

Women's **+NEW SEASON** Running **ESSENTIAL UPDATES** Tights, tops & trail shoes

February 2020

**LOVE
EVERY
RUN**

**9 WAYS TO NAIL
YOUR GOALS**

WARRIOR

**"FOLLOW YOUR PACE &
STICK TO YOUR GOAL!"**

Influencer Kerllen's wise
words for every race

**SPRING MARATHON
SURVIVAL GUIDE**

THE INJURY-PROOF WORKOUT YOU
NEED TO STORM THOSE 26.2 MILES

**HALF-MARATHON
SPECIAL**
**YOUR EASY
8-WEEK PLAN**
DON'T PANIC!
p46

**COULD YOU BE A
RUN COACH?**

SHOE TECH
The science that
helps you run better

**RACE DAY
YOGA TRICKS**

**VEGAS,
BABY!**

**Bucket list races
for 2020**



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INNOVATION
SINCE 1976**

Hello!

ISSUE 122 // FEBRUARY 2020



New year's resolutions should be banned. Fair dos, it's as good a time as any to think about new challenges and

whatnot, but all too often we set the bar too high. And with huge expectations, the flipside can often be a huge sense of disappointment, or even of failure, if we don't meet them as we imagined. And that's never going to help us reach our goals, is it?

So here's the thing: if at the start of January you had a resolution that faltered halfway through, why not consider February the month in which you adjust that resolution and create a new, realistic focus?

You see, the thing is, you haven't failed if you didn't go strictly plant-based for the whole of January, or you didn't manage to run every single day, or you couldn't bring yourself to sign

up to an ultra, or your anti single-use plastic policy has wobbled in the face of a lovely bottle of shampoo. What you've done is you've shown willing and grit. You've confidently stepped forward in your quest to challenge yourself, and in so doing have proved yourself an inspiration to everyone around you. You haven't failed – you have *tried*. Consider it your first step. Now let us help you transform that step into thousands of joyful steps on page 30 – not just for a month, but for the rest of your life. We don't believe in resolutions here at *Women's Running* – we believe in revolutions.

Happy running!

Esther Newman *Editor*



READ ANYWHERE AT ANY TIME!

Download the *Women's Running* app and buy a single issue for just £3.99. Or subscribe from just £2.99. Search *Women's Running* in the app store.

This month we...

...spread the love

Training to be a run leader only takes one day! See page 40



...got technical

We discovered exactly how our shoes help us run better. See page 52



...caught some Zs

Yes we asleep in a yoga class. But we didn't snore. See page 68



JOIN OUR TRIBE!

[womensrunning.co.uk](https://www.womensrunning.co.uk)
[@womensrunninguk](https://www.instagram.com/womensrunninguk)
[womensrunningmagazineuk](https://www.facebook.com/womensrunningmagazineuk)



WITH YOU EVERY STEP

Women's Running is the community for women who love to run. Each issue is packed with essential advice on training, nutrition and kit, alongside inspirational real-life runners' stories. Whether you're considering your first ever run, or you regularly take part in races, *Women's Running* will help you run better. Running is about more than just putting one foot in front of the other: it's about who we are.



ON THE COVER *

Photography
Joseph Branstion
Hair & make-up
Jyn San
Kit and trainers
Under Armour

Women's Running

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become a coach
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Why the bright but humble beet has so much goodness to give us runners – plus three well ace beetroot recipe ideas

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Delicious veg tacos, an irresistible banana and chocolate mousse, plus a healthy and easy-to-make, scrummy roast dinner

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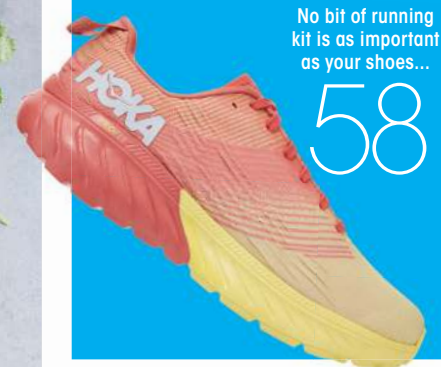
Award-winning influencer Kerllen Rego talks running and much more

"Being a mum doesn't have to stop you from doing what you love"



Delicious vegan feasts from BOSH!

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No bit of running kit is as important as your shoes...

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Fully recover, mentally and physically, with yoga nidra

SAVE 30% RIGHT NOW!
SUBSCRIBE & SAVE. SEE P20 FOR DETAILS



We couldn't have done it without...



Tina Chantrey

Tina is a UKA running coach, as well as an England Athletics Mental Health Champion, and runs her own running group @

shewhodaesruns. In 2019, she ran every single day, including a midnight marathon in Las Vegas, which she tells us all about on page 92. She also took an in depth look at the anatomy of our running shoes on **page 52** to find out how they help us run better.



Anne-Marie Lategan

Anne-Marie is a personal trainer with a degree in Human Movement Science & Rehabilitation. She loves enthusing

her clients to push themselves further. And that's exactly what she's done for us in our marathon workout on **page 72**: if you're training for a spring marathon, do these simple exercises and stretches every day to reduce your risk of injury.



Katie Campbell Spyryka

Katie writes about endurance sport and adventure, and admits to being slightly obsessed with

Strava's monthly run climbing challenge. On the side, she runs the Lessons in Badassery blog, which sees her quiz leading female ultra athletes. This issue, she reported on the Skymasters event for us on **page 94**, and was inspired by some legendary runners.



Melanie Angel

Melanie is a 62 year old grandmother from Middlesex who says she refuses to let age or injury interfere with her

running. She ran the New York Marathon in November and is currently in training for London this April. She reports on the NY Marathon for us on **page 95**, and she knows she shouldn't presently be running but chooses to ignore her sore body's warnings!



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LIFESTYLE

Headlines // People // Food // Kit // Health // Opinion



HEADLINES

The people, campaigns, research and updates making an impact in our running community this month

ONE RUNNING MOVEMENT GATHERS PACE

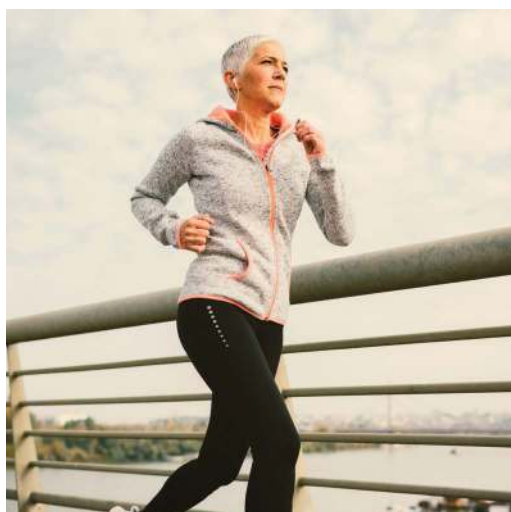
For health, happiness and miniature heroes!

Women's Running is proud to be a partner of One Running Movement. This revolutionary organisation is on a mission to improve the health and wellbeing of schoolchildren.

This year, it continues its drive to inspire current and future generations to embrace regular physical activity and #MoveForLife by offering non-competitive, virtual and live cumulative running events. These are a series of half marathon and marathon distances in which children run 12 or 25 cumulative miles in their own time, in their own way, and then they can take part in a One Running Movement event to run the final 1.1 or 1.2 miles. There are over 25 nationwide events expected in this academic year, with over 25,000 people taking part.

You can sign up as a school, a group or individually. The events bring everyone together, and offer a superb chance for children to experience the thrill of a full-scale running event. The atmosphere is fantastic as they are cheered over the line, and all children receive a technical tee to run their last mile in, and all of them are presented with a proper medal at the finish line.

For more details, go to: onerunningmovement.com



Marathon training reduces your vascular age

Research, published in the *Journal of the American College of Cardiology* has revealed that training for and completing a marathon causes cardiovascular benefits equal to a four year reduction in vascular age. Even at a relatively low intensity, marathon training reduces central blood pressure and aortic stiffness. Older, slower athletes showed the most rejuvenation, proving that taking up endurance running later in life can help reverse some cardiovascular problems. Boom!

4,705

Men

1,895

Women

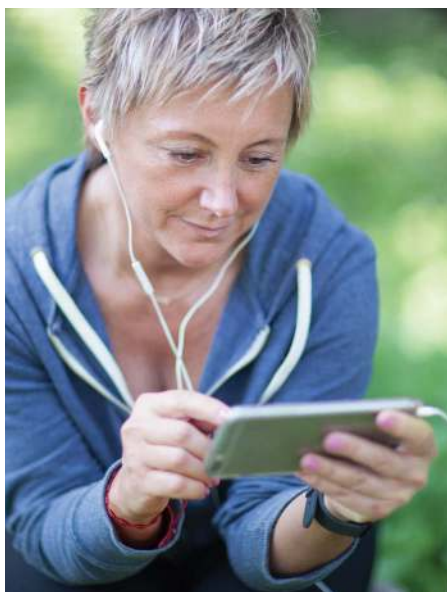
The gender split for the Six Start Finishers of the Abbott World Marathon Majors

(AbbottWMMM.com)

Millions of women negatively affected by 'unrelatable' fitness images on social media

To celebrate its fifth birthday, This Girl Can has launched a powerful campaign revealing that millions of women say seeing 'unrelatable' fitness images on social media has a negative impact on them. This ties in with their new advert, showing the raw unfiltered reality of women exercising, focusing not on the way they look, but the way exercise makes them feel.

New insights from Sport England reveal that 63 per cent of women who see slim, toned bodies on social media sites say this has a negative impact on them, while nearly a quarter who follow fitness influencers, say they make them feel bad about themselves. With currently nearly two fifths (39 per cent) of women inactive, This Girl Can is calling for influencers, media and brands to feature more realistic and diverse imagery of women to promote sport and physical activity.



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THE ORBIS TRAIL CHALLENGE

Ultra runner Susie Chan is inviting runners to join her in Malawi to take part in a running challenge while helping local charity projects. Susie follows in the footsteps of Dame Kelly Holmes in headlining the 2020 Orbis Trail Challenge.

Susie will be joined by 30 runners to take on three trail runs through Malawi. Applications are now open for runners wanting to join the team to take on a 25K extreme mountain trail run, a 20K forest run, and a 20K Lake Malawi run.

This year's Orbis Trail Challenge will be raising awareness and funds to support the reforestation taking place around Zomba Forest Plateau. The project aims to raise £10,000 for TREEZ, a local charity that aims to replant, protect existing forests and include community members in the reforestation.

To find out more and apply, visit www.orbis-challenge.com/running

World record holder Kosgei will defend London Marathon title

The iconic London Marathon 2020 promises to be an exciting race for the women, with world record holder Brigid Kosgei going head to head against Vivian Cheruiyot and Joyciline Jepkosgei.

Having smashed Paula Radcliffe's 16-year-old marathon world record in October, in a time of 2hrs 14mins and 04secs, Kosgei will be joined by four other sub 2hr 19mins runners, meaning she will have to fight for first place.



*This month
we love...*



MONAT BE BALANCED LIGHTWEIGHT MOISTURIZER

£64, MONATGLOBAL.COM/UK

This lightweight moisturiser hydrates down to the deeper layers with hyaluronic acid.



ORGANIC APOTEKE BUTTERMILK CLEANSER

£41.95, ORGANICAPOTEKE.COM

A gentle exfoliating action and an anti-oxidant rich formulation leave skin replenished.



HOMEDICS MIRROR POWER BANK

£29.99, HOMEDICS.CO.UK

This handy device keeps your phone charged up while the LED ring lights is ideal for quick make-up touch ups.



NEW GEAR

From toe socks and bamboo hoodies to intelligent jackets, here's the best new kit

Wise up

UA's ColdGear Reactor Jacket uses 'intelligent' insulation to adapt to your activity and regulate your temperature. The jacket uses Storm technology to repel water, the double-layered front panels block wind, while the light knit on the sleeves, sides and back breathe with you. It's also extremely well designed with a lovely stretch that holds, and a tailored fit you'll want to keep on for casual occasions, too.

£115, underarmour.co.uk



Lock in warmth

All your hair needs are met with these high performing Icebreaker headbands that also provide warmth. The Chase headband boasts a soft double-layer of stretchy warmth. Or, for those runs when the temperature has dropped, we recommend the Affinity headband, blended with merino in a thick textured knit to protect ears. The perfect solution if your head gets too hot under a hat, invaluable for dog walks and all outdoor winter activities. So stylish, too.

£18 & £30, icebreaker.com



Weightless warmth

Made from soft bamboo fabric, the Seamless Bamboo Hoodie is a joy to run in. The fit is flattering, the thumb loops keep hands warm, with the bonus of a snug hood and closed neckline. Performance wise it provides almost weightless warmth, due to a fine knit and thermoregulating properties. Wear it to yoga, Pilates and the gym – it'll be your favourite hygge piece this winter.

£48, bambooclothing.co.uk



Raise your game

For thrill seekers wanting a dynamic neutral shoe we give you the 361° Meraki 3, with an upgraded ortholite sockliner to enhance comfort. You'll thrive with the QUIKFOAM midsole, providing superior cushioning and stability. It's a flexible shoe that hugs your foot, and its pressure-free tongue makes every footfall feel effortless. Most of all, you'll appreciate the lightweight and sleek engineered mesh upper.

£119.99, store.361europe.com



Toe off in style

Keep your toes and feet toasty with the Injinji Trail Midweight Crew Socks. With each of your toes wrapped in fabric there's no rubbing against shoes, and these socks encourage toes to splay out on ground contact for improved balance. The band under your arch provides support you can sense, the fit is perfect and the mesh top is highly breathable.

Well cushioned socks that are fun too!

£18.99, betaoutdoorsports.com/run/stockists



Unbelievably breathable

You'll be impressed when you pull on the Gore Infinium stretch gloves, which are windproof, breathable and water repellent. With a four-way stretch they are super-comfortable and we applaud their high level of reflectivity. You'll be able to use your phone without taking them off and they fit so snugly, with a cosy cuff, that they won't bother you at all.

£39.99, gorewear.com





HOW DO I...?

