

run workouts for runners and triathletes

Run Workouts for Runners and Triathletes: Boost Your Endurance and Speed

Run workouts for runners and triathletes are essential components of any training program aimed at improving performance, building endurance, and enhancing speed. Whether you're preparing for a marathon, a triathlon, or simply looking to elevate your running game, incorporating a variety of targeted run workouts can help you achieve your goals. Understanding the nuances of different training sessions and how they benefit your body is key to maximizing your results while preventing injury.

The Importance of Run Workouts in Endurance Sports

Running is a fundamental discipline in many endurance sports, including triathlon, and it requires more than just logging miles. Structured run workouts allow athletes to improve cardiovascular fitness, muscular strength, and running economy. For triathletes, balancing swim, bike, and run training means that quality run sessions must be efficient and purposeful.

Incorporating specific run workouts not only helps build aerobic capacity but also trains the body to handle different paces and conditions encountered during races. This variety ensures you develop a well-rounded fitness base and adapt mentally and physically to race-day challenges.

Types of Run Workouts for Runners and Triathletes

Different run workouts target various aspects of running performance. By mixing these into your routine, you can improve speed, endurance, and recovery.

1. Interval Training

Interval training involves alternating periods of high-intensity running with recovery jogs or walks. This workout is excellent for improving VO2 max, lactate threshold, and overall running speed. For triathletes, intervals can mimic the surges and efforts needed during race transitions or course variations.

A typical interval session might look like this:

- Warm-up: 10-15 minutes easy jog
- 4-6 repeats of 800 meters at 5K race pace or faster
- Recovery jog or walk for 400 meters between repeats

- Cool down: 10 minutes easy jog

Intervals help condition your muscles and cardiovascular system to tolerate higher speeds and improve your ability to sustain hard efforts.

2. Tempo Runs

Tempo runs, also known as threshold runs, are sustained efforts at a comfortably hard pace—usually around your lactate threshold. This pace feels challenging but manageable and can be maintained for 20-40 minutes. Tempo runs teach the body to clear lactate efficiently, improving your ability to sustain faster paces for longer durations.

For triathletes, tempo runs are especially valuable as they simulate the steady effort needed during the run leg when fatigue from swimming and cycling sets in.

3. Long Runs

Long runs build aerobic endurance and mental toughness. They increase your body's ability to burn fat efficiently and strengthen muscles and connective tissue. For triathletes, long runs often come after a bike workout to simulate the race-day brick session and prepare for the transition from cycling to running.

Long runs should be done at a comfortable pace—often referred to as "conversational pace"—allowing you to maintain good form and avoid overexertion.

4. Hill Workouts

Incorporating hill repeats into your training enhances leg strength, power, and running economy. Hills also improve your stride mechanics by encouraging a more forceful push-off and better knee lift. For triathletes, hill training can be invaluable, especially if your race course includes elevation changes.

A hill workout might include:

- Warm-up: 10 minutes easy jog
- 6-8 repeats of 200-400 meters uphill at a strong effort
- Recovery jog back downhill
- Cool down: 10 minutes easy jog

How to Structure Run Workouts in a Triathlon Training Plan

Balancing swim, bike, and run sessions is crucial for triathletes who want to avoid burnout and injuries. Here are some tips to effectively integrate run workouts into your weekly routine:

Prioritize Quality Over Quantity

Instead of running every day, focus on 3-4 quality runs per week that include intervals, tempo, long runs, and recovery days. This approach allows your body to adapt and recover while still progressing.

Include Brick Workouts

Brick workouts involve cycling followed immediately by running, mimicking race conditions. This helps improve your body's transition from bike to run, reducing the risk of muscle fatigue and cramping.

For example:

- Bike for 45-60 minutes at moderate effort
- Immediately follow with a 20-30 minute run at a steady pace

Listen to Your Body

Running can be demanding on joints and muscles, especially when combined with other disciplines. Pay attention to signs of overtraining such as persistent fatigue, soreness, or decreased performance. Incorporate rest days and cross-training activities like swimming or yoga to aid recovery.

Additional Tips for Effective Run Workouts

Warm-Up and Cool Down

A thorough warm-up prepares your muscles and cardiovascular system for the workout ahead, reducing injury risk. Dynamic stretches and easy jogging are ideal. After your workout, cooling down with light jogging and stretching helps flush out metabolic waste and promotes recovery.

