

How To Run Safely

Shoes and Clothing

- Wear comfortable, supportive running shoes to avoid injury. Buy shoes at a store that sells exercise and running shoes. If you need help selecting shoes, ask the sales staff for help.
- Buy new shoes every 300 to 400 miles. Shoes can break down before they start to show wear. This could cause injury.
- Wear the proper clothing in the summer and winter.
 - Summer: Wear comfortable, loose-fitting clothing. If you become overheated, you are at risk for heat exhaustion or heat stroke (a medical emergency).
 - Winter: Wear clothing in layers. If you do not dress properly, you are at risk for frostbite or hypothermia (a medical emergency).
 - Wear a cotton T-shirt or a cotton turtle neck underneath a sweatshirt. You can also wear a poly blend undershirt or another specialty fabric.
 - Wear cotton gloves or mittens.
 - Wear a warm hat and a face mask to prevent frost bite on cold days.
 - If the weather is cold and windy, wear a lightweight nylon jacket (or a jacket of similar material).

Proper Warm-up and Cool-down

- Warming up and cooling down will help you avoid injury.
- To warm up:
 - Start each run with a brisk, 5-minute walk. You may stretch, but stretching is not as good as the brisk walk.
 - Run your first mile slowly. You can hit your normal stride with the second mile.
- To cool down:
 - Jog the last 2 or 3 minutes and walk another 4 to 5 minutes before stopping.
 - Stretch your muscles to keep them flexible. Hold each stretch for 30 seconds. If you feel pain, stretch more gently.

Personal Safety

- Run on sidewalks and trails whenever you can.
- Avoid running in high-traffic areas or uneven surfaces.
- If you have to run on the road, run on the left side against the traffic.
- Wear reflective clothing when you run in the dark.
- Do not carry money or valuables while you run.

If you wear headphones, keep the sound at a normal level so you are aware of your surroundings.

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Medical Safety

- Drink 12 to 16 ounces of water before running. If you run for longer than 20 minutes, bring water with you. Be sure to drink plenty of water after running. Not drinking enough water puts you at risk for dehydration.
- Increase your running intensity slowly.
- Sore or stiff muscles are common, especially if you are just starting to run or if you are increasing your training. Do not run with pain or with muscle soreness that doesn't get better in a few days.
- Call your doctor if you have any pain other than sore muscles, are short of breath or if you have any other new medical concerns.

Tips for Beginning Runners

- Start with a run-walk program. For example, run for 2 minutes then walk for 4 minutes for the total time and slowly transition to all running. For help getting started, visit the beginners training section of runnersworld.com.
- Do not run too fast at the beginning. You should be able to talk while you run.
- To avoid injury, run at least 3 to 5 times each week for 20 to 30 minutes each time.
- Once you are comfortable with running, do not add more than a couple of miles a week to your total running distance. Only increase by 10 percent maximum time each week to avoid injury.
- Stop running if you feel pain or are short of breath.