Choose the right pair of running shoes for me

You know the feeling: the sun is up and you feel like going out for a run to start improving your fitness. But do you have the right type of shoes for your personal running style and needs?

When choosing a new pair of running shoes there are so many considerations and options out there that it can feel overwhelming to choose which ones are right for you. But it doesn't have to be.

"There are some simple considerations that should help match you up to the right shoes for you, when you are looking for new trainers," advises Jurian Elstgeest, managing director of 361 (361europe.com/en).

Be wary of special offers

Running shoes are built in many shapes and forms. "Special offers often include very specific models or the ones not selling so well, so be careful there. You may end up buying a bargain, but not the right shoes for you," stresses Elstgeest.

Where do you run most?

The surface you run on most will define whether you will need a more cushioned road shoe, a trail shoe with more grip and protection for the forests and hills, or a lightweight shoe for faster running

on road and/or track. "So if you run mostly on pavements and roads you are probably fine with a normal road running shoe, even if you also go off-road but don't leave the footpaths," says Elstgeest. "If you are running mainly off-road you'll need good grip. Fast runners spend more time on the road or track and tend to buy a shoe with a reduced weight."

Do I need stability shoes?

This is a bit tricky. If you are 'in shape' and rarely have ankle and knee issues you probably can get away with a neutral running shoe. If you are in doubt, seek help from your local running specialty store. "They will be able to check what will work best for you," he says. "Maybe you need a more stable or a wider shoe. What's really great about going into your local running store is they'll let you try on several models and you will feel the difference and then be able to pick your favourite pair. Trying

is buying and it is so much more fun running in shoes that work for you!"

How many pairs of shoes do I need?

"You can survive on one pair for a while," says Elstgeest. "But serious runners and athletes will own multiple pairs to rotate between. This makes sense, after all, as running in different shoes on different surfaces is a really good idea to help reduce the risk of injury."

"Don't forget though, a new pair of shoes can't instantly transform you into a better runner – even the latest Nike Next%. All they'll do is make a severe impact on your income. You still need to put in the work, so don't forget to mix up your runs every week. Soon enough you'll notice you'll be making improvements and also having more fun doing it."

Find out how your running shoes are made on page 52.

// What's really great about going into your local running store is that they'll let you try on several models and you will feel the difference and then be able to pick your favourite pair **//**



HEALTH

The latest nutrition, beauty and health headlines.
Because running doesn't end at your feet

AIR POLLUTION 'BREAKING OUR HEARTS'

Breaking news shows that air pollution is associated with increased risk of heart disease and stroke. Research published in *The Journal of Physiology* shows that the knowledge we have about how pollution harms the hearts of marine species can be applied to humans. The knowledge gained from the marine ecosystem might help protect the climate and health of our planet, while also helping human health.

Around 11,000 coronary heart disease and stroke deaths in the UK each year are attributable to air pollution, due to particulate matter (PM) that cause health problems. Researchers of this study focused on a set of compounds that binds to the surface of PM, called polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAH) as they are associated with the detrimental effect air pollution has on the heart.

Dr Holly Shiels, senior author, from the University of Manchester has commented: "Pollution affects all of us...fish exposed to PAH from oil spills can serve as indicators, providing significant insights into the human health impacts of PM air pollution."

Dr Jeremy Pearson, associate medical director at the British Heart Foundation, which partly funded the research presented in this review, commented that: "Reducing air pollution is crucial to protecting our heart health, which is why the BHF is calling on the next government to commit to reducing air pollution to within WHO limits."



Vaping damages lungs

Researchers from Queen's University Belfast have discovered that bacteria often found in the lungs became more harmful and caused increased inflammation when they were exposed to e-cigarette vape.

Professor Jose Bengoechea, co-author of the study said: "At the very least this work should open a frank debate on vaping safety."

CORE BENEFITS

Research shows that incorporating a core-workout programme into your running regime can improve your 5K time by over 60 seconds.

The six-week Les Mills Running & Core Training Study revealed not only a reduction in 5K time, but that three-dimensional core exercises such as plank variations and postural chain movements, also improve running endurance.



3 RECOVERY DRINKS



BEST FOR
QUICK
FIXES

SIS REGO RAPID RECOVERY

£13, scienceinsport.com

Rego is a complete recovery product to be consumed immediately after exercise, containing a blend of carbohydrate (23g), protein (20g) and electrolytes, with vitamins and minerals. And it tastes pretty good too!



BEST FOR
VEGANS

TAILWIND REBUILD RECOVERY

£2.75, tailwindnutrition.co.uk

Rebuild Recovery powder provides calories to replenish glycogen and complete proteins to accelerate muscle repair, with organic rice protein and amino acids, healthy fats from coconut milk, and just the right amount of electrolytes.



BEST FOR
COELIACS/
DIABETICS

MOUNTAINFUEL ULTIMATE RECOVERY FUEL

£1.75, mountainfuel.co.uk

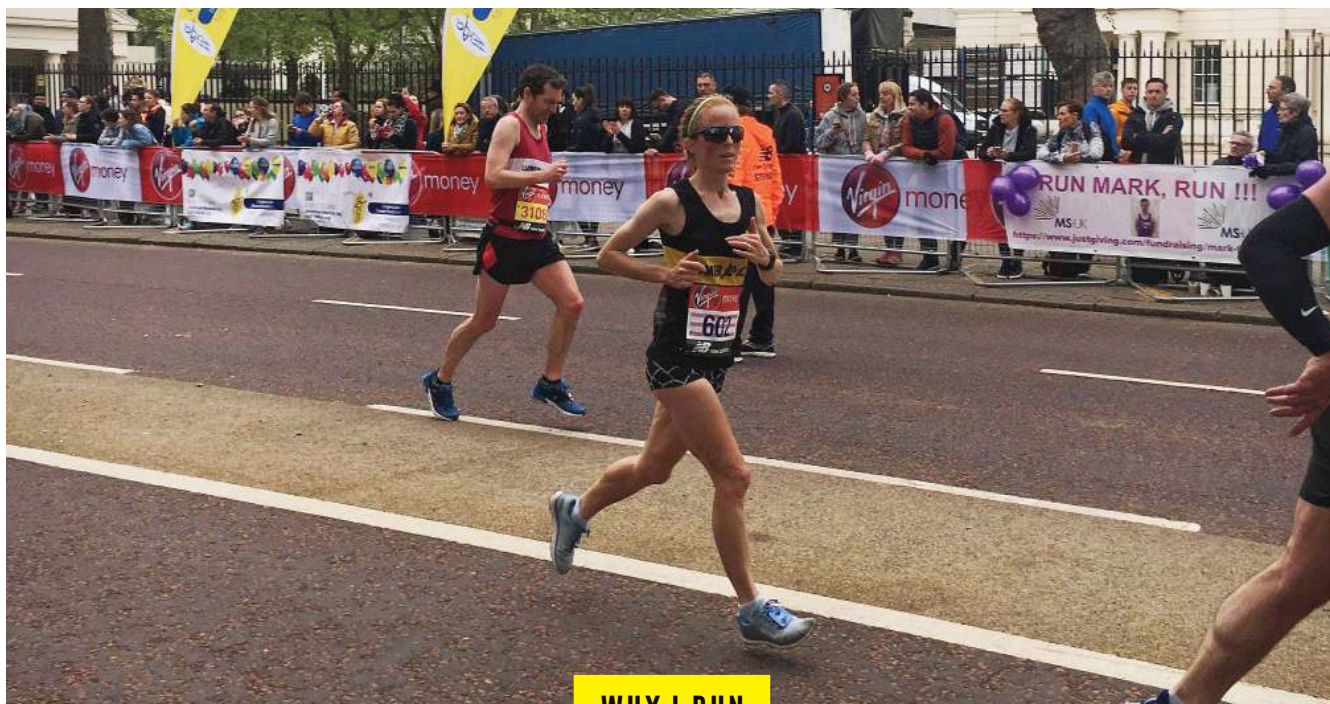
Part of the total nutrition system from Mountain Fuel, Ultimate Recovery will maximise muscle repair and glycogen replacement after exercise, helping repair your muscles for your next performance. It's suitable for coeliacs and type 1 diabetics.

MYTH BUSTER

YOU LOSE MOST
BODY HEAT FROM
YOUR HEAD



The myth that you lose most of your body heat through your head isn't quite true; in cold conditions you lose about 10 per cent of body heat through your head, which, as it's about 7-9 per cent of your body's surface, is proportional. This doesn't mean you shouldn't wear a hat – but in order to stay warm it's your core temperature that's important. Keeping your body insulated should be your priority, so think of quality baselayers and a good jacket, with a hat being the icing on the cake!



WHY I RUN

Victoria Ratcliffe

How did you get into running?

I've always been a keen mountain biker and I could feel my fitness had taken a knock after childbirth. Running seemed the quickest and most convenient way to get back on track. I quickly got bitten by the bug.

What sort of running do you do?

A mix of road and trail, and anything from 5K to 15 miles. I tend to run around 25 miles a week as a minimum, but also mix in cycling.

Who do you like to run with?

My local club, Somer AC. The chance to run with people who are faster gets you out of your comfort zone and makes you realise how much more you're capable of.

What races have you done?

Mainly longer distance events, road and off-road. Events that stick in my mind include Endurance Life's Dorset Coast trail marathon for its beauty and toughness; Bath Half because it's my local

Getting the running bug after the birth of her second daughter, **Victoria** has run a sub-3hr marathon and loves her local hills

ABOUT VICTORIA

The mother of two daughters (aged 9 and 12) lives in Radstock, near Bath. She earns a living as a freelance business PR consultant and copywriter, and working from home means she has the flexibility to get out onto trails and roads during the day.

Which race are you most proud of?

I ran the 2019 London Marathon in 2:57, a better time than I dared hope for and largely thanks to fellow club runners who taught me to just go for it and believe in myself.

What's your favourite piece of running kit?

I love my TomTom watch as I can listen to music through it for those longer road runs.

What do you eat before and after running?

Before a long run you can't beat porridge with raspberries, and a double espresso. After a tough session, toast topped with peanut butter is the perfect recovery nosh.

What do you enjoy most about running?

I love the clarity of mind and how relaxed I feel afterwards – I'm a stressy person and running helps me unwind. I've discovered a competitive streak I didn't realise I had. At school, I didn't think sport was for me. 🧐





FUEL

Try these three quick recipes for an easy yet ever-nutritious meal or snack, perfect for the health conscious runner

A speedy, sweet snack for an energy boost



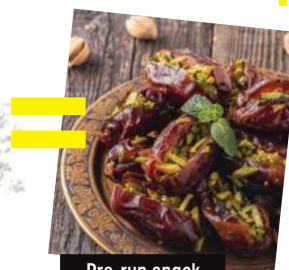
Dates



Chopped pistachios



Desiccated coconut



Pre-run snack

Gently baked eggs in tomato for protein



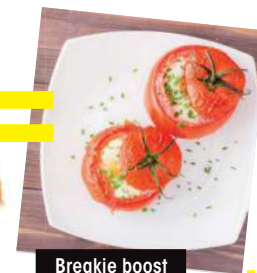
Tomato



Poached egg



Seeded bread



Breakie boost

High protein, filling recovery snack



Greek yoghurt



Sliced fig



Pumpkin seeds



Honey



Recovery yum!

EAT WELL



ARE THERE ANY FOODS THAT WILL HELP MY ACHY POST-RUN JOINTS?

Knees, hips, spine and ankles can take a hit when you're a frequent runner, but certain foods can help to minimise wear and tear and protect your joints from damage. Eat more fruits and vegetables with anti-inflammatory properties as these are high in antioxidants which protect against inflammation and may help to speed up recovery after exercise. Add berries to your morning porridge and post workout smoothie, a drizzle of olive oil to salads and munch on lots of green leafy vegetables like cabbage, spinach and kale. Omega-3 foods like oily fish, nuts and seeds also help to combat inflammation, so snack on a handful of walnuts, almonds and pumpkin seeds everyday and eat oily fish like salmon and mackerel at least twice a week. Minimise processed and sugary foods as these increase inflammation, making it harder to recover post-run and try to stick to an overall balanced diet.

» TURN TO PAGE 84 FOR TWO MOUTH-WATERING VEGAN RECIPES

3 Vegan snacks



SQUIRREL SISTERS PEANUT CARAMEL PROTEIN BAR

With absolutely no added sugar, this plant-based protein bar offers 100 per cent guilt-free indulgence.

£1.20,
Waitrose



GRAZE LIGHTLY SEA SALTED CRUNCH

These high protein vegan snacks contain peas, corn, broad beans and crunchy pretzel bites lightly coated in sea salt. Yum!

£3,
Sainsbury's



HAWKER'S POPPED SNACK

A great alternative to crisps, these soya and potato snacks are high in fibre and low in fat and calories. And they're delicious!

Multipack of 5, £3.50,
Ocado

MUM ON THE RUN

Laura Fountain is a mother, a running coach, a personal trainer, a marathon runner and the author of *The Lazy Runner* and *Tricurious*. Follow Laura @lazygirlrunning



Cross country sexism must be stamped out

My friend Laura and I coached track sessions together at our running club. New runners would often ask which Laura was which. We'd shrug and say, "It doesn't really matter."

We were both pregnant at the same time, too, her delivering just a few months before me. Our kids have been going to baby groups and toddler classes together for two years. They run around together and we wonder whether they'll be future runners.

// The idea our sex dictates what we're capable of is dangerous //

But while Laura has a little girl, I have a boy. And so, if they do grow up to follow our muddy footsteps and run cross country, they'll compete under unequal terms. In cross country, men and boys often run longer races than women and girls.

The English National Cross Country Championships this year will see the senior women running 8K while the men run 12K. Even the junior men will run 10K.

I try to be mindful of the messages that I'm giving my son. The messages that society gives him are largely out of my control though. What does a race that demands men and boys run further than women and girls

tell him? Probably that to be female means to be less capable. But I also worry what it tells him it means to be a man. When you tell women they're weaker, you're also telling men they have to be stronger.

The South of England Cross Country Championships this year will, again, see men running 15K and women 8K. Those who object to the equalising of race distances will often say, 'but women don't want to run 15K', as though *all* men do.