Focus on Running Form

Good running form enhances efficiency and reduces injury risk. Keep your posture upright, shoulders relaxed, and arms swinging naturally. Avoid overstriding and aim for a cadence of around 170-180 steps per minute.

Hydration and Nutrition

Fueling your body adequately before and after run workouts is vital. For longer runs or intense sessions, consider hydration strategies and carbohydrate intake to sustain energy levels and aid recovery.

Adapting Run Workouts for Different Race Distances

Whether you're training for a sprint triathlon or an Ironman, your run workouts should reflect the race demands.

Sprint and Olympic Distance

Shorter triathlons require more speed and anaerobic capacity. Emphasize interval training and tempo runs to build speed and lactate tolerance. Long runs can be shorter but should still maintain aerobic endurance.

Half and Full Ironman

Longer events require a strong aerobic base and muscular endurance. Prioritize long runs at an easy pace, complemented by tempo efforts to maintain pace. Brick workouts become more critical to simulate race-day fatigue.

Final Thoughts on Run Workouts for Runners and Triathletes

Incorporating a variety of run workouts tailored to your goals and race distance is the cornerstone of successful training for runners and triathletes alike. By blending intervals, tempo runs, long runs, and hill work into your routine, you build a resilient, fast, and efficient running engine. Remember that consistency, recovery, and listening to your body go hand in hand with any training plan, so be patient and enjoy the journey toward your personal best.

Frequently Asked Questions

What are the benefits of incorporating interval training into run workouts for runners and triathletes?

Interval training improves speed, cardiovascular fitness, and running economy by alternating periods of high-intensity effort with recovery, which helps runners and triathletes enhance their overall performance.

How can tempo runs help triathletes improve their race performance?

Tempo runs increase lactate threshold, allowing triathletes to maintain a faster pace for longer periods without fatigue, which is crucial for improving endurance and race times in both running and multi-sport events.

What is the ideal weekly mileage for beginner triathletes focusing on run workouts?

Beginner triathletes should aim for 15-25 miles per week, gradually increasing mileage to build endurance while minimizing injury risk, and balancing running with swimming and cycling training.

How can hill repeats enhance running strength and speed for triathletes?

Hill repeats build muscular strength, improve running form, and increase power output, which translates to better speed and efficiency on flat terrain and during bike-to-run transitions in triathlons.

What role does recovery play in run workouts for runners and triathletes?

Recovery allows muscles to repair and adapt, preventing overtraining and injury. Incorporating rest days, easy runs, and proper nutrition ensures consistent progress and improved performance.

How can brick workouts benefit triathletes in their run training?

Brick workouts involve running immediately after cycling, helping triathletes adapt to the unique sensation of running on tired legs, improving pacing, and reducing the risk of race-day fatigue.

What types of run workouts should be prioritized during the base training phase for triathletes?

During the base phase, triathletes should focus on building aerobic endurance through easy runs, long runs, and technique drills to establish a strong foundation for more intense training later.

How important is running form during workouts for triathletes, and how can it be improved?

Good running form enhances efficiency and reduces injury risk. Triathletes can improve form through drills, strength training, and video analysis to ensure proper posture, foot strike, and cadence during workouts.

Additional Resources

Run Workouts for Runners and Triathletes: Optimizing Performance Through Targeted Training

Run workouts for runners and triathletes form a critical component of endurance training, blending speed, endurance, and recovery to optimize performance across disciplines. Whether preparing for a marathon, sprint triathlon, or Ironman, integrating specific run workouts can elevate cardiovascular capacity, muscular endurance, and overall race readiness. This article investigates various types of run workouts tailored to the unique demands of runners and triathletes, analyzing their benefits, implementation strategies, and how they contribute to race-day success.

Understanding the Role of Run Workouts in Endurance Training

Running is a fundamental element for both standalone runners and triathletes, yet their training priorities often differ. Runners typically focus exclusively on running efficiency, speed, and endurance, while triathletes balance swimming, cycling, and running, requiring a more nuanced approach to avoid overtraining and injury. Run workouts for runners and triathletes must therefore be carefully designed to promote aerobic capacity, enhance lactate threshold, and improve running economy without compromising recovery.

