

## Are You Walking or Are You Running?

The walking stride shown below highlights the fact that when the lead leg heel has made contact with the ground, the leg is straight at the knee, and remains that way when the entire foot is firmly planted on the ground.

As further illustrated, when the lead leg is in a vertical position, weight is distributed to the front of the foot (toes), the rear leg has pushed off, bent at the knee in readiness for forward propulsion, and once it passes the vertical it begins to straighten in readiness for the heel to contact the ground. Once the heel has been planted, the rear leg toe leaves the ground.

The cycle then repeats. This is the art of walking. The lead leg does not bend at the knee in a walking stride.

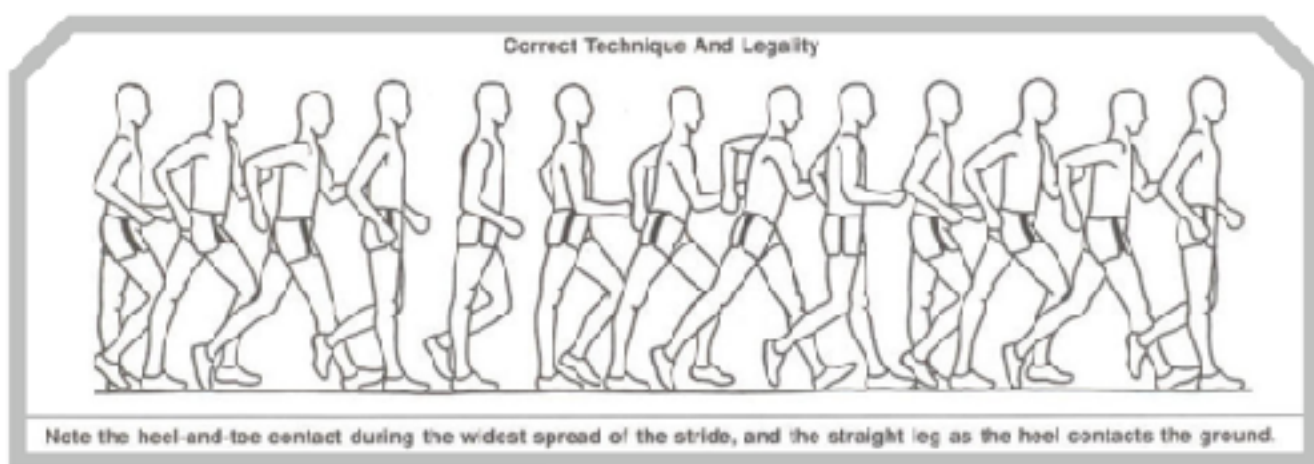
The speed of this walking cycle can increase significantly, but the same parameters remain. Contact with the ground is maintained at all times. The quickest form of walking is commonly known as race walking (speed walking, power walking.) This faster form of walking, though, works on the same principles as general walking - heel, toe, heel, toe, always with one or the other in contact with the ground.

During the course of a running cycle, the alternating lead legs are in a constant state of flex. There is no straightening of either leg during any part of the movement and separation from the ground is continuous as the legs alternate from lead to rear positions. This happens even in a slow run or a jog.

Irrespective of the science involved, and let's face it how many of us have the eyes (or the desire) to measure the degree of bentness in a knee, it is sometimes difficult to know, even at rest, if a leg is bent naturally because of aging bones or if the person is carrying an injury. Determining bentness in the heat of a game is a thankless task and may well be impossible in a practical sense.

It would seem, then, that the easiest measure of what the difference between walking and running is, is contact with the ground during a stride. For the purposes of Walking Football, it may be best if we simply consider running to be when you have both feet off the ground.

It has been suggested that if you think you may be running, then you probably are. Keep in mind at all times that the sport is called Walking Football. Try not to run, and if you think you are, acknowledge it and start walking.



*(Reproduced, in part, from <http://walkingfootballbirmingham.co.uk/about-walking-football/walking-jogging-the-debate-runs-on/> edited by Esstee Media for WFB Magazine)*

Your thoughts? Your experience? Your interpretation? Contact us at [info@walkingfootballbrisbane.com.au](mailto:info@walkingfootballbrisbane.com.au)