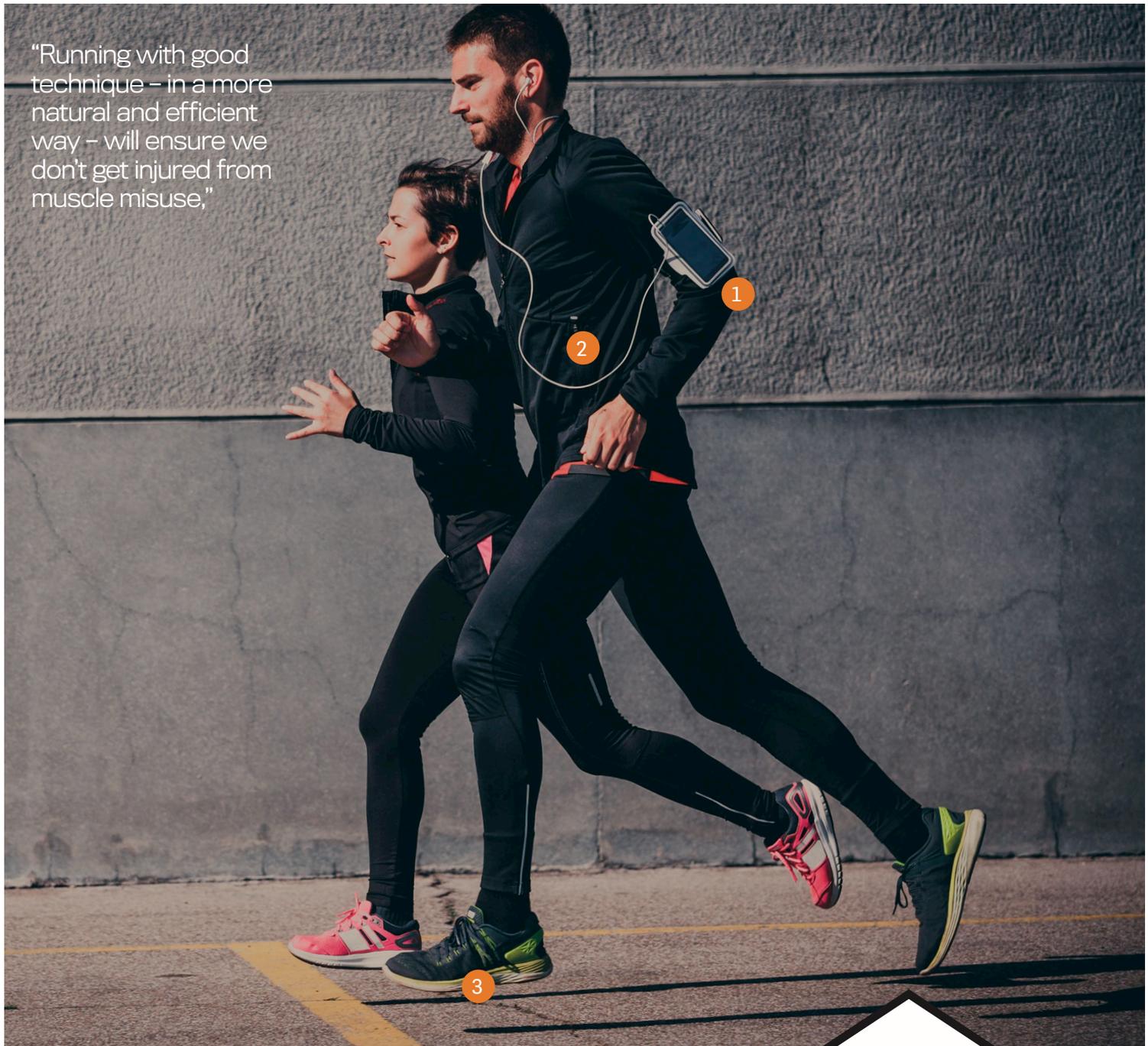


“Running with good technique – in a more natural and efficient way – will ensure we don’t get injured from muscle misuse,”



**GOOD FORM** Most running injuries are linked to bad technique and good form also rewards with better endurance and speed

“Good running technique is key and so often overlooked,” says Benzie. “With an efficient, natural running style your body will use its natural balance, skeletal support and fascial elasticity. It will stress your body less and therefore allow it to last longer in a race. Most running injuries can be traced to bad form.”

Runners tend to get injured because they misuse or over-use their muscles. Observing the 10 percent rule (building up training by no more than 10 percent per week) for marathon training should shield

the runner against over-use injuries. “Running with good technique – in a more natural and efficient way – will ensure we don’t get injured from muscle misuse,” says Benzie.

“Heel-striking for example increases the impact on the knee; we create around 2.5 times our body weight on impact on every foot fall and make around 1,300 strides per mile – imagine that. Good running form also helps to strengthen bones and joints, reducing your chances of injury in the longer-term.”

**EXPERT: SHANE BENZIE** is a running coach, movement specialist and race director of the T60, T100 and T184 races, [runningreborn.co.uk](http://runningreborn.co.uk)

**HOW TO RUN MORE NATURALLY AND EFFICIENTLY**

- 1** Get your arms right and the rest tends to fall into place. They need to be at right angles, close to the body with the dynamic movement to the rear, letting them swing forward naturally.
- 2** Stay upright as much as possible, with a slight forward lean from the ankles. Run tall, using your skeleton to support the weight of your body.
- 3** Heel-striking increases knee impact and is inefficient. When you land on your heel you’re effectively braking and missing out on

proprioception from the bottom of the foot which has 200,000 nerve endings – telling us where we are and how to react to the ground as we move over it.

Instead, aim for full-foot contact, then your feet work as natural shock absorbers. The quicker your feet move the less likely you are to heel strike and the more efficient your style.

So, think: pump arms, stay tall, short, fast strides (your cadence). If that seems too complicated, just imagine you’re on a unicycle (forward lean, pedal fast).