

GETTING BACK ON PACE AFTER HILLS OR TURNS

Run a few quick, fast strides at the crest of each hill to regain a quick cadence and get you back on race pace. Do the same around turns. – Matt Llano

We've all run hills before, so we know how easy it is to get to the top of the hill and slow down or stop to catch our breath, rest our legs and lower our heart rate. Instead, aim to run a few quick, fast strides at the crest of each hill in a race to regain your race-pace cadence (and likely pass a few runners in the process!). Doing this will help you to get your momentum back as you continue chasing after your race goal.

Turns along the race course can also slow your momentum and take you off your race pace. But as with charging over hills, turns present the same opportunity to run a few quick strides afterwards to get back on pace.

Matt Llano, a McMillan Running Coach who has run 1:01:47 for the half marathon said he learned this tip from Ryan Hall:

"I remember him telling me that a lot of people lose their momentum and their cadence as they approach turns, which is something I never really thought about before. When you're approaching a turn in a race, you often slow as you round the turn, careful to not slip on loose dirt and gravel. I never realized how important it is to **throw in a surge coming off of the turn** to get back into a faster groove."

Llano recalls successfully employing this tactic for the first time at the 2014 USA Half Marathon Championships. It was a memorable race indeed - he ran his personal best 1:01:47, placed top-5 overall, and earned his first World Championship team berth and the opportunity to represent Team USA at the World Championships in Copenhagen later that year.

"I used Ryan's advice in that race every time I could, especially going around turns and coming out of fluid stations. Since I was running at the front of the race, it was amazing to me that in every one of those situations, I would put a small gap (just a few meters) on the field. It seemed that everyone else was content to be slowing down."

Give it a try in training and in your next race. You'll be surprised at what a difference it can make!