

# Isometrics For Speed

Isometrics...what are they really? Well this form of exercise has the root "iso" meaning no movement. But how can an exercise with no movement help me run faster? The answer to that may surprise you and change your beliefs on speed development and speed training forever.

Although the definition of an isometric is an exercise performed with no movement, this truly is not the case. Although to the naked eye when one of these exercises is performed it may appear that there is no movement, but in fact there is very, very small movement involved. This is actually the reason these are so effective. One of the two ways to get faster is through very, very, very slow movements. So in these isometrics, although it would appear that we are not moving, we are moving very small distances very, very slowly. What happens when we move at this speed? The muscles need to contract violently, and with high velocity in order to stabilize the joints involved. Do our muscles contract this way during normal sprints or during normal weight training? No! In fact, we could be moving a weight as fast as we possibly can and we would not be getting the same effect at all.

Let's look at an example: the wall sit. In the wall sit we will have our head, shoulders, and back pressed up against a wall with our feet out in front of us about a foot away from the wall. With our head, shoulders, and back against the wall, we will pull our hamstrings. We will only go down far enough to where those three body parts are connected to the wall at all times and once they are not the exercise must be stopped. Once we get somewhere near parallel, we will undoubtedly hit a breaking point. This is where the isometric begins. We are going to pull down as hard as we can, while keeping form, using our hamstrings. We may not feel or appear to be moving further down but we actually are. This is our very, very slow movement. We pull down with the hamstrings because in an athletic event we bring in force with our hamstrings and give out force with our quads. This exercise would go on for up to 5 minutes a day.

Regular weight training can not give you this effect. In fact, regular weight training will make you slower because you are unable to move as fast as possible. But with isometrics and very, very slow movements you can get the muscle contractions you wish to use during an athletic event!