Sports science research consistently highlights that varied run workouts stimulate different physiological adaptations. For example, interval training enhances VO2 max—the maximum rate of oxygen consumption—while tempo runs improve the ability to sustain faster paces by increasing lactate threshold. Long runs build the aerobic base necessary for endurance events. For triathletes, run workouts also serve as a critical transition phase, training the body to perform after intense cycling and swimming sessions.

Types of Run Workouts and Their Benefits

A strategic training plan incorporates multiple run workout types to address different performance aspects:

- **Interval Training:** Short bursts of high-intensity running interspersed with recovery periods. This workout improves speed, anaerobic capacity, and VO2 max.

- **Tempo Runs:** Sustained efforts at a “comfortably hard” pace, usually near lactate threshold, to enhance endurance and delay fatigue.
- **Long Runs:** Extended duration runs at a moderate pace, crucial for building aerobic endurance and mental toughness.
- **Fartlek Workouts:** Unstructured intervals combining fast and slow running, promoting adaptability and recovery.
- **Brick Workouts:** Specific to triathletes, these combine cycling and running sessions back-to-back to simulate race conditions and train the legs to transition smoothly.

Each of these workouts serves a distinct purpose but must be integrated thoughtfully, considering an athlete’s overall training load and recovery needs.

Run Workouts Tailored for Runners vs. Triathletes

While there is overlap, the training emphases for runners and triathletes diverge due to the multisport nature of triathlon.

Run Workouts for Runners

Runners often have the luxury of dedicating more time and energy exclusively to running. Their workouts emphasize:

1. **Speed Development:** Through interval sessions such as 400m or 800m repeats at near-maximal effort, runners can improve their running economy and top-end speed.
2. **Lactate Threshold Training:** Tempo runs of 20-40 minutes at a pace close to race pace help runners sustain faster speeds without accumulating excessive fatigue.
3. **Endurance Building:** Weekly long runs extending beyond race distance are common to develop stamina and muscular resilience.
4. **Recovery Runs:** Easy-paced runs aid in muscle recovery while maintaining aerobic conditioning.

Runners also benefit from hill repeats, plyometric drills, and form-focused sessions to reduce injury risk and enhance biomechanics.

Run Workouts for Triathletes

Triathletes, in contrast, must balance running with swimming and cycling training volumes, necessitating a more integrated approach. Key considerations include:

- **Managing Fatigue:** Run workouts often occur after cycling (brick sessions) to simulate race conditions and train the neuromuscular system to adapt to post-bike running discomfort.
- **Efficiency and Economy Focus:** Because triathletes have less time to run, workouts often emphasize maintaining good running form and economy at submaximal speeds.
- **Intervals and Tempo Runs:** These remain essential but are usually shorter and carefully spaced within the training week to prevent overuse injuries.
- **Long Runs:** Generally shorter than those of dedicated runners, but still vital for endurance. Some triathletes perform segmented long runs, incorporating brief cycling or swimming breaks.

Integrating run workouts into a triathlon training plan requires strategic periodization to balance intensity and volume across all three disciplines.

Implementing Effective Run Workouts: Training Principles and Practical Tips

Designing run workouts for runners and triathletes requires attention to training principles that maximize adaptation while minimizing injury risk.

Periodization and Recovery

Periodization—structuring training into phases of varying intensity and volume—is essential. Both runners and triathletes benefit from cycles of base building, sharpening, tapering, and recovery. For example, early-season workouts might focus on aerobic base-building with longer, slower runs. Mid-season introduces higher intensity intervals and tempo runs, while tapering reduces volume to ensure peak performance.

Incorporating rest days and active recovery sessions is critical, especially for triathletes juggling multiple disciplines. Neglecting recovery can lead to overtraining syndrome, characterized by decreased performance and increased injury risk.

Monitoring Intensity: Using Heart Rate and Perceived Exertion

Objective monitoring tools like heart rate monitors and GPS watches help athletes regulate workout

intensity. For instance, tempo runs typically fall within 80–90% of maximum heart rate, while intervals push closer to 90–95%. Perceived exertion scales also guide pacing, with tempo runs described as "comfortably hard" and intervals as "hard to very hard."

