

Training specific to up and down mountain races: triangular fartlek

Original article in Italian written by Emanuele Manzi

In recent years 'up and down' championship races have tended to take place on courses with multiple laps and these 'triangular fartlek' sessions can be useful in preparation for this type of event. Ideally a loop should be identified which contains a climb, a descent and a flat section, all of approximately equal length, for example 1km climb, 1km descent, 1km flat. If this option is not available an alternative would be to climb and descend the same hill and then run a 1km flat loop at the bottom or even go out and back for a total of 1km.

Warm up: 20 minutes + strides

The idea is to alternate a fast section with a steady section (not too slow) so the first two laps would be 1km hard climb, 1km steady descent, 1km hard flat, 1km steady climb, 1km fast descent, 1km steady flat. The number of laps would depend on the target race and the athlete's training plan. An example would be to complete 4 laps when preparing for a 12km up and down race. The concept is fairly simple and can be adapted according to the athlete's needs, varying the length of the sections. One of the objectives is to practise descending fast without hammering the legs and this is achieved because of the short distance of each descent. Another important objective is to practise climbing following a descent, a key skill in a multi-lap race.