Runners are runners. We all prefer to run on different terrain, at different times of day, to run different distances. To think that gender dictates what sort of running we'd want to do is ridiculous and the message that our sex dictates what running we're capable of is dangerous for both men and women.

Last year I ran five miles from my home to the start of the South of England championship race. It took my total distance for the day to further than the men's race. I want my son to see that inequality, in whatever shape or form, should be challenged and not just accepted as part of 'tradition' or any other excuse.

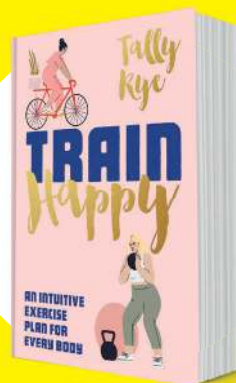
And, if he and his female friends decide to run cross country, I want them to be able to compete on equal terms. 🏃‍♀️



Women's Running protested unequal race distances at the South of England XC Champs in January. Find out how we're pushing for change at womensrunning.co.uk



This month's
wise women



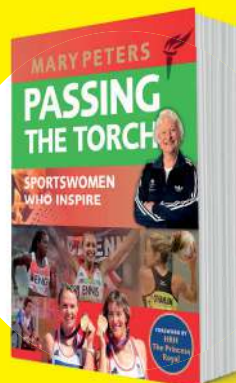
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£14.99, Pavilion Books
Ditch the diet and enjoy being active, starting with a 10-week training plan.



BEYOND BEAUTIFUL ANUSCHKA REES

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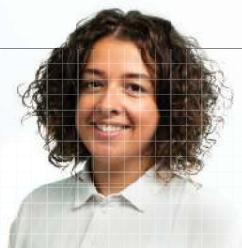


PASSING THE TORCH MARY PETERS

£12.99, Gateway Publishing
A series of interviews with inspiring sportswomen past and present.

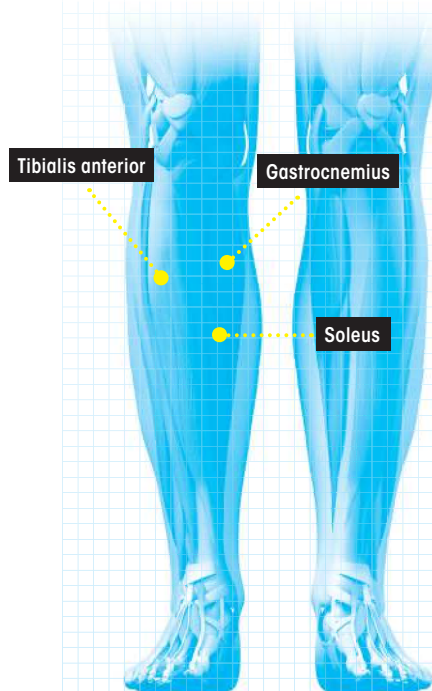
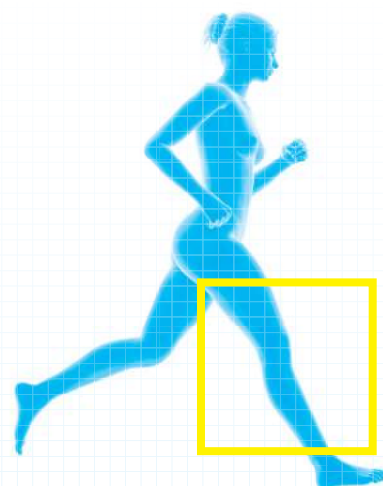
YOUR EXPERT

Gabriella Pimentel is a lower limb musculoskeletal specialist at Pure Sports Medicine. She has previously worked with England National football teams and Olympic gymnasts. Puresportsmed.com



CLINIC

As the second largest long bone in the body, the **shin bone**, anatomically known as the **tibia**, provides a huge amount of support to the rest of the body



movement and pushing off from the ground during running. All the muscles in the lower limb are important for running mechanics, however, weakness in the calves can directly correlate to increased stress through the tibia.

A simple yet effective way to strengthen the calf muscles are with calf raises:

- Standing on a step, let the heels drop back off the step
- Come all the way up onto your toes, then slowly lower back to starting position
- Can be done with knees bent (to bias the soleus muscle) or knees straight (the gastrocnemius)
- Aim for 2 sets of 20-30 daily

Aside from weakness, calf tension can

also place increased load through the tibia. If your running loading is high, it is important to decrease tension in the calves frequently. This may include:

- Foam rolling the backs of your lower leg for 2-5mins after exercise
- Stretching the calves by hanging your heels off the bottom of a step, or by completing a 'knee to wall' stretch (see below)
- Seeing a soft tissue therapist for a massage

A point to note: if there is weakness in the calves this may sometimes present as constant tension that, despite stretching and foam rolling, doesn't improve. In this instance, completing the strengthening exercise above would be beneficial.

**Anatomy**

The shin bone is the largest of the two bones below the knee. It can be felt as the hard, central ridge on the front that connects the knee joint to the ankle (cue a song about the ankle bone connected to knee bone!). It attaches to the other lower leg bone (fibula) via a membrane, and it is these two bones that are crucial to supporting your body when you run.

Due to the tibia's location, it helps with both knee and ankle function. There are many muscle attachments on the tibia, such as the calf complex, which is key in facilitating foot

// Weakness in the calves can directly correlate to increased stress through the tibia //

Calf stretches should be a fundamental part of your training





Your physio will be able to recommend specific exercises and actions

Common shin problems

► Tibial stress response

Our first problem is less common, but important not to miss. A stress response can be imagined as a spectrum, where the earlier stage is bone stress and the later stage is a full fracture. This can be considered as an overuse injury of a bone and occurs when too much load is placed through the bone and it is unable to repair quickly enough. For example, in runners this can occur when mileage is suddenly increased over a short period of time.

► Symptoms:

- Initially pain will begin towards the end of an activity, but resolves with rest
- As symptoms worsen, pain will begin earlier during the activity and may continue after the activity has finished
- In later stages, the pain may be felt at night and/or be present with minimal activity
- You may notice swelling at the area of pain, which is tender when pressed

► Immediate care:

- Stop weight bearing exercise – consider a rest period and cross training to lower your loading, for example cycling or swimming
- If the area is swollen, follow the principles of ice and rest
- If pain is present at night, or symptoms are worsening, seek medical advice

Medial tibial stress syndrome (MTSS)

Commonly known as shin splints, this issue is frequent among runners. As you can see

by the name, it is on the same spectrum as a stress fracture and is difficult to distinguish. It is also an overload injury and risk factors include being female, having a previous history of stress fractures, a high BMI and reduced ankle range of movement. However, when caught early, prognosis is often very good. Runners should expect a full recovery with adequate rest and activity modification.

► Symptoms may include:

- Presence of exercise induced pain along the bottom two thirds and inside border of the tibia
- Pain during or after activity that relieves itself with rest
- The pain normally presents as a throbbing ache in the shin

► Immediate care:

Similarly, it is recommended to ice (15mins, not on bare skin) and rest the shins. Wait until the pain has consistently settled – patience is key – then slowly build your load back up. In the long term, it may be worth having your foot mechanics assessed and strengthening work for the gluteals, calf and the foot intrinsic muscles.

Anterior compartment syndrome

Compartment syndrome occurs when the pressure within the tissues increases too much, resulting in a lack of blood supply to the muscles and nerves. This most common occurs with acute trauma or again, overuse. Assessing your foot posture for well fitting trainers, strength work to improve lower limb muscles, and being mindful of your running load are effective ways to prevent this.

► Symptoms may include:

- Pain that presents as a deep, burning or aching pain on the outside of the shin
- Pain that starts within the first 30mins of exercise and stops when activity is stopped
- A feeling of swelling or increased tension
- Pulling your foot towards you may be difficult, while pushing the foot down may reproduce your symptoms
- Recurrent episodes of cramping and numbness/pins and needles

► Immediate management:

- Stopping any aggravating activities – most likely running
- Ice application
- Massage may be beneficial in early cases
- If no improvement, medical expertise should be sought

As always, your physio is your best friend! 🧠





MY ROUTE

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Email womensrunning@anthem-publishing.com

Mum of three boys and regular buggy runner, **Fran Sille** is currently marathon training. Her local stretch of the Thames Path National Trail provides the perfect route for longer runs

© STRAVA



The Thames Path National Trail offers some beautiful long-distance – and flat! – running routes and this is a taster, with the opportunity to increase the distance. As a bonus, it's double-buggy friendly, too!

START

This 5.1 mile route starts in the village of Hurley, parts of which date back to 1086. From the car park at the end of the high street, turn left and follow the footpath towards the River Thames.



PART 1

Cross the river over the wooden footbridge and turn right. Follow the river, passing the lock on your right (complete with toilets and a café in summer months). After the lock, the path follows the river until you reach a second bridge which you will cross. On crossing the river (back to the south bank), turn left and run along the riverbank passing through a kissing gate until you reach and cross a third wooden bridge.



PART 2

Turn right after crossing the bridge, and follow the Thames Path signs all the way to Marlow. This will take you past Temple Lock followed by Bisham Abbey, originally founded in 1260, which was home to Henry VIII, Elizabeth I and is now home to the National Sports Centre. If you can manage this route early in the morning, the mist on the river is magical.



PART 3

Follow the Thames Path all the way until you reach the Marlow suspension bridge, where you will cross to the south side. Follow the Bisham Road into the village of Bisham with the Bull Inn on your left. After passing the gates to the National Sports Centre, turn right down Temple Lane.



PART 4

Continue straight ahead, following the road through the village of Temple. When the road ends, pass through the wooden gate (to the left of Temple Weir House) and on to a footpath which leads back to Hurley. The footpath first passes under a bridge, before turning right onto a tarmacked drive, when this eventually takes a sharp right, continue straight ahead back onto the footpath. On reaching the road (High Street) turn right and follow the road back to the car park.



FINISH

If you fancy extending the route there are two options: from Marlow, instead of crossing the road bridge, follow the Thames Path out and back towards Cookham; or in Hurley again follow the Thames Path out and back towards Henley-on-Thames. 📍

Events



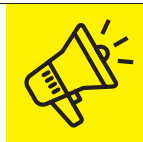
ISLE OF WIGHT FESTIVAL OF RUNNING

Time to book a weekend away? Escape to the Isle of Wight for an unparalleled race experience where you can choose from four cross-country routes in the breath-taking west of the island. The biggest draw of the weekend is the famously tough Needles Half, which follows a spectacular trail along the coast from Colwell Bay to The Needles. The Tapnell 10K takes runners past Afton Down, where Jimi Hendrix played his last performance in England at the 1970 pop festival. The Freshwater 5K passes another historic site: Alfred Lord Tennyson's magnificent home, Farringford. Younger members of the family can join the Junior Fun Run. 30-31 May, isleofwightfestivalofrunning.co.uk

QUEST WALES

One of the most scenic adventure races in the UK, Quest Wales, based in picturesque Snowdonia National Park, sees participants run, cycle and kayak across the stunning scenery of Snowdonia National Park. Participants have the choice of 23K, 38K or 50K routes to match their fitness levels, and while there may be a few hills and challenges along the way, the amazing spirit of the event means you'll never be left behind. 20 June 2020, questadventureseries.com





Can compression gear really help with recovery?

Look up compression kit and you might be surprised at the cost. So is it worth investing in this gear, or are there cheaper ways to help boost your recovery?



Matt Davey is brand manager for compression sportswear company CEP UK & Ireland. cepsports.co.uk



Those wishing to intensify their training, or who might suffer with calf or hamstring cramps, or who want to run without worrying about blisters, are all likely to benefit from compression. But not all compression is equal.

An expertly made compression product will use medical compression, which works with the venous return system to increase blood flow, which also supports efficient circulation. The compression profile provides stronger compression around the ankle, which gradually reduces towards the knee, helping to push blood back up your leg towards your heart. This in turn keeps your muscles fresher for longer.

Compression also contributes to recovery. Recovery socks or tights use a slightly different profile and are useful

// Medical compression works with the venous return system to increase blood flow //

for wearing after a hard session or race, when muscles feel particularly tired. You can relax while keeping the blood pumping efficiently to support recovery.

It's important to get the right fit. A superior knee-high compression sock fits your calf measurement – which is key to get the benefit. We all have different calf sizes, which is why you should avoid compression socks that come in shoe size alone – these simply squeeze your muscles, either too much or not enough.



Oliver McLean is technical manager at Meglio, a supplier of NHS physiotherapist products. mymeglio.com



For all runners, avoiding the physiotherapy treatment table is a priority. Too often however, we are programmed to look for a quick fix, a magic formula or the latest trending gadget on social media. Compression clothing looks great, but how does it actually work?

Designed to prevent injuries and aid recovery, compression clothing promotes blood circulation

and helps stabilise muscles during activity. Some pro athletes swear by it. Problem solved? Not quite.

Like most objectives, the key to staying fit and healthy requires a combination of tools – and consistent attention. Recovery, flexibility and strength work are essential to keep your body in tip-top shape, especially as we age. Later in life, our muscle mass starts to decline and the risk of

// The key to staying fit and healthy requires a combination of tools – and consistent attention //

picking up an injury increases. A foam roller and lacrosse ball can get the job of a personal massage therapist done for a lot less. Effective on almost any part of the body, lacrosse balls can be used to target trigger points and release muscle tension.

Physiotherapists say consistency is key. Used in conjunction with products such as compression clothing, massage tools will help you to prevent injuries and stay fit for longer. 🧘

Women's Running

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Kerllen Rego **WARRIOR**

"Running is definitely my therapy"

Kerllen Rego has built a career out of her desire to motivate other women to live a mentally and physically healthy life. And the thing that sets her apart? Her warts-n-all approach...

Words Rachel Ifans

Kerllen Rego is a mum and a runner. So far so nothing new, right? Well, think again. Kerllen is a woman full of surprises. Her Instagram account has a huge 227,000 followers and in May she scooped a win at the inaugural World Blogger Awards in Cannes (from 200 entries she was shortlisted to 42 winners). She gave up a teaching job to work as an influencer. She's Brazilian but lives in the south Wales countryside. And she believes in presenting real life on social media, rather than painting a superficial perfect-life-by-the-pool BS picture.

