

blurt

# BLURT'S RUNNING GUIDE FOR BEGINNERS

*"It always seems impossible until it's done."*

## WHY RUN?

Running is a simple exercise with overwhelming benefits such as relieves stress, alleviates symptoms of mild depression, helps you to focus, increases fitness and stamina, lowers blood pressure and cholesterol, increases creativity, mental strength and body confidence.

It's also a convenient way to exercise; **you + trainers + road.**

As for euphoria that is the runner's high, just you wait...

## FOOTWEAR . . .

As people, we're all different and our running styles/techniques vary. It is vitally important that you have a pair of supportive trainers to run in to prevent injury. Wearing the wrong footwear can result in ankle, hip, knee and back pain, even tendonitis.

Before you even start running, it really is worth investing in a gait (gait means the way we move using our limbs) analysis. These can cost as little as £10. You'll be asked to run on a treadmill (not for too long, don't worry) whilst a camera records your movements. The way you run will be analysed and footwear will be recommended based on the findings.

## ONE FOR THE LADIES . . .

A good boulder houlder; hands up if you want droopy boobs? It's not something anyone wants yet so many women do not wear a sports bra whilst exercising. It's baffling that statistics show 68% of women choose not to wear one. By not wearing one, you could be doing permanent breast damage which means you could end up with saggy boobs that you'll have to tuck into your skirt (OK slight exaggeration, but still, you get our point).

A good sports bra should be comfortable, stop breast movement and reduce potential damage to the chest ligaments. A bad sports bra however, can cause back pain, breathing difficulties, jogger's nipple and drooping breast as a result of stretched ligaments.

## GETTING OUT THERE...

The thought of running may remind you of your PE teacher yelling at you, send shivers down your spine or reduce you to a quivering mess but the fact you're even reading this suggests you're interested in getting out there.

To begin with you may only be able to run for a minute or two without stopping. That's absolutely fine. We all have to start somewhere. To build fitness, try intervals where you alternate running and walking for a minute each and then as you feel more comfortable, increase the amount of time you spend running and walk less. There are a few great free apps available to download on your phone which can help you measure your time and distance too.

It may also help you to have a goal to work towards or someone supportive to run with. Consider signing up for a 5K, 10K or even a half marathon with friends to give yourself something to aim for.

There are some really good training plans around. We're partial to Hal Higdon's training plans which we stick on our fridge to motivate us <http://www.halhighdon.com/training/>

## TREADMILL V RUNNING OUTDOORS

The beauty of running is that it is free whereas gym memberships can be pricey. That said, if you're feeling a bit self-conscious about running outdoors, the treadmill may be a good place to start until your fitness and confidence increase.

Running on a treadmill is easier than running outdoors as the terrain doesn't change, there is no wind resistance and the treadmill absorbs more shock. Set the treadmill at an incline of 1% to get it as near to the outdoor experience as you can.

If you have set yourself a goal of running a race, then it is important that you train outdoors to get as prepared as you can for race day.

When running outdoors, always make sure you are wearing sunscreen, are aware of your surroundings and are running in a well-lit area.

Knowing how far you've run outdoors can be another source for anxiety; we plan our routes using <http://www.mapmyrun.com/>

## WATER, WATER, WATER...

You'll lose lots of fluids whilst running so it is important to keep hydrated. A quick way to check if you are dehydrated is to check the colour of your wee; if it runs clear then you are hydrated. The darker the wee, the more you need to drink.

Being dehydrated by as little as 1% can reduce your level of performance by a whopping 10% whilst being dehydrated by as little as 2% can cause a fuzzy head so drink up.

Once you get to the point that you are running for longer than half an hour without stopping, you'll need to replace the electrolytes (salt) you've lost through sweating. Sports drinks can be expensive so at Blurt we make our own instead by mixing fruit squash with water and a pinch of salt.

## NUTRITION...

Your body is a machine. It really is. Think about all the things it does in a day. Just like any other machine, your body needs the right fuel for it to perform at its best. Fruit and veg are rich sources of nutrients which your body needs to thrive. Again, this can be a chore for those of you who are not in the habit of eating many of either.

Your diet should consist of a minimum of 5 portions (1 portion = roughly 1 handful). Try to have a portion with your breakfast such as an orange, two for lunch (lettuce and tomato added to your sarnie) and two with your dinner (peas and carrots). Once you are in the habit of thinking in this way, it gets much easier to sneak in fruit and veg with most meals.

A lack of protein can lead to irritability, fatigue, lack of concentration and food cravings as protein helps to stabilise our blood sugar levels. Protein is required for cell/tissue/muscle/enzyme growth, maintenance and repair. It's also the main nutrient which keeps our nails and bones strong, our skin glowing and our hair shiny. Good sources of protein are eggs, cheese, nuts/seeds, beans, meat and fish. Your diet should have protein in it every day.

There has been a lot of hype about essential fatty acids such as Omega-3/6 and with good reason. These essential fatty acids are really important for the formation and functioning of a healthy brain. The body can't produce essential fatty acids itself so these need to be included in your diet. Good sources include flaxseed (linseed), mackerel, sardines, salmon, fresh tuna and walnuts.

For your food to digest properly and efficiently, good bowel health, for toxins to be eliminated efficiently and to prevent constipation, your body needs fibre which will also help you to feel fuller for longer. Generally speaking, fibre comes from food sources which originally were plants - cereal, fruit, veg, rice etc.

It has been known for new runners to actually put on weight because they overestimate the calories they are burning through running and eat more. To prevent weight-gain, don't overdo carbs, try to avoid junk/processed food, eat a small snack before you set out on your run and a small snack post-run.

So, we have given you a few pointers and if you fancy putting on your trainers and giving it a go then good for you!

Remember, the most important thing is that you enjoy it, don't put any pressure on yourself. Do what you are comfortable with and take it at your own pace.

Let us know how you're getting on too, we'd love to hear about it...



#runitout

with

**blurt**