Triathletes often use these metrics to balance run workouts with swimming and cycling sessions, adjusting intensity to avoid excessive cumulative fatigue.

Sample Weekly Run Workout Plans

To illustrate, consider these simplified weekly run schedules:

Runner's Week:

- Monday: Recovery run (easy pace, 5 miles)
- Wednesday: Interval training (6 x 800m at 5K pace)
- Friday: Tempo run (4 miles at lactate threshold pace)
- Sunday: Long run (12-15 miles at moderate pace)

Triathlete's Week:

- Tuesday: Brick workout (45 min cycling + 3 miles run at moderate pace)
- Thursday: Tempo run (3 miles at threshold pace)
- Saturday: Long run (6-8 miles at easy pace)
- Sunday: Recovery swim or cycling

Both plans emphasize variation and gradual progression, with built-in recovery.

Benefits and Challenges of Run Workouts for Runners and Triathletes

Run workouts offer numerous advantages, including increased cardiovascular fitness, improved muscle strength and coordination, and better mental resilience. For triathletes, run training enhances the ability to maintain pace after cycling, a critical determinant of race performance.

However, challenges exist. High-intensity run workouts can increase the risk of overuse injuries like

stress fractures, plantar fasciitis, and IT band syndrome, especially when combined with cycling and swimming training. Careful attention to biomechanics, running surface, footwear, and gradual mileage increase mitigates these risks.

Additionally, time constraints pose challenges for triathletes who must allocate training hours among three sports. Efficient run workouts that maximize benefit in limited time—such as high-quality intervals and brick sessions—are essential.

Technological Aids and Data-Driven Training

The rise of wearable technology and training platforms allows runners and triathletes to analyze metrics such as cadence, ground contact time, and stride length. These insights help refine technique and optimize run workouts.

Some advanced athletes integrate power meters for running, a relatively new technology that quantifies running effort independent of pace or terrain. This can be particularly beneficial for triathletes managing fatigue across disciplines.

Conclusion: Tailoring Run Workouts for Optimal Results

Run workouts for runners and triathletes are multifaceted, requiring a balance of intensity, volume, and recovery tailored to individual goals and sports demands. By strategically incorporating interval training, tempo runs, long runs, and brick workouts, athletes can enhance endurance, speed, and efficiency. Careful monitoring and periodization minimize injury risk and promote consistent improvement. As training science and technology evolve, personalized run workouts will continue to be a cornerstone of endurance performance for both runners and triathletes.

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run workouts for runners and triathletes: *Run Workouts for Runners and Triathletes* Bobby Mc Gee, 2009 To improve performance, athletes need to vary their workouts. For runners, this means alternating endurance runs with shorter but more difficult courses. *Run Workouts for Runners and Triathletes* is the perfect tool for self-coached athletes who want variety in their training. It provides more than 20 different training plans along with detailed advice on determining pace and balancing hard and easy days. Included are new takes on workouts all runners and triathletes should have in their training kits, such as track repeats, hill runs, and interval training. Along with these classic training techniques, the authors include favorite workouts that reflect their own unique and highly successful methodology. Whether trying to break a personal record in a 10K or polishing up for the running leg of a triathlon, this book helps runners and triathletes at all levels

break out of the dreaded runner's rut.

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run workouts for runners and triathletes: Runner's World Run Less, Run Faster, Revised Edition Bill Pierce, Scott Murr, Ray Moss, 2012-04-10 Advises on how to run faster by running less, providing a variety of training programs tailored to qualifying times for the Boston Marathon and an overview of the 3PLUS2 program aimed at improving endurance.