"I think I won because I'm a real person. I'm completely real – I'm not fake. I show everything I do." That doesn't sound very Instagram, does it? But it's what her followers want.

Social media audiences can spot it's not the right voice, when your photos are only professional and never personal, and when you're posting just only positive stories rather than giving something of value to your audience.

The real deal

Kerllen rationalises in her slightly broken, charmingly spoken English, which is so likeable and full of personality in her posts: "There is a trend towards superficiality on social media. Other influencers only show what they want you to see. They don't really give a true picture of what they're really like. I'm a real mum. My life is just the same as

other people's and I think that's one of the reasons why people follow me – I'm real."

No-one helps Kerllen with her influencer role, she does it all by herself – a fact that definitely helps her maintain an authenticity. And this independent, resilient woman has always gone it alone with her running too.

Young promise

Kerllen was always an active, sporty kid with a determination and commitment that is rare. She talks of how as a girl she'd walk miles in her native Brazil to ballet lessons rather than miss a session, how she'd get up at 5am every day to exercise at university (this writer didn't know where the gym was on her campus and she was there for four years!). But, as with many a woman runner's tale, it was when the tough times hit that running crawled out of the woodwork and offered itself as salvation.

Kerllen had moved to the UK with her husband and found herself very isolated as a new mum; no friends as she was new to the area, a wider family who were out of reach in Switzerland, a babe in arms and adrift in a foreign culture. It was tough.

What she calls the baby blues sounds like it was bordering on post-natal depression. "My weight dropped off and I cried more than I should. I tried to be optimistic but it was tough." So she took stock: What exercise could she do with the baby? You've got it: the pushchair-

baby-mummy combo emerged supreme. Kerllen tells us that when she ran with her daughter Carolina back in 2005, she was the only one doing that. She giggles at how women's running has changed seismically in the past 15 years. "I became known as the woman in my village who ran pushing a buggy! No-one did it back then.

"Running became my big passion – I loved it. It was because I could do it everywhere. Wherever I went, I could run. With running, it's so easy to go; you don't need much equipment, all you really need is the motivation to get out there." And of course, once she'd started running, she didn't want to stop (more on this anon).

Positive thinking

She has advice for women who are home alone with young children now, perhaps feeling down and lonely and lacking confidence to train – just like she was 15 years ago. "Use your mind to make things happen. Think positively and visualise that you can do something for you. You can shape your life with your thoughts. You deserve this time, it's your time. Training will make you feel better, happier and it will improve your self-esteem. When you have a good self-esteem everything around you will get better."

Now her daughters Carolina and Natalie are 14 and 11 years old respectively, and Kerllen still runs

every morning for at least an hour. It gives her the space she needs to think, to work things out and to come up with new ideas and inspiration for life. “It’s still a massive part of my life. And, 15 years later, it’s still helping my mental health – I’m 100 per cent sure of that.

“I’ll give you evidence. When I’m upset I go running and I just come back home when I feel better. Only a day or two ago I felt down, and I knew I needed fresh air, so I put my trainers on and went and ran for three hours. Running is definitely my therapy: I can’t imagine my life or myself without it.”

Running changes

“Sometimes I have music, sometimes books, sometimes nothing. It depends on what I’m looking for from my run on that day. Running is great and flexible like that. It changes with you.”

Kerllen is in the midst of marathon training, doing half her weekly runs

on the treadmill and half outside. She’s hoping to do three of the Big Six in 2020 – Tokyo in March, the London Marathon in April and hopefully the Berlin Marathon later in the year (she relies on an ambassador place at these big races). In 2021 she has her sights set on American races and completing the Big Six in the process.

She runs every day, she’s a busy mum, her work as an influencer never turns off. How does she keep strong and fit?

“Regarding injuries, I consider myself lucky. I haven’t had many injuries. Of course, as I build up my training for a marathon and cover more miles, it gets harder because I get tired, but I haven’t had injuries.”

She puts that down to her holistic healthy lifestyle (as well as to luck). For a start, she doesn’t just run. “I build up my strength in the gym as well. If you want to stay injury free, you have to lift weights and do yoga. Your legs need to be strong

enough. My tip is to not just run – mix things up and make sure you stretch too.”

Light lunches

A good diet is really important, too.

“Eating helps your body and diet is key to keeping well and injury free. Generally, I eat what I want, but for me that usually means having a healthy eating lifestyle. I favour a natural diet: I eat lots of veg and always look for balance. I don’t calorie count but I know that I run better when I’m lighter. If I run after my summer holiday I find it hard as I’ve invariably put on some weight during the break!”

Reflecting on races she’s done, what moments stand out? Maybe it’s the Brazilian in her but the passion flares up and she focuses on emotion rather than PBs. “Okay, there are two races that were very emotional for me. The first is the London Marathon. For me it was an emotional experience. It had been such a dream for me to do it and it became

Even after 15 years, Kerllen is still “100 per cent sure” running helps her mental health



about more than just turning up and running on the day. It was a privilege to be there and made me think a lot about running and what it had brought to my life.

“Emotional, mental and physical – all three things came together that day and I found it very moving.”

The other one was the Paris Triathlon. “The same thing happened to me there. It was a full triathlon, not a sprint, and although I loved the cycling, I found the swimming so hard. Oh my goodness, don’t put me in the water again! It was 35°C – really hot – and the swim was in a river full of weeds! I cried after that race. I just felt very sensitive and emotional.”

She reflects on challenges to come. “I think the Tokyo Marathon in March 2020 will be huge for me. My family always comes to races with me but that won’t be the case in Tokyo and I wonder if I will find that hard emotionally. I’m really looking forward to the race as I’m going as an ambassador, but I think it will be emotional too.”

When worlds collide

With mention of being a race ambassador, our chat turns back to social media and the unlikely career Kerllen has built herself from the ground up, through her passion for running. “Being a full-time mother and teaching English as an Additional Language (EAL) to children from different schools, it’s amazing that, through my blog, I am able to share my passion for sports and fitness with others to promote a healthy, motivating lifestyle.

“I’ve always wanted to let other women know that being a parent doesn’t have to prevent them from doing what they love.”

// What I’ve always wanted is to let other women know that becoming a parent doesn’t have to prevent them doing what they love //



Kerllen’s essential kit

The nine key bits of gear Kerllen can’t do without

#1 Aftershokz headphones

I don’t really fancy having anything sticking in my ears, so these bone-conducting ones, that sit outside the ear completely, are really fab.

#2 Gore shorts

I prefer running in shorts. I like free movements while I am running.

#3 Phone

I can’t run without my mobile phone. I use it for music, podcasts and also my Instagram stories.

#4 Garmin watch

My Garmin watch – absolutely essential!

#5 Winter kit

My winter kit is very important too. It includes: a headband in winter to keep my forehead and ears warm and stop me getting headaches; leggings to protect the muscles (cold muscles don’t perform well and they tire more quickly; and gloves – there’s nothing worse than having freezing hands while we are running.

#6 Sports bra

A sports bra needs to be nice and tight!

#7 Fasted runs


Even though it’s not a bit of kit, it’s still an essential for me! I always run in the morning without eating before. I think that my performance is much better with an empty stomach.

#8 Silva running belt

My runner’s belt, for carrying my phone. I take it with me wherever I go. It’s very important to me to have my hands free while I’m running, and I just take the mobile out once in a while to record.

#9 UA running shoes

My Under Armour Hovr running shoes. My normal size is 5.5, but I feel more comfy wearing a bigger size when I’m running so my trainers are a size 6.



Kerllen says she's known as the runner with a phone in her hand

Kerllen started out with her social media account back in 2012 when no-one knew about Instagram. "My family live in Switzerland and my sister Jackelinne said I should start to share my lifestyle with other people, because she said people aspired to be like me! I thought it was a good idea and I started to share recipes and bits and bobs. To start with, the account was private, for family and friends only. But then gradually people started wanting access, so I changed it to a public account.

"I guess I had a good grasp on the marketing side of social media because I had done a degree in it, but I wasn't very experienced with computers,

// Keep calm, believe you can do it, don't be afraid, run the first 10 per cent of the race slower than you normally would //

so it took me a good six months to get properly up and running."

Passion play

Soon Kerllen was getting recognised and liked for two things: her motivation and her passion for fitness. She still enjoys the creative space she gets from being an influencer. It enables her to share the ongoing adventures she has with her family and give readers her running tips and advice, too.

"Now I'm privileged enough to be able to choose brands that fit my lifestyle. And I've given up my job working in the school for foreign languages to focus on my influencer role. I've worked with brands such as New Balance, Garmin, Suunto and Salomon, as either a brand or race ambassador."


What does being a race ambassador actually involve? "Being an ambassador means helping promote the race in the run-up to it and also on the day itself. For me, this means tagging the race on my training run posts, talking about the race on social media and giving tips about running it, as well as detailing my training plan. On the race day, I try to promote the race as much as possible with Instagram stories too."

Handy work

Many runners find race days stressful enough as it already – the herding, the adrenaline, the waiting – without having to focus on creating engaging content for my followers too. Kerllen, though, is fantastic at it: "I'm known as the runner who runs with the mobile phone in her hands. It's a great way of recording the best moments of the races and gives my followers a very real insight into the experience that I had."

Kerllen has also been a race ambassador for our very own Women's Running Race Series in Cardiff last May. She took to the stage on race day and her motivational advice for runners bears repeating now: "Keep calm, believe that you can do it, don't be afraid, hydrate

yourself, follow your pace and stick to your goal. Run the first 10 per cent of the race slower than you normally would, with the idea that you'll finish strong. Don't try to go out faster than your goal pace. If you do that, you risk burning out early. Try to keep an even pace throughout the race, and save your extra energy for the final push to the finish."

It's difficult to add to that. It turns out that when it comes to running, Kerllen knows exactly what she's doing. 

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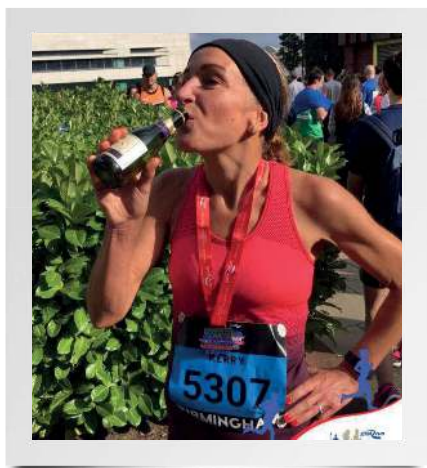
This month, you share your views on running without a watch, how to sleep better and why joining a running club can help you make friends in a new area. Great work #WRTribe.

WANT TO JOIN OUR #WRTRIBE? SIMPLE Like on [Facebook](#) [womensrunningmagazineuk](#) Follow on [Instagram](#) [@womensrunninguk](#)

How important is sleep to you when it comes to training?

1 @Kerry Grant

"We definitely need our sleep. I recommend reading *Why We Sleep* by Matthew Walker."



2 @Denise Smith

"I rarely sleep right through the night. I put an audiobook and drift off again. I so need my sleep and it really does affect my runs."



3 @Pat Wilson

"I drop off really quickly but never sleep for more than three to four hours at a time. I stay in bed and I usually manage to drop off again eventually. I have to have a nap during the day or I would never get through."



INSPIRED IN OZ

Australia's Barbara-Lyn Hyam is impressed by cold-weather runners

"Your magazine was only available sporadically at my local newsagents so I jumped at the chance to subscribe. I have enjoyed all the articles and especially love to dream about making it over to Britain one day and running in your beautiful countryside. On the weekend I entered my first triathlon, inspired by your recent articles. You are so brave running in the cold!"

I'm a real wuss – although the heat can be a pain too. Cheers to all and best wishes from Oz."



#WRTRIBE CLUB OF THE MONTH

Badass Mother Runners Club

Badass Mother Runners is an online running group, started a year ago by Beverley Logan from south Wales. What began as an Instagram page to encourage mums who run that they are more badass than they give themselves credit for, has grown into an online community of thousands, across Facebook, Instagram and Strava.

"There are often meet ups at local races, where it's super easy to spot us in our vibrant kit! The supportive nature is incredible. It's great to go for a run, especially on a day you might not be feeling it, knowing thousands of women are behind you cheering you on. A warm welcome awaits you!"
[badassmotherrunners.co.uk](#)

TELL US WHY YOUR CLUB SHOULD BE CLUB OF THE MONTH!
EMAIL [WOMENSRUNNING@ANTHEM-PUBLISHING.COM](#)





NEXT ISSUE
HOW DO YOU MAKE YOURSELF RUN
WHEN YOU DON'T FEEL LIKE IT?

WIN!

This month, our favourite comment wins a pair of these beauties: the Saucony Ride ISO 2. Congratulations **Sian Jamieson!**

WISE WORDS FROM A RUNNING DEVOTEE

**Get motivated with
Sian Jamieson,
a 36-year-old from the
Scottish Highlands**

"I'm just back from a wee run after a two-week hiatus because of a mountain bike injury. This has been the longest two weeks of waiting! I'm taken aback by how much I've missed it and how much I've needed to run – I only took on the Couch to 5k challenge five months ago. Running has transformed my body and mind. I was a sceptic. Now I'm a full-on devotee.

"I feel more confident in myself, feel more capable and have taken on tasks



I would otherwise have hidden away from. It's sparked joy in my life again, helping me tackle anxiety and depression. It has also brought me closer to old friends and new. The running community around me has become a valued support base I know I can call on when I need them. Just get out there – you won't regret it!"

FOOD SWAP

Crisps for popcorn



Popcorn is a high-fibre wholegrain and is lower in fat and calories than crisps (375kcal per 100g compared to 536). It contains nutrients including B vitamins, magnesium and manganese. However, buy or make versions that are prepared without high amounts of fat, sugar and salt. Instead, flavour with smoked paprika, chopped herbs and a touch of sea-salt, cinnamon, cocoa powder and dash of sugar, lemon or chilli and garlic.

We hang out with *Karin Voller*

Ultra-runner Karin, 38, from Tring, loves running in the Alps

Why do you run?

I love being in the outdoors and running with my two dogs. Whatever the weather, there is no such thing as a bad run. My real love of running is when there is no set distance or time. I run lead for trail-running holiday company Run the Wild and seeing others catch the running bug is so satisfying.

