

Getting Started: Beginning Running

What gear do I need?

Running shoes

A pair of good quality running shoes fit to your arch type is essential. Typically a running specialty store is the best place to be fit to your arch type; measured properly to ensure adequate space and best fit around your feet.

Micro-fiber socks

These socks are designed to breathe and to move moisture off your foot to the outer layer for quick evaporation. They prevent blistering and work well with your shoe to improve fit.

How do I get started?

Your first run should be done at an even, comfortable pace. You may run for time, say 10-15 minutes or you may want to focus on running a quarter to a half mile. The main determining factor for both time and distance is to cease running when your muscles are showing signs of reasonable fatigue. It is better to build from this base in small increments to prevent intense soreness that makes it difficult to continue to train on a daily basis.

The first two weeks you want to increase your running time by small increments. The amount of minutes increased will vary from individual to individual. Your goal is to push yourself a little bit farther without increasing time/distance too quickly. Pushing too hard too fast can cause extreme muscle soreness and/or injury.

Another option to build your endurance and allow your muscles to adapt to your new level of activity is to alternate between walking and running. You can base the walking time on your body's need to recover and then pick up the running. Or you can be more systematic and consistently run a certain amount of minutes and then walk for a pre-determined amount of minutes. You can mix it up any way that accommodates your need to prevent excessive fatigue.

When will I know that it is time to increase my distance?

After your first two weeks, you will have built a specific base. From this base, you can strive to build to an additional half-mile distance. When you can run this additional distance comfortably, begin to build up to the next additional half mile. The time period required to build to the next half mile will vary from one individual to another. Do not increase your total running distance by more than 10% each week.

Life-style running goals

A great distance goal for running is a three-mile distance. This provides a good cardio-vascular fitness level and also keeps you focused on maintaining your training. In addition there are often local 5K runs (3.1 miles) that allow you to meet other local runners.

Decide what is a reasonable weekly goal for running days and make a plan for when and where you will run each of your training days. It is recommended to train at least three or four days each week. Rest and recovery is also a training component so allow your body a minimum of one day of rest from running in a seven-day period.

R-I-C-E

In the event you experience unusual discomfort or pain, you may try resting for a few days, apply ice in 10-20 minute increments throughout the day to the area that is hurting, compression of the area and elevation if applicable. If the pain persists, you will need to see a medical expert.