their mode of progression, they are in danger of failing to comply with paragraph 1 above by showing the athlete a yellow paddle with the symbol of the offence on each side. The athlete cannot be given a second caution by one and the same Judge for the same offence. Having cautioned an athlete, the Judge shall inform the Chief Judge of his action after the competition.

Red Cards

When a Judge observes an athlete failing to comply with the rule of racewalking by exhibiting visible loss of contact or a bent knee during any part of the competition, the Judge shall send a red card to the Chief Judge.

Disqualification

- When three Red Cards from three different judges have been sent to the Chief Judge, the athlete is disqualified and he shall be notified of this disqualification by the Chief Judge or the Chief Judge's Assistant by showing the athlete a red paddle. The failure to give notification shall not result in the reinstatement of a disqualified athlete.
- In track races, an athlete who *is* disqualified shall immediately leave the track and, in road races, shall, immediately after being disqualified, remove the distinguishing numbers and leave the course.
- A Posting Board shall be placed on the course and near the finish to keep athletes informed about the number of red cards that have been sent to the Chief Judge for each athlete. The symbol of each offence should also be indicated on the Posting Board. *These are normal used in championships events.*

Judging

- a) All the Judges shall act in an individual capacity and their judgments shall be based on observations made by the human eye.
- b) For road races, there should normally be a minimum of six to maximum of nine judges including the Chief Judge.
- c) For track races there should normally be six judges including the Chief Judge.
- d) In competitions of State Championships or higher the Chief Judge has the power to disqualify an athlete, inside the stadium when the race finishes in the stadium or in the last 100m when the race takes place solely on the track or on the road course, when his/her mode of progression obviously fails to comply with the definition above regardless the number of previous red cards the Chief Judge has received on the athlete. An athlete who is disqualified by the Chief Judge under these circumstances shall be allowed to finish the race

What makes the best style?



The arms:

The arms should only go across half of the body that is the hands should only go to the breastbone. The hand on the other arm should be pushed back, past the body. (As shown in the picture).

The Toes:

For the best results, land on the heel with the toes raised. This helps to keep the knee straight. It may result in sore shins (the front muscle in the lower leg), but that can be cured with stretching, massage and icing.

Upright Body

The body needs to be held upright; it should not bend at the hips or have a significant forward bend.

The shoulders

The shoulders need to be relaxed, they don't go up and down much, instead they only move slightly forwards and back. Too much forward shoulder movement will result in the shoulder doing too much work and the arms doing very little. This will lose power.

Push off the Toes at the back

As the foot leaves the ground, the toes come off last and are raised only a little distance above the ground.

Race hint: Walk with someone

It is always easier to walk with someone; it gives you a pacemaker, some company and helps to keep you going.



Double support phase

The front leg should land before the back leg comes off, if both feet are on the ground as in the 2nd picture, then you have a double support, YOU MUST BE WALKING as far as contact goes.

The knee

It must be straight from when the foot lands as in the 2nd picture to when it is under the body, the 1st picture. In the first picture the knee looks like it is bending backward, THIS

IS PERMITTED and is legal, it can't be bent the other way though.

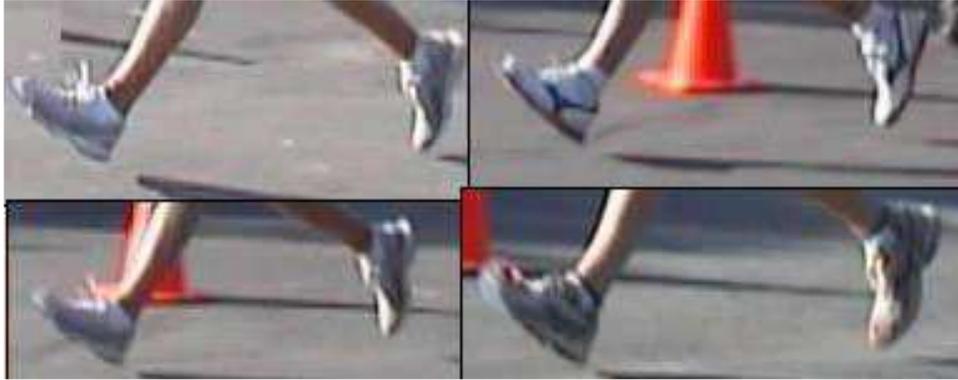


The hips

The hips should rotate backwards and forwards, the opposite way to the shoulders as shown in the 2nd picture above. If the hips go outwards from left to right as a model on the cat walk, then this is BAD walking.

Contact and Bent Knees

The rule can be divided into two part, 1st, at some stage both feet have to be on the ground, so the front foot has to land before the back foot comes off the ground.



These athletes are off the ground, so the judge could give them a red card.

The 2nd part of the rule states that the knee must be straight from the time the foot lands until the leg is under the body.



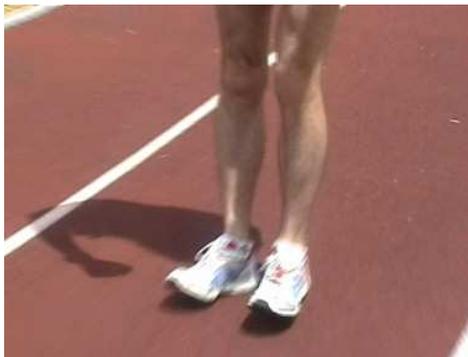
This athlete is walking with bent knees, so the judge could give him a red card.

So how do you fix these situations?

The next session will go into more detail on what to do, but below is one drill that will help with the bent knees.

Drill: To help with bent knees

1. Walk taking small steps on the heels only with the toes raised off the ground. Do this for 30 seconds, rest then repeat.



Walking on heels

2. Walk forward slowly, landing on the heel pulling the toes up straighten the contact leg and bracing the muscles to give the appearance of the straighten knee. Do not let the toes relax once the heel strikes the ground, that is hold the toes up even as the leg comes to the vertical upright position.
3. Racewalk landing on the heel and hold the toes up while the foot is in contact with the ground. Keep the knee of the contact leg straighten until the leg passes the upright position under the body.

Over striding

If a walker over strides, he/she may have a problem getting the foot down to the ground with a straight leg. This could lead to problems with both contact, as the front foot does not reach the ground before the rear foot leaves the ground, and knees, as the leg must bend to reach the ground. This also puts excessive stress on the gluteals and hamstrings.

Solution

- Either bring the centre of gravity forwards, creating a stride that is more behind the walker than in front.
- Or let the foot fall naturally and allow the hip drop to bring the foot to the ground with a straighten leg.

Drill

1. The body may be leaning back, causing the walker to over stride, so practice racewalking slowly holding the body upright or with a slight forward lean by tightening the stomach muscles and gluteals.
2. To let the body go back to a natural stride length, go back to walking normally and gradually increase the speed without trying to increase the stride.
3. When racewalking, concentrate on the back foot pushing off the ground, that is, think about the toes on the back foot pushing off the ground rather than the front foot striding out trying to reach the ground.



Coming off the toe of the rear foot



4. To improve the hip flexibility and hip drop, stand with both legs together but with one foot on a book and the other flat on the ground with a straight knee. Do the same for the other side. As the hip becomes more flexible, increase the book thickness to about 3 centimetres to improve the hip drop further.

Point 4, increasing hip drop

5. Repeat point 4 but with the leg straightened and the foot in front of the body ready to stride forward, drop the hip so the foot reaches the ground. In a stationary position, repeat this 4-5 times with each leg.



Point 5, increasing hip drop with the foot forward