How do you train?

I prefer to run first thing when there are few people around and I have the forest or mountain to myself. I'm introducing some formalised training to see what my body is capable of. We live in the Alps for some of the year and there the focus is on ascent on a route or circumnavigating a hill as opposed to time or distance. If I feel good, I go quicker. If I feel bad, I back off.

Are you focussed on anything at the moment?

Yes! I have my first 100-mile race booked. So, for the next few months I'll be building up distance, and back-to-back long runs. runthewild.co.uk





RESET YOUR RESOLUTIONS

Adjust your mindset right now: you have NOT failed if those rash New Year's resolutions have been tougher than expected. With a little tweak here and there, you can nail your goals simply by reframing them

Words: Louise Pyne

Fed up of your New Year's resolutions falling by the wayside come February? Research shows that around 80 per cent of resolutions are discarded within a few weeks. So while setting them can be a great idea, in order to strive for positive change in your life, as a nation we're pretty rubbish at sticking to them.

So why are the odds stacked up against us? And why do we fail? "We generally set goals that, although are exciting, are too big and not sustainable. It's more sensible to break down aims into bite-sized chunks that are more manageable," says running expert and nutritionist, Helen Morton.

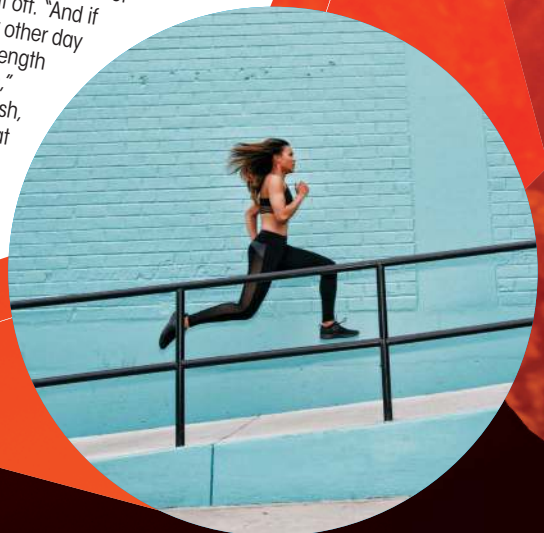
Don't get us wrong. Fitness goals are important. They extend our perception of what is possible and force us to push ourselves to our physical and mental limits. They give us a sense of achievement and help raise our self confidence. But some of us are setting the *wrong* type of resolutions. So while it's good to have a bigger picture of what you want to get out of 2020, it's important to focus on how you are going to get there. Otherwise your goal will feel more pipe dream than actually achievable.

Here we share some of the most common running resolution fails and how to tweak them to ensure you smash your goals.

RESOLUTION RESET

RESOLUTION FAIL: VOWING TO RUN EVERY DAY

Unless you're already a seasoned running pro with a targeted goal in mind, such as training for an endurance race, running every day might well be an unattainable aim. Of course, we're not trying to put you off pounding the pavements. Setting an intention to run more often is a great way to make sure you see positive changes in your performance. But vowing to run every single day come rain or shine is probably not the best way to go if you're just starting out on the fitness scene. "Running every day is a great goal, but it takes time and energy. It can be a step too far unless you were already exercising daily," says Helen. If you're relatively new to running, a more progressive, reasonable goal might be starting out with one extra fitness session per week than you already do. And then slowly building this up over the weeks so it becomes more sustainable – think progress, not perfection! Choosing the same time to work out every day may make it become more of a habit and something you look forward to instead of putting it off. "And if you're already a keen runner, you could set a goal to run every other day and do a different form of exercise (like yoga, spin class, strength training, walking, dance class) on the days you don't run," continues Helen. This will help to keep fitness sessions fresh, and enables you to focus on strengthening muscles that are needed to keep up stamina when you run.



RESOLUTION RESET

RESOLUTION FAIL: AIMING TOO HIGH

When setting any goal, especially a fitness goal, it's important to assess what you want from the outset. Are you motivated to lose the extra pounds you put on over Christmas, to get stronger, or to boost your endurance? Sit down with a notepad and pen and write down your goals and the motive behind them. This enables you to put the focus on the positive outcome – and without this targeted aim you are almost destined to fail.

It's crucial you make goals that aren't too far fetched. If you've never run 5K before, signing up for a marathon is probably not the best idea. "Most people who are starting to train for running a marathon for the first time would ideally have been running consistently for at least six months. The marathon distance should not be underestimated; it is a long way," says running expert and nutritionist, Helen Morton. Start with a few 10K races to boost your confidence and at least one or two half marathons under your belt before setting your sights on a full on marathon. "Remember, the main goal for a first timer running a race should simply be to enjoy the experience," ascertains Helen.

// When you cut out entire food groups you're more likely to crave something you've put off limits. This can induce feelings of guilt and negativity, creating a cycle of yo-yo dieting //



RESOLUTION RESET

RESOLUTION FAIL: SETTING AN UNREALISTIC PB

Once you've signed up for a race like a 10K or half marathon you probably have a PB in mind, but it's important to make sure this goal is actually realistic. "Be realistic with a PB goal. Think about how much time you actually have to dedicate to training and improving your nutrition," says Helen. The easiest way to estimate this is to look at how you performed in previous races (if you've done any) or your pace during timed runs. "Keep a check on how your training runs are improving and use those times as a guide for races," adds Helen. You can also access pace calculators online where you select your distance and time taken to run that distance in order to work out your pace per min/km. This can be a useful tool to help you adjust your pace accordingly.



RESOLUTION RESET

RESOLUTION FAIL: CUTTING OUT ALL DIET VICES

One of the biggest nutrition mistakes people make is trying to live a wholly virtuous diet when training for an event. While a balanced diet is the best approach to take when it comes to healthy eating, thinking in the extremes and challenging yourself to an unrealistic diet will only set you up for failure. When you cut out entire food groups you're more likely to crave something you've put off limits. This can induce feelings of guilt and negativity, creating a cycle of yo-yo dieting. "Clearing all diet vices is just not sustainable. It is also unnecessary," says Helen.

Establish a healthy relationship with food by allowing yourself a little bit of everything. "A healthy, balanced diet includes the occasional treat – food should be a source of enjoyment not punishment. For runners we need a daily balance of complex carbohydrates, quality protein, healthy fats and adequate hydration," says Helen. And meals plus two snacks (one eaten in the morning and one in the evening), you should also have extra pre and post exercise snacks or shakes on days you're running to allow for energy and recovery.



Helen's willpower workout

These practices will help to boost motivation to achieve your goals

1# Keep a training diary

Writing a fitness diary helps you to assess your progress as you work your way through training. Jotting down detailed notes about your workouts can help you to avoid the dreaded procrastination and provides a satisfying record you can look back on when you need a little extra inspiration and motivation. You could also share your workouts on social media to get encouraging feedback that will motivate you during those inevitable days where you feel like throwing in the towel.

2# Find a fitness buddy you can train with

Time flies by when you have a friend to train with. It's one of the easiest ways to stay motivated and can reinvent your training routine – after all, committing to meet someone makes it harder to skip a session.

3# Set small, achievable goals – and rewards too

Having a little something to look forward to once you've reached each milestones can help to keep training on track. Downloading a new workout

playlist on Spotify, getting an invigorating post-workout shower gel or a snazzy new pair of sports socks will remind you of your achievements and help you to stay motivated.

4# Keep your exercise kit handy and ready to use

If you've set your sights on a run first thing in the morning, on your lunch break or straight from work, make sure running kit and a pair of trainers are always readily accessible to make running feel less like a chore during dark, cold or wet weather.

5# Use positive self-talk to tell yourself you can do it

This can be a tough: try to be supportive of yourself and your goals rather than beating yourself up if you haven't reached a target. Breathe through any anxiety and repeat positive affirmations to yourself such as "I am becoming a stronger runner with each training session" to keep up a can-do attitude. Repeating positive statements such as these will help to ignite your subconscious mind so in time it will accept the statement as being true.

Motivational apps

Silence that nagging voice in your head telling you to work out more with an app designed to boost your fitness and determination...

1# Nike + Training Club

With over 160 workouts to supplement your running regime, based around strength, endurance and mobility, each workout lasts just 15-20 minutes and most require no equipment at all, so can be done in the comfort of your home. For more info visit nike.com

2# Zombies, Run!

This interactive app is the perfect solution if you're stuck in a fitness rut. It sees you as the star hero in a game. You must navigate your way through an adventure story while being pursued by zombies. For more info visit zombiesrungame.com

3# Strava

This very popular app records your activity and collects important data, including pace, distance, speed and calories burned. And if you're bored of slogging out the same routes session after session, there's also a wide range of road and trail routes you can upload to help refresh your workout. For more info visit strava.com

4# Adidas Runtastic

Distractions can help see us through some of the toughest training moments and if you need your mind to be occupied to break out of your comfort zone, then this app is for you. It features Story Runs, podcast-style tracks that are designed to motivate you while working out. For more info visit runtastic.com

5# Road ID

Safety is paramount when you're running and this app gives peace of mind for you and your loved ones. The key feature is that it allows you to share your location with friends and family via real time GPS and even informs your specified contacts via text or email when you become stationary for five minutes and fail to respond to the app's notification prompts. For more info visit roadid.com

RESOLUTION RESET

RESOLUTION FAIL: SACRIFICING YOUR SOCIAL LIFE FOR YOUR RUNNING

Juggling a social life with your fitness routine can be a struggle if you've signed up to something like a marathon or ultramarathon, which requires fairly big training volume over a few months. If you've committed to a bigger fitness goal than usual, it's probably going to impact your lifestyle to some extent, which means some sacrifices are inevitable. If however, you find training is taking over your life and negatively affecting your emotional wellbeing, it might be time to re-think things. If you're not feeling positive emotionally it will put an obstacle in the way of you meeting your goals. Make sure you don't neglect your loved ones – even if you don't have as much time to meet up with friends or family because of training commitments, make the effort to keep in touch via phone, WhatsApp or email. Try and add more time to your day. If you're not the type of person who likes to run in the morning, it's still a good idea to wake up early, then you can cross off a couple of tasks on your to-do-list, so you can afford to take some time out later in the day, to get that important run in. It's okay to skip the odd training session. Don't beat yourself up about it. If you've chosen a date night at the cinema or dinner with friends over that long run you had planned, try and squeeze in a 15-minute jog instead and perhaps make up for missing out on your original running plans the following day. The chances are you'll feel happier and more refreshed, which means you'll perform better during your next session.





**RESOLUTION
RESET**

RESOLUTION FAIL: EXERCISING TOO QUICKLY AFTER INJURY

Running-induced injury sucks. We've all been there. Painful and downright frustrating, getting hurt can sideline your goals. But prioritising time for your body to recover will help to accelerate the healing process, and with the right mindset you can look after yourself during an injury and bounce back stronger and wiser. "Runners who have been injured are usually very keen to get back to training once the injury has healed," says running expert and nutritionist, Helen Morton. "A slow, steady increase in running is far healthier and less likely to cause injury recurrence than diving straight back in to your pre-injury training plan."

The type of injury you have dictates how long you will need to stay away from running – and some injuries don't lead to a blanket ban. If you've suffered inflammation, wait at least 72 hours for tissue to heal, and if you're suffered anything more serious seek advice from your doctor or physiotherapist. And when you do start to exercise again, listen to your body. If you feel pain at the injury site, you maybe haven't allocated enough time for recovery and pushing too hard can cause further setbacks. "Consider what caused the injury in the first place (old trainers, increasing distance too quickly, insufficient recovery?) and make appropriate changes."



**RESOLUTION
RESET**

RESOLUTION FAIL: NOT PRACTISING ENOUGH SELF-CARE

Taking time in-between sessions for recovery will help to ease any stress on your body and prevents burnout. It also helps to enhance our willpower reserve so you feel raring to go when it comes to your next planned running session and not overwhelmed at your end goal. When your body is in a relaxed state your heart rate and breathing slow down, stress hormones drop, blood pressure is lower and your body releases stored up tension. Relaxation helps you to stay more focused as you're not grinding your body to the ground. Soak in a relaxing bath with a few drops of calming essential oils like lavender, light some scented candles, practise restorative yoga or curl up in front of your favourite Netflix series. Anything that helps you to wind down in between training sessions is a win to help you achieve your long-term goals. Treating your body well enables it to perform at its best possible capacity, so prioritise self-care to help transform your results.

|| When your body is in a relaxed state your heart rate and breathing slow down, stress hormones drop, blood pressure is lower and your body releases stored tension ||



**RESOLUTION
RESET**

**RESOLUTION FAIL:
FOCUSING
ON MULTIPLE
GOALS AT ONCE**

Trying to tackle too much at once is a mistake many people make when it comes to setting new health and fitness goals. This sets you up for failure, because if you're striving to do too many things, ultimately you're unlikely to manage each task properly. Quality and not quantity should be your goal setting mantra. So while it's a good idea to write out a list of what you'd like to accomplish by December, it's also a good idea to pick two or three goals to work on over the next six months. And once you've achieved these in the timeframe you've set, you can work on your next lot of aims. This sort of well-thought-out, structured plan will give you the time and energy you need to ace every challenge, and having a long-term outlook will help you to see your goals as more of a lifestyle change.

// A well-thought-out, structured plan will give you the time and energy you need to ace every challenge and having a long-term outlook will help you to see your goals as more of a lifestyle change //



**RESOLUTION
RESET**

**RESOLUTION FAIL:
INFLEXIBILITY
IN YOUR
DEFINITION
OF SUCCESS**

// Understand your body's abilities and work on both your strengths and weaknesses. For example if you have a lot of endurance but not much speed, train with speed work to build up your pace //

There is not one universal rule to success. In fact we all have our own interpretation of success and being flexible in your definition of success will help to you achieve your aims. If you're running your first ever 5K and believe that success means crossing the finishing line first – you're already on your way to failure. Of course it's good to set the bar high, but if you're too rigid about success you'll take the joy out of training. Understand your body's abilities and work on both your strengths and weaknesses. For example if you have a lot of endurance but not much speed, train with speed work to build up your pace.