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have changed since the previous edition was released. This new edition adds emphasis to personalizing training plans; incorporates new power, pace, and heart rate techniques for swimming, cycling and running; improves on skill development techniques; updates his strength training approach; speeds up recovery for busy athletes; and cuts through the noisy volume of training data to focus athletes on the numbers that mean the most to better performance. The most significant changes have to do with getting the intensity of workouts right to build a bigger aerobic endurance base while becoming more race fit.

run workouts for runners and triathletes: *Triathlon Workout Planner* John Mora, 2006-01-18 Train smarter and get better results no matter how busy your lifestyle. *Triathlon Workout Planner* is like having your own personal support team to prioritize training, fit workouts into your schedule, and plan for long-term racing success. By choosing the right workout at the right time, you can actually improve efficiency, technique, and overall fitness level in less time with these invaluable tools: -Three or four key workouts that serve as the core of your weekly training schedule -The 80/20 rule, which focuses on the 20% of training that gets 80% of the results -Workout choices based on available time and target heart rate for customized training -Eight weeks of log pages to gauge progress and make weekly adjustments, helping you stay on track and stay injury free -Racing plans for every distance—from sprint to Ironman Take control of your training and your schedule with *Triathlon Workout Planner*. Train more efficiently and effectively for better performance on and off the race course!

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run workouts for runners and triathletes: Triathlon: Starting Out Paul Huddle, Roch Frey, 2017-01-31 Triathlon is more than the sum of its parts. You can swim, cycle, and run but you need more to become a triathlete. If you want to prepare for your first triathlon, this easy-to-understand introduction to the sport is what you need. Roch Frey and Paul Huddle, two of the most respected names in multisport coaching, cover all the bases to get you to the starting line and help you finish your first race. The book contains information on everything from weight training to flexibility up to nutrition. It also contains detailed workout schedules for the sprint and Olympic distances to guide you through your training period. Triathlon: Starting Out is an easy-to-use training book that will help you visualize the race and make it to the finish line. With Roch and Paul at your side, anyone can do a triathlon!

run workouts for runners and triathletes: ACSM's Sports Medicine Francis G. O'Connor, 2012-09-10 The field of sports medicine is evolving, accelerated by emerging technologies and changing health care policies. To stay up to speed and ace the Boards, you need a resource that moves at your pace. Sanctioned by the American College of Sports Medicine (ACSM), this handy review addresses all areas of the sports medicine subspecialty board examination--with coverage that spans the full spectrum of sports medicine, from medical to skeletal conditions related to the athlete. The editors and authors include orthopedic surgeons, family physicians, pediatricians, internal medicine specialists, physiatrists, certified athletic trainers, physical therapists, psychologists, nutritionists, exercise physiologists and more, ensuring that you'll benefit from the broad spectrum of expertise embraced by the specialty. Look inside and explore...* Seven convenient sections address general considerations, evaluation of the injured athlete, medical problems, musculoskeletal problems, principles of rehabilitation, sports-specific populations, and special populations.* Comprehensive coverage includes all topic areas featured on sports medicine subspecialty board exams.* Easy-access bulleted format makes essential facts simple to locate and recall.* Tables, figures, and algorithms make complex ideas easy to grasp and retain. PLUS...* An online companion resource includes nearly 1,000 board-style practice questions with rationale for correct and incorrect responses--a great way to test your knowledge and improve your exam performance!

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run workouts for runners and triathletes: Physiological Aspects of Sport Training and Performance Jay Hoffman, 2014-03-31 Physiological Aspects of Sport Training and Performance, Second Edition With Web Resource, updates and expands on the popular first edition, providing an in-depth discussion of physiological adaptation to exercise. Students will learn the importance of an evidence-based approach in prescribing exercise, while sports medicine professionals and health care providers will appreciate using the text as a primary reference on conditioning and performance of athletes. A range of topics are covered, including environmental influences on performance, hydration status, sport nutrition, sport supplements, and performance-enhancing drugs. The book is focused on physiological adaptation to exercise with a goal of providing practical applications to facilitate exercise prescriptions for a variety of athletes. Physiological Aspects of Sport Training and Performance, Second Edition, is organized into five parts. The first part examines physiological adaptation and the effects of various modes of training on biochemical, hormonal, muscular, cardiovascular, neural, and immunological adaptations. The second part covers principles of exercise training and prescription. The third part discusses nutrition, hydration status, sport supplementation, and performance-enhancing drugs. The fourth part focuses on environmental factors and their influence on sport performance. The fifth and final part is focused on how certain

medical and health conditions influence sport performance. Updates in this second edition focus on cutting-edge knowledge in sport science and sports medicine, including the latest information on physiological adaptations to exercise; current trends for training for power, speed, and agility; eye-opening discussions on sport supplementation and performance-enhancing drugs; data on training with medical conditions such as diabetes and exercise-induced bronchospasm; and groundbreaking information on training in heat and cold and at altitude. In addition, new chapters offer a practical approach to the yearly training program and sudden death in sport. The second edition also incorporates the following features to enhance practical application and facilitate students' learning:

- A new web resource includes 80 drills and 41 video demonstrations that help readers understand how to implement the various exercises.
- Chapter objectives provide an overview of key content in each chapter.
- Chapter review questions help students assess their learning.
- In Practice sidebars bring chapter content to life in a practical manner and help students better understand the material.