2020 fitness resolutions...

These inspiring women have set their sights on conquering their New Year training challenges...

Melodie Manners, 31 from Cornwall, has set her sights on running every day

"I have set a resolution to run every day for the year #runstreak2020. To keep up my motivation I am documenting my running with an image and review of my effort on Instagram (@melodiemanners) and I find this keeps me accountable.

"I have made my goal to run a minimum of one mile per day, which I have found prompts me to run further. By the time I'm at one mile my muscles are warmed up and endorphins kick in, so I often find it easy to go for longer.

"So far I have run 27.6 miles, and I have even encouraged my non-running boyfriend to take up running. He has run 15 of those miles with me! One of my friends is also mirroring with a run streak and sending me her miles per day to keep her accountable too.

"I have several strategies I use to keep up my motivation. I tell myself I am really excited to go out and run. I'll message it to my friend, I'll say it out loud to myself and boyfriend and I just repeat it really as a bit of a mantra. Being positive and not letting myself think it's a chore has really helped, especially when it's cold and dark. I also try and replay all the times I've run/raced and it has felt really hard but I've not given up and have felt amazing afterwards."

Naomi White, 29 from Hampshire, has challenged herself to run a half marathon

"My goal for 2020 is to run my third half marathon. I have previously taken part in the Ealing and Bournemouth half marathons four years ago and vowed I wouldn't do another, but the running bug is back! I felt that in 2020 I wanted to challenge myself again and have a goal to train for. I got back into running last September and started with a weekly 5K for Headspace and to build up

endurance. I then took on a running coach in November 2019 (Oliver Jones) as I felt I needed a direction in order to get faster and increase my distance if I had any hope of being fit enough to run a half again.

"Having a coach who has devised a bespoke plan for me has helped to motivate me massively. We initially started with a goal of running a 10K in 50 minutes, and to achieve this, the plan included two runs per week, which for me was realistic for my lifestyle. The sessions vary but include sprint sessions, long-distance, hill sprints, speed changes and the all-important rest and recovery.

"As January came around, Oliver and I went on a number of early morning beach runs and this is when we decided to do a half marathon in 2020. I'm going to run it with my coach as a pacer and am aiming to finish in 1 hour 42 minutes. The training will increase from two to three sessions per week and alongside this I will also be doing two to three strength sessions."

Emee Culpeper, 25 from London, will be running the 2020 London Marathon

"This year I've decided to run my first ever marathon. I have run half marathons and 10K events in the past so I thought I'd push myself further. Helping raise money, to support the research towards those suffering from Alzheimer's as well as the effect it has on those families and the pressures on life, motivates me. Running different routes and with different friends and family keeps things mixed up as well.

"Originally I started running as it helps to clear my head. A lot was happening in my life, so I found myself running more and more. It has now become a huge part of my life (it's also the cheapest form of exercise too). It's also just fun and I like taking in what's happening around me as I run!" 🏃‍♀️

Sweating buckets, feeling **incredible**

I may look exhausted, but I'm helping people get the care they need at the end of their lives.

And that's something worth sweating for.

Find a race near you at
mariecurie.org.uk/sweat



Care and support
through terminal illness



Charity reg no. 207994 (England & Wales), SC038731 (Scotland) E169f
Photo: Ben Gold/Marie Curie



COACH

Train as a coach // Half marathon plan // How I train

A photograph of two women running on a paved path in a park. The woman on the left is wearing a black vest over an orange long-sleeved shirt and grey patterned leggings. She has blonde hair that is blowing in the wind. The woman on the right is wearing a teal hoodie and black leggings. They are both smiling and running towards the camera. The background shows trees and a park bench.

Could you be a **coach?**

Run coaches are super fast, elite runners with years of experience, right? Wrong! If you have the time and the enthusiasm, you could end up training your very own running group. What are you waiting for? Words **Tina Chantrey**



The thought of becoming a coach can seem a little daunting. But it really doesn't have to be; you, me, *everyone* can become a running coach, or get involved at some level with delivering running sessions. It doesn't have to be hard, you don't have to be an elite runner – or even a fast runner – to become either a leader or a coach. And it can be unbelievably rewarding, and really good fun.

Coaches and leaders are the backbone of our sport. They inspire, support and work across all events, ability levels, aspirations and ages to develop all athletes. Is this something you'd like to do? Read on...

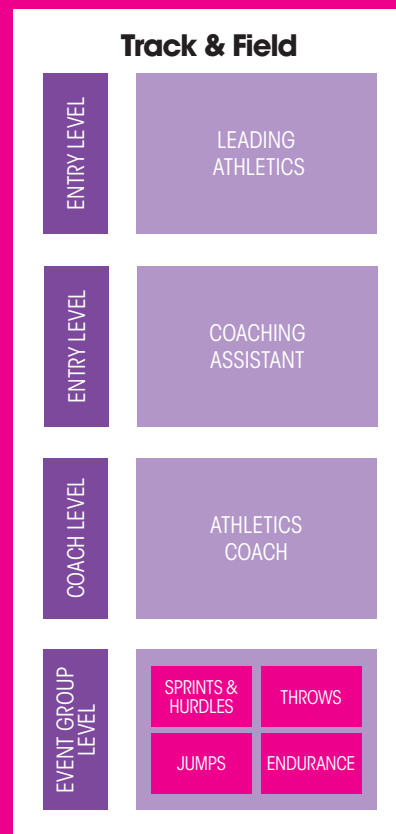
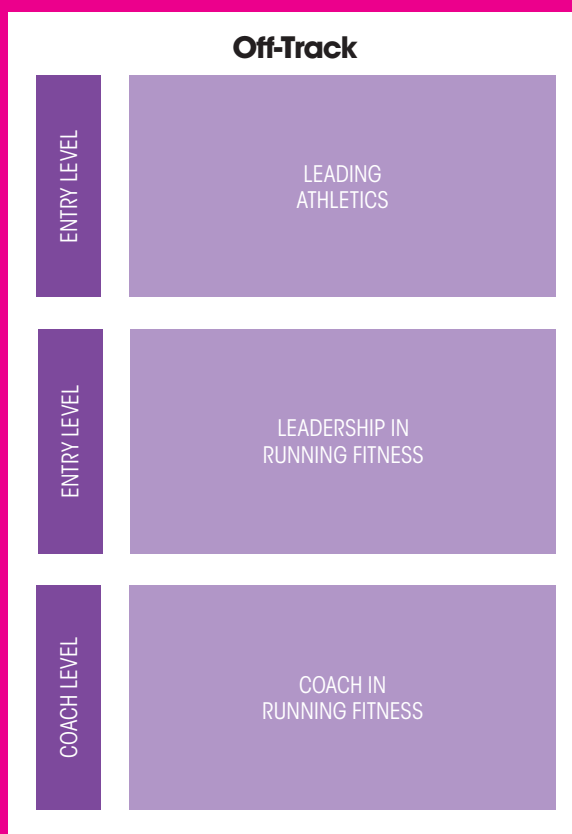
England Athletics (EA) offers

courses throughout the country that will give you the tools to begin your coaching journey, at whatever level you would like to get involved at. The basic pathway is shown over the page, and as you can see, there are options for everyone, regardless of age or ability. »

Coaching courses Off-track & Track

There are plenty of courses to choose from, and lots of courses to stretch yourself further. If you want to help out at your local club or set up your own running group, you have two options. The first is for people who want to get involved in road running, or 'off-track', the second is for those who want to work within track and field. There are athletics and running qualifications to suit everyone.

There are also plenty of additional courses within these qualifications, such as disability inclusion training and sight loss awareness training, as well as ways in which you can continue your coaching journey through attending conferences and masterclasses.



Leadership in Running Fitness (LiRF)

The Leadership in Running Fitness (LiRF) course is the first one to take. It's designed to prepare you to provide a safe and enjoyable running experience for young people over 12 years of age and adults of any ability.

This qualification will provide you with insurance to lead a group within the limits of the course content. Leadership in Running Fitness is a prerequisite course for the Coach in Running Fitness qualification, which comes next.

You'll get involved in tasks and activities throughout the course and work on engaging athletes, all with the help of the course staff.

This is a one-day course involving both classroom and practical activity and will teach you the principles of a warm-up, endurance running technique, how to progress movement skills, a cool down and best practice for stretching. You'll also learn how to organise a group safely,

the importance of an individual-centred approach to leading (you get the athlete to think about how they can improve etc), the structure of a session and goal setting. You'll get stuck in during this day, practising a warm-up, leading an activity, instructing and developing a session plan. It's very relaxed yet builds a massive amount of confidence.

Book on to a LiRF course now at: athleticshub.co.uk/course-list

Coach in Running Fitness (CiRF)

The Coach in Running Fitness (CiRF) qualification is the cornerstone of the 'off-track' pathway. Let's call it 'road', as this makes more sense. It's primarily for those working with road runners who wish to improve their fitness.

As such, it offers a broad application to road based endurance running rather than specific track events or distances and is not designed for coaches who want to work with runners taking part in track based events. When qualified you

will be insured to coach a running group without supervision.

It's a demanding course, especially if you have a full-time job or other commitments to consider. You'll do a range of tasks and activities throughout the course, and it involves quite a bit of work as you get your head around micro and mesocycles and periodisation, but it can be done. I managed to fit it in when my three girls were all young, so it is achievable, but it requires you to set aside time for both the course, mentoring from a coach throughout, and practising your sessions every week. But the result is more than worth it.

CiRF is more formal than the LiRF qualification, with a four day course, two at the beginning, two at the end. At the end, you will be assessed on your technical knowledge, planning and coaching practice. Your tutors are there to encourage and assist you, not to shoot you down, so don't get too stressed about those days until you're doing them.

You will come away from this course with a greater knowledge of the ABCs of running (agility, balance and coordination), fundamental running skills, the importance of physical preparation, such as strength work, and coaching skills including safety, organisation, instruction, demonstration and feedback.

Book on to a CiRF course now at: athleticshub.co.uk/course-list

Coaching Assistant, Track & Field

If your passion lies on the track, and with sprints such as the 100, 200 and 400 metres or middle distance (800m, 1500m and longer), the coaching assistant qualification will build your confidence and develop your skills for coaching athletics via a range of run, jump and throwing skills and activities. It will also focus on the introduction of the fundamental movement skills that underpin athletics activities.

To support the multi-event approach for developing athletes, coaching assistants will be expected to assist in

the delivery of a range of sessions that develop running, jumping and throwing skills in their club. It will help you develop warm up activities for children and adults, the basic fundamentals of movement (base size and direction, balance, posture, coordination), the key principles of running (including wheelchair racing, over obstacles, as well as race walking), jumping and throwing and a basic introduction to the body's energy systems. The course also helps you to learn best practice principles for organisation and safety and how to set and organise an activity.

This is a two day course, usually run over a weekend, involving classroom and practical activity. There is no assessment element, but expect to walk away with plenty of new ideas and skills to deliver from networking with other coaches.

Book on to a Coaching Assistant course now at: athleticshub.co.uk/course-list

Athletics Coach

The athletics coach qualification has been designed to support coaches in working

// You need to set aside time for mentoring from a coach throughout, and practising your sessions. But the result is more than worth it //



My Muddy Runners

(@muddyrunters)

Kate Bone shares how she set up her own group

"Running has always been part of my life. As a child, a student, or a busy lawyer, I always had this form of exercise and wellbeing in my armoury – I knew how to do it, it was in my blood. When I was 24 my mum died, and I coped by running. My sister and I did ten Race for Life events to fundraise in memory of our mother, and we encouraged our friends to run with us, seeing an extraordinary running community build before our eyes.

"By then I was a mother of three young children. I was soon joined by other school mums, coming out in all weathers, exploring local footpaths and trails in our area and often coming back wet and muddy, but buzzing. We set up a small Facebook group and called it 'Muddy Runners'.

"The four mums who had started the group then decided to get qualified and did the Leadership in Running Fitness course through England Athletics. We made the group official, affiliating to Run Together (the recreational arm of England Athletics) and offering a 10-week course for beginners.

"In 2015 we heard about Project 500 [an organisation supporting women coaches] and were lucky to be awarded a bursary to enable us to undertake our Coach in Running Fitness qualification. At this time we had nine young children between us, were all working part-time jobs and trying to balance working/home life with completing the qualification. It wasn't easy, and nor should it be, but with hard work, determination and the support of each other and our club, we passed – we celebrated that day at the Test Valley Sports Awards evening, where we came runners up as Coaches of the Year. We now have over 200 social club members and offer five runs a week, from slow runs to social runs to a 10-week course."





coach with the option to choose speed, jumps, throws, or endurance.

Book on to a Coaching Assistant course now at: athleticshub.co.uk/course-list

RunTogether

The first port of call for you to empower yourself with information, before you decide how you would like to get more involved with the running community, is the England Athletics' RunTogether website, runtogether.co.uk. It really is a treasure chest of information, and you need to mine it.

The ethos behind RunTogether is providing fun, friendly, supportive and inclusive running opportunities for everyone: whatever your ability or time availability. "We believe running / jogging is more fun and easier to become part of your lifestyle when shared with others," stresses EA.

Since its inception in 2017, 2,000 RunTogether groups have been set up around the country. Setting up a group

with athletes right from the foundation stage to event group development stage, and advocates a multi-event approach.

This qualification also enables coaches to choose their own event group area of interest (speed, endurance, jumps, or throws), which is covered on the Day 3 and Day 4 options. Coaches on the athletics coach qualification will develop their knowledge and expertise across core

event areas in relation to run, jump and throwing activities, as well as specialising in their chosen event group area.

The course consists of four contact days, which include assessment of technical knowledge, physical preparation, planning and coaching practice. Days 1 and 2 cover general athletic content (including what and how to coach), while Days 3 and 4 provide the

Sarah Gardiner

England Athletics Club Support Manager and the founder of Back on Track Runners shares her coaching tips

► Why should I be a run leader?

Giving back and helping others at the start of their running journey is so rewarding. You'll discover new parts of your local area when planning new runs, and you will be encouraging more runners to feel welcomed into a safe environment without being intimidated by the perceived threat of faster or more serious runners, or the fear of joining a 'real running club'.