Students and instructors will benefit from the new web resource, which features 80 drills and detailed instruction on performing each drill. The drills can be used for a dynamic warm-up or to enhance speed and agility. Most drills are accompanied by at least one photo showing how to perform a key movement of the drill. Forty of the drills are accompanied by a video of the drill being performed in its entirety, and a dynamic warm-up routine video features 10 warm-up exercises. *Physiological Aspects of Sport Training and Performance, Second Edition*, provides a strong basis for understanding adaptation to exercise and appreciating how changes in program variables can alter training adaptations. All the information in this text is presented in an attractive, reader-friendly format that is conducive to learning. The text serves as both a key educational tool and a primary reference for exercise prescription for athletes.

run workouts for runners and triathletes: *The Well-Built Triathlete* Matt Dixon, 2014-05-29

In *The Well-Built Triathlete*, elite triathlon coach Matt Dixon reveals the approach he has used to turn age-group triathletes into elite professionals. Instead of focusing narrowly on training and workouts, Dixon reveals a more comprehensive approach that considers the whole athlete. Dixon details the four pillars of performance that form the foundation of his highly successful purplepatch fitness program, showing triathletes of all abilities how they can become well-built triathletes and perform better year after year. *The Well-Built Triathlete* gives equal weight to training and workouts, recovery and rest, daily nutrition, and functional strength. Dixon considers the demands of career and family and the ways different personality types prefer to approach training. *The Well-Built Triathlete* helps triathletes apply Dixon's approach to their season and training plan. Chapters on swimming, cycling, and running explain the most effective ways to train for each. A purplepatch section shows how triathletes can peak their fitness for long streaks of high performance. Dixon's holistic, whole-body approach to triathlon will help triathletes become greater than the sum of their workouts. By becoming better all-around athletes, well-built triathletes will train and race faster than ever.

run workouts for runners and triathletes: *Complete Triathlon Guide* USA Triathlon, 2012-04-24

Triathletes, rejoice! For the first time, USA Triathlon, its elite athletes, and the nation's most respected coaches share their secrets, strategies, and advice for every stage, every event, and every aspect of the world's most demanding sport. From training to technique, fueling to recovery, if it's essential to the sport, it is covered in *Complete Triathlon Guide*. In this guide, you'll find invaluable bike-handling techniques straight from the pros, learn how to assess running form and improve running cadence and stride, troubleshoot your freestyle swim stroke, and shave seconds off starts and transitions. And you'll go inside the sport for expert instruction and personal insights from triathlon's biggest names: Joe Friel Gordon Byrn Bob Seebohar Sage Rountree Ian Murray Sara McLarty Linda Cleveland George Dallam Steve Tarpinian Krista Austin Iñigo Mujika Alicia Kendig Barb Lindquist Christine Palmquist Graham Wilson Jackie Dowdeswell Jess Manning Joe Umphenour Karl Riecken Katie Baker Kristen Dieffenbach Kurt Perham Mathew Wilson Michael Kellmann Mike Ricci Scott Schnitzspahn Sergio Borges Sharone Aharon Suzanne M. Atkinson Timothy Carlson Yann Le Meur With *Complete Triathlon Guide* you'll enhance your training regimen with the most

effective workouts, including stage-specific programs for swimming, cycling, and running; programs for strength, flexibility, and endurance; tactics that address individual weaknesses; and advice on tapering to ensure you're in peak physical condition on race day. From the latest on equipment and technology to preventing injuries and dehydration, this guide has you covered. Whether you're gearing up for your first race or you're a hard-core competitor looking to stay ahead of the pack, Complete Triathlon Guide is the one book you should not be without.

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