You don't have to be fast, serious, loud and shouty, have lots of time, write training plans for people, coach athletics, have your own insurance, or do this on your own. You can set up a group with others. All that England Athletics asks is that you run your group having qualified as a Leader in Running Fitness. You choose your group location, demographic and set up, and you lead your group in your own style.

You are then insured and able to access the support available to you. The further qualifications you can choose to take will enable you to coach younger athletes, write training plans and coach in different athletic events.

Remember, a good leader is able to write and lead sessions that everybody can participate in, they don't necessarily have to do this from the front of the group!

► What skills do I need for this?

You need to enjoy running, and preferably have a running story of your own which can relate to others in your group. You may participate in events or social runs, or may encourage others to do, you will need to be motivated and organised and able to encourage others. You will like making new friends, and you will want to be a role model to others.

► What makes a great group?

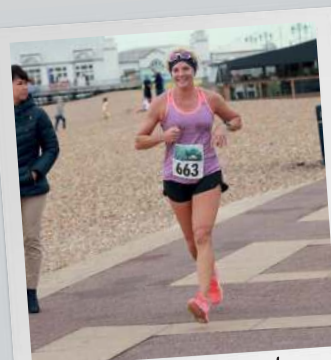
One or more leaders (ideal ratio is one leader to 12 or less runners).

Well-planned routes and sessions (risk assessing – dark, hills, roads, hazards).

Being creative with your routes, making sessions interesting and varied, using street furniture and basic equipment for stretches and warm ups.

Being organised will help you set up, maintain and grow your group. Use the RunTogether platform to advertise your runs, which enables members to book on, and use the run leaders app to conduct registers.

And lastly, safety: making sure runners are visible, leaders have phones, ICE information for runners (on app), first aid kits (if trained), suitable clothing for weather conditions, knowing where toilets and defib units are locally.



Sarah in her stride

► What kind of runs could I try?

- **Go naked:** no watch timed 5K
- **Photo challenges:** finding road signs, solving clues
- **Off-road:** using bridleways, steps, slopes, and tracks
- **Partner runs:** one runner goes 2K in one direction, another the same distance the other way; both try to beat each other back
- **Disc efforts:** run fast for one minute and lay a disc down on the floor then return to the start position, and repeat. Encourage consistency and pace judgement.

Follow Sarah @sgbackontrack

is easy; get qualified as a LiRF and then log on to the website. If you want to be a woman-only group, or trail only group, that's fine; it's your group, your rules.

The RunTogether Runner app will make your life as a leader so easy. Key features of the app include being able to search for runs near you, viewing your upcoming and completed run details, viewing your group details and allowing your athletes to book on to sessions in just two clicks. Also, the support menu on the RunTogether website provides advice, including marketing support, how to build your own RunTogether website, and downloadable logos.

There is also a Satellite Clubs programme, aiming to encourage more young people aged 14-25 to start or become more physically active through athletics and running. Could this be something for you, perhaps at your child's school or a local college?

Want something else?

There are many extra courses to build confidence, skills and enable you to meet other coaches; it is from these you will pick up lots of advice. These include movement skills, sight loss awareness training, event group endurance and the new #GoCoach campaign. Since the #GoCoach campaign launched in October 2018, 5,517 people have attended a coaching or leading course. The aim of #GoCoach is to ensure people of all ages and abilities can access athletics and running nationwide, by introducing 10,000 new coaches and leaders to the sport by the end of 2020. A massive task? You can make it happen. Get online and get signed up!

Dina Asher-Smith supports the campaign. Dina, who has trained with her coach John Blackie since she was nine, said: "I know how important it is to

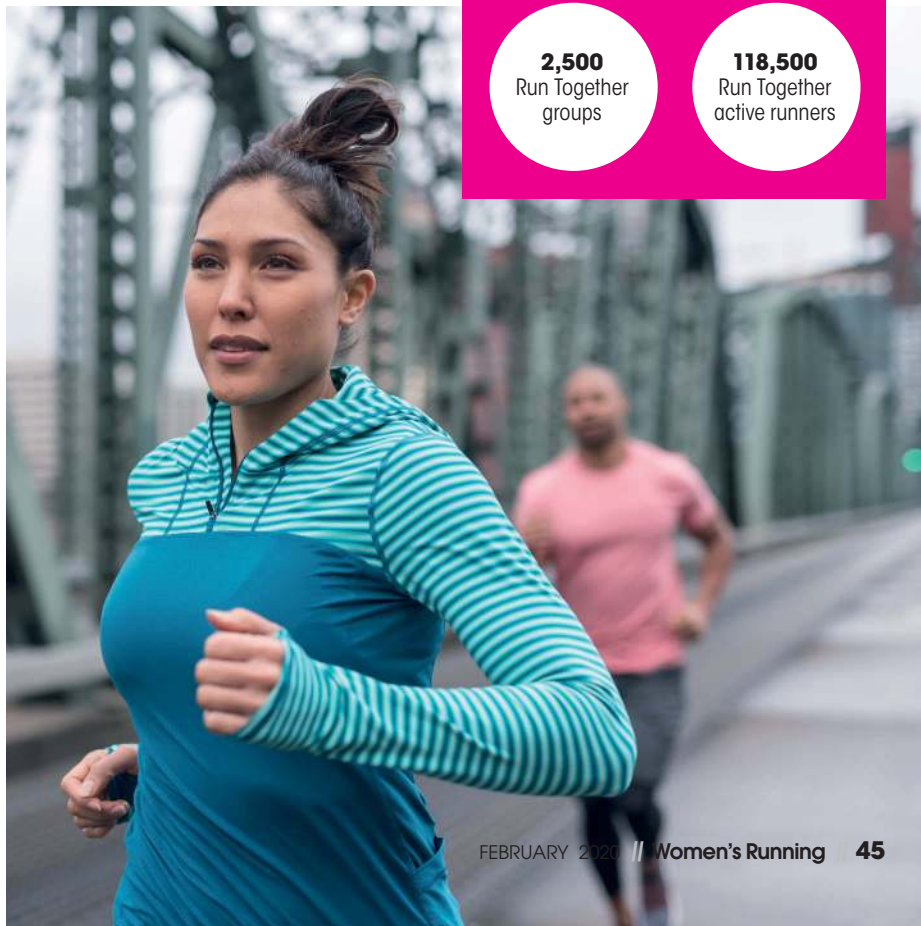
have a good coach. It's vital for clubs to recruit new coaching volunteers so they can encourage more people of all ages to take part in the sport. If there's someone who you think would make a good coach tell them about the #GoCoach campaign – or give it a try yourself!"

#GoCoach shows that people from all walks of life can enjoy a rewarding role as a volunteer coach or leader while bringing significant value to both individual athletes and the club environment. Now we *know* you're interested. The EA website is only ever one click away!

Project 500

Project 500 is another organisation that aims to help you become a coach. Just 30 per cent of sports coaches are female and of newly qualified coaches each year, only 17 per cent are women. Project 500 helps address the imbalance by recruiting, developing, deploying and retaining 500 female coaches: "Project 500 inspires and supports women to become involved, stay involved and reach their potential in sports coaching."

Sports coach UK has launched Reach (<http://reachintocoaching.co.uk/>), a campaign focusing on inspiring more women to get into coaching and supporting them to keep doing so. With all this help, you can do it! 🏃‍♀️



// Only 17 per cent of newly qualified coaches are women. Project 500 addresses the imbalance by recruiting and retaining 500 female coaches //

Essential resources

Englandathletics.org/coaching

Runtogether.co.uk

<https://runtogether.co.uk/running-support/run-leader-support/>

Project 500 Facebook (More Women Better Coaching)

Twitter: @femalecoaches

Twitter: @ReachCoaches

England Athletics at a glance

1,800
Affiliated clubs
and organisations

181,000
Registered
athletes and
runners

27,000
Licensed
coaches and
leaders

5,000
Licensed
officials

4,000
Licensed road
races

430,000
Regular
participants
influenced

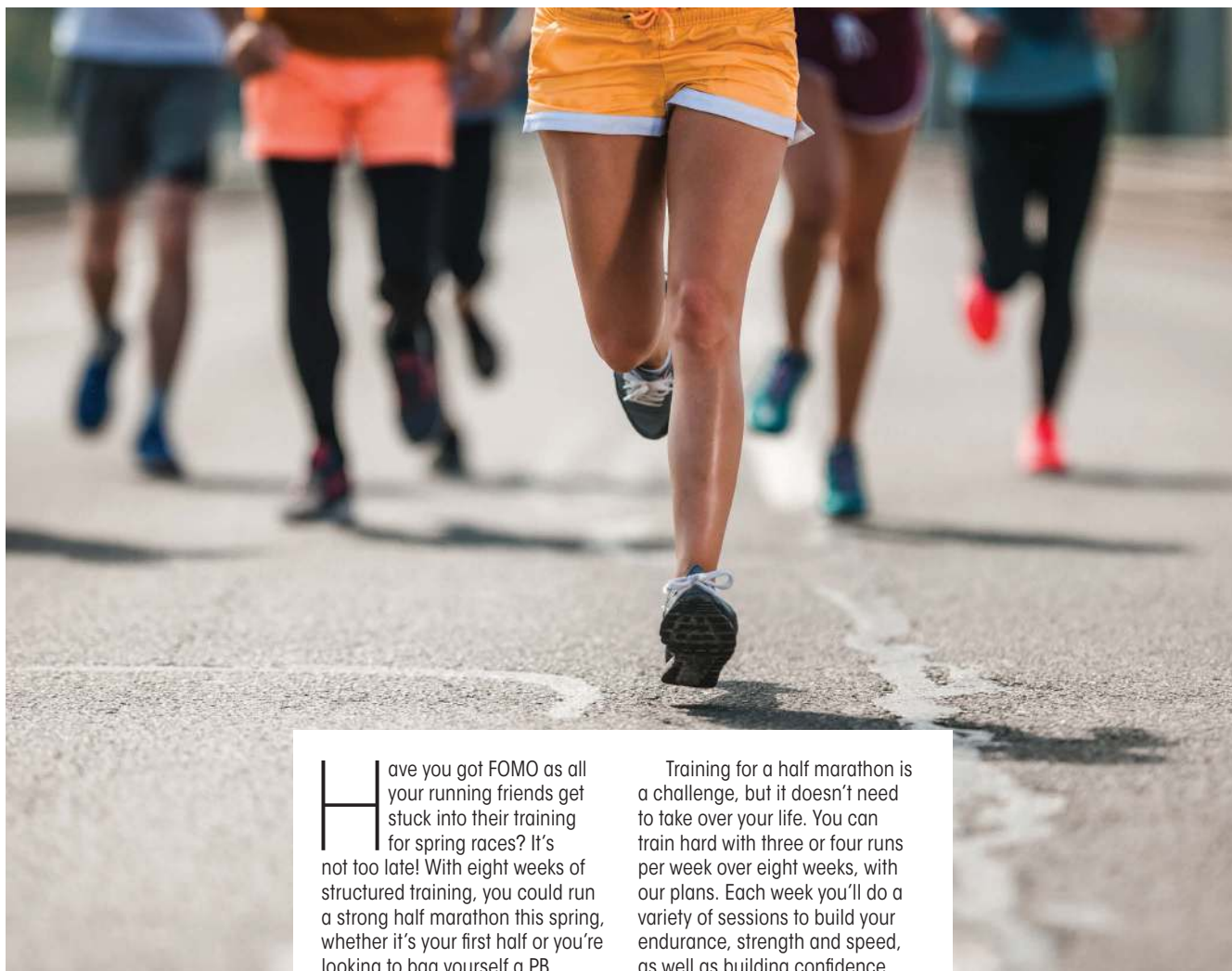
2,500
Run Together
groups

118,500
Run Together
active runners



TRAIN FOR A HALF MARATHON

Got a spring half marathon in the diary? It's not too late to get started! Whether you're a first-timer or a PB hunter, we've got the last-minute plan for you



Have you got FOMO as all your running friends get stuck into their training for spring races? It's not too late! With eight weeks of structured training, you could run a strong half marathon this spring, whether it's your first half or you're looking to bag yourself a PB.

Training for a half marathon is a challenge, but it doesn't need to take over your life. You can train hard with three or four runs per week over eight weeks, with our plans. Each week you'll do a variety of sessions to build your endurance, strength and speed, as well as building confidence.

TRAINING EXPLAINED

Tempo run

The plans overleaf include two types of tempo runs that will see you running at either half marathon goal pace (HMP) or your 10K pace. The half marathon paced runs will train you to run more efficiently at your goal pace and help you judge your pace, too. The 10K paced tempo sessions are run as longer intervals. These will work you slightly harder, to help you become faster and stronger.

Long runs

Your long runs are the bread and butter of your training plan. They're

the runs that will train your body to withstand the demands of running a half marathon, as well as improving your endurance and building confidence.

Easy run

The importance of easy runs is often overlooked by runners who think the only way to get faster is to run faster. Easy runs provide additional miles in your week which will add to your aerobic fitness. When run at a truly easy pace (as much as one minute or more slower than your goal pace), they can help revive your legs between your harder sessions

of the week. They're also a chance to just chill out and enjoy a run, either solo or with friends.

Interval training

The benefits of shorter, faster intervals extend beyond just making you fitter and faster. They're a good chance to work on your running form, and digging deep to finish each rep will help build the mental strength you'll need in the final miles of your race.

Cross training

Aerobic cross training, such as swimming, cycling, rowing or

some gym classes, can help build your fitness while giving your legs a break from pounding pavements. So you'll be able to build aerobic fitness while, hopefully, avoiding overuse injuries. It will also add variety to your week.

If you already include cross training into your weekly schedule, you can continue with your favourite activity. If you're new to cross training, start with 30 minutes and build up to 60 minutes over the eight weeks.

Strength training

Adding some strength training, at home or at the gym, into your week can help you become a stronger runner and help prevent injuries. Stronger muscles can deliver more power to your stride, helping you run faster and power up hills.

Working on your core strength can improve your stability and can help prevent some injuries. Good core and upper body strength can help you maintain good form when you start to get tired in the second half of a race.

Running is a unilateral movement (meaning we move one leg and then the other), so adding some unilateral exercises, such as lunges and single-leg deadlifts, into your routine is key. They'll help improve your balance and stability while also helping you get stronger.

Warming up

It's always a good idea to warm up before a run, but it's particularly important to do it before your faster sessions. And as you're going to be training in the colder months of the year, it's even more important

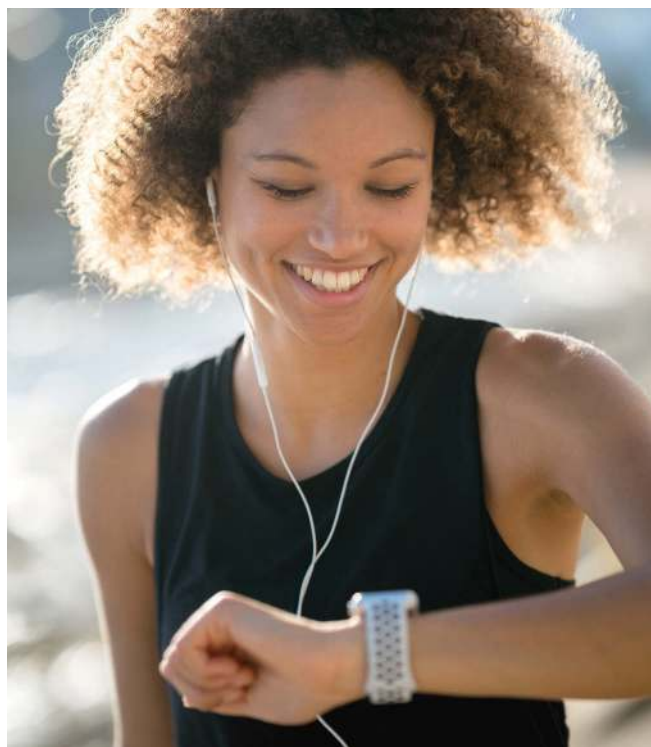
to warm your muscles up. Warming up prepares your body for exercise and can reduce the risk of injury. Find yourself a flat stretch of ground, around 50m long. Go up and down performing some slow jogging, skipping, high knees and bum kicks for starters.

The interval sessions and tempo runs in your training plan are intended to include 10 mins or 1 mile of easy running before the hard work begins. Take this nice and easy and gradually increase your speed.

Cooling down

At the end of your workout, you probably just want to sit down and relax. But spending a few minutes cooling down is an important part of your training. See it as part of the session rather than an add-on.

Gradually decrease your speed for the last 5-10 mins of your run, then do some light stretching, targeting all the key running muscles: calf, hamstrings, glutes and quads. If you've been given any specific exercises or stretches to do by a physio, now is a good time to do them.



WHICH PLAN TO USE

► The First Timer plan

The First Timer plan (overleaf) is exactly that: a plan for those who want to build up to their first half marathon. Ideally you should have done a 10K already, or be able to run 5 miles, before starting this plan.

You can also use this plan if you've done a half marathon or two already, but your mileage is closer to where this plan starts. The plan has the option of doing three-four runs per week. Choose whichever is right for you, but try to be consistent with the amount of runs you do each week.

► The PB Hunter plan

The PB Hunter plan is for those who are comfortably running four-five times per week and have maintained a good amount of training over the winter. You'll be more time-orientated and looking to knock a few minutes off your half marathon time, or at least get pretty darn close to it. The plan has the option of doing four or five runs per week. Choose whichever is right for you, but try to be consistent with the amount of runs you do each week.



PLAN 1: THE FIRST TIMER

Build the endurance, strength and speed you'll need to run your first 13-1 miles – and all without getting injured – by following our eight-week training plan

	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
WEEK 1	Rest	4 miles with 5x 2 min @5K pace -5 sec, 1 min easy	Rest or cross train	4 miles with 4x 5 mins @10K pace, 90 sec jog	Rest or cross train	Rest or 3 miles, easy pace	6 miles
WEEK 2	Rest	4 miles with 3x 1K @5K pace, 90 sec jog	Rest or cross train	4 miles with 3x 8 mins @10K pace, 90 sec jog	Rest or cross train	Rest or 3 miles, easy pace	7 miles
WEEK 3	Rest	4 miles, steady pace with 6x 2 min uphill, recovery jog back down	Rest or cross train	4 miles with 2 miles @Half Marathon Pace (HMP)	Rest or cross train	Rest or 3 miles, easy pace	8 miles
WEEK 4	Rest	4 miles with 5x 2 min @5K pace -5 sec, 1 min easy	Rest or cross train	5 miles with 3x 1 mile @10K pace, 90 sec jog	Rest or cross train	Rest or 3 miles, easy pace	9 miles
WEEK 5	Rest	4 miles with 3x 1K @5K pace, 90 sec jog	Rest or cross train	5 miles with 3 miles @HMP	Rest or cross train	Rest or 3 miles, easy pace	10 miles
WEEK 6	Rest	4 miles, steady pace with 6x 2 min uphill, recovery jog back down	Rest or cross train	6 miles with 4x 1 mile @10K pace, 2 min jog	Rest or cross train	Rest or 3 miles, easy pace	11 miles
WEEK 7	Rest	4 miles with 5x 2 min @5K pace -5 sec, 1 min easy	Rest or cross train	6 miles with 4 miles @HMP	Rest or cross train	Rest or 3 miles, easy pace	8 miles
WEEK 8	Rest	4 miles with 4x 5 min @HMP, 90 sec jog	Rest	3 miles, easy pace	Rest	Rest	Race day



PLAN 2: THE PB HUNTER

Improve your endurance, your strength and your speed to run a half marathon PB
– and all without getting injured – by following our eight-week training plan

	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
WEEK 1	Rest	5 miles with 1 mile easy, 8x 400m @ 5k pace -5 sec + 200m jog	Rest or 3 miles, easy pace	5 miles with 3x 1 mile @10K pace, 90 sec jog	Rest or cross train	3 miles, easy pace	8 miles
WEEK 2	Rest	5 miles, steady pace with 6x 2 min uphill, recovery jog back down	Rest or 3 miles, easy pace	5 miles with 3x 1 mile @10K pace, 90 sec jog	Rest or cross train	3 miles, easy pace	10 miles
WEEK 3	Rest	5 miles with 4x 1k @ 5k pace, 2 min recovery	Rest or 3 miles, easy pace	5 miles with 2x 1.5 miles @Half Marathon Pace (HMP), 2 min jog	Rest or cross train	3 miles, easy pace	12 miles
WEEK 4	Rest	5 miles with 1 mile easy, 8x 400m @ 5k pace -5 sec + 200m jog	Rest or 4 miles, easy pace	6 miles with 4x 1 mile @10K pace, 2 min jog	Rest or cross train	4 miles, easy pace	10 miles
WEEK 5	Rest	5 miles, steady pace with 6x 2 min uphill, recovery jog back down	Rest or 4 miles, easy pace	6 miles with 2x2 miles @HMP, 2 min jog	Rest or cross train	4 miles, easy pace	13 miles
WEEK 6	Rest	5 miles with 4x 1k @ 5k pace, 2 min recovery	Rest or 5 miles, easy pace	6 miles with 4x 1 mile @10K pace, 2 min jog	Rest or cross train	4 miles, easy pace	12 miles
WEEK 7	Rest	4 miles with, 1 mile easy, 6x 400m @ 5k pace -5 sec + 200m jog	Rest or 3 miles, easy pace	6 miles with 4 miles @HMP	Rest or cross train	3 miles, easy pace	8 miles
WEEK 8	Rest	4 miles with 4x 5 min @ HMP, 90 sec jog	Rest or 3 miles, easy pace	Rest	3 miles, easy pace	Rest	Race day

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Elisabet with husband
Sondre Amdahl



HOW I TRAIN

Elisabet Barnes

Swedish ultrarunner and coach **Elisabet** talks flexible training, specificity and hiking

ABOUT ELISABET

A two-time winner of the Marathon des Sables, Elisabet is known for her multi-stage racing and desert ultra successes, which also include winning Morocco's Trans Atlas Marathon (230km) and the Oman Desert Marathon.

Where do you mostly train?

I live in Norway, but my winter training varies depending on where I am and what races are coming up. If I'm at home I do cross-country skiing to complement the running or alpine skiing on easy days, plus strength training, and running outside on the snow with spikes.

Is your training flexible?

Yes, my training is mostly flexible. I rarely spend more than one month in the same place, so I adapt to where I go and what's available. If there's a great gym, I do more strength training, if there are awesome mountain trails I go on them, if there's good road running I do that more.

Do you ever struggle for motivation?

I do sometimes struggle to stay motivated for long periods of time. I'm not one of these people who is obsessed with running and loves going out every day. I need variety and to find other motivating factors than winning a race.

Why do you run?

I run for adventure, for the places it takes me to, the new cultures I get to immerse myself in, the people I meet, and for how all of those experiences develop me as a person and enrich my life. I never want training to restrict me.

Do you do specific training?

Ahead of a race, I replicate the terrain and conditions so my body adapts and develops specific skills. For a technical mountain race, I train on the same type of terrain to develop eye-foot coordination, speed, balance and confidence over that terrain. If I train for a more runnable, non-technical race like the Marathon des Sables, being able to run fast becomes important so that needs to feature.

How do you acclimatise to heat?

I always do heat acclimation prior to a desert race and if I race at altitude I try to travel there before the race to acclimatise. It makes a huge difference to performance and also mental preparation, giving you not only the adaptations but also confidence that you will cope better with the specific environment.

Do you enjoy hiking?

I always hike as part of my training. It's very relevant for mountain races where you typically hike a lot [as well as run] anyway. I often mix running and hiking in the same session, for example running the downhill and flatter parts, and hiking the ascents. 🏔️



The Swede exploring in
the mountains



Coolrunnings

Anatomy of a Running shoe

The tech in running shoes can be mind-boggling: we find out how they can make you run better, and how to choose the right ones for you

Words **Tina Chantrey**

The technology incorporated into today's running shoe is dramatically different to shoes of only 10 years ago. Marathon runners of the 1980s would be amazed to bounce along in a modern-day shoe, with uber-cushioning and integrated tongues. But what do all these advancements really mean? And what does each part do?

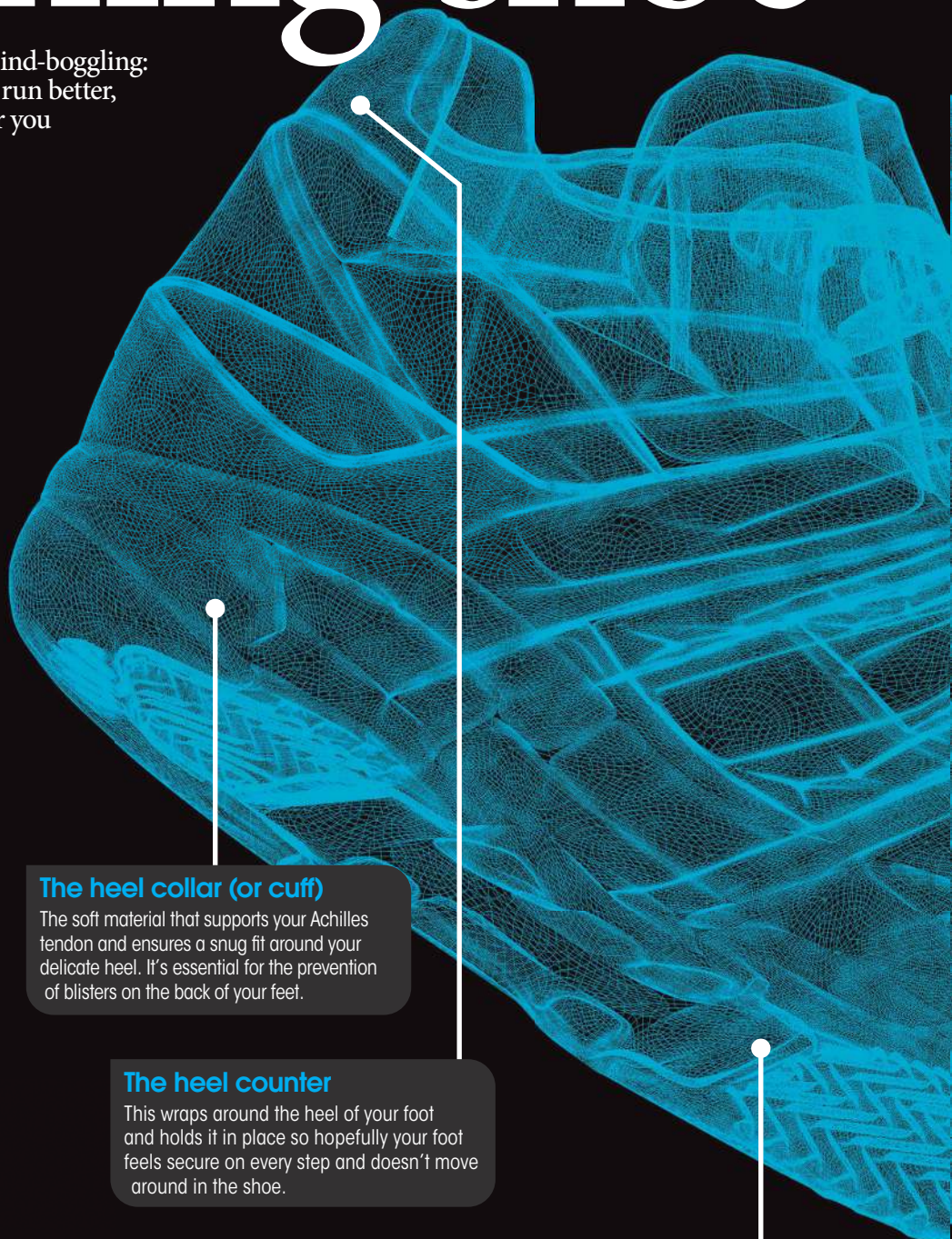
All of a running shoe's components work seamlessly together to deliver a specific running experience. Generally however, there are three regions we refer to in a running shoe: the upper, the midsole and the outsole.

The **upper** is the top part of your shoe that you insert your foot into. It incorporates the heel counter and collar, the eyelets and laces, the tongue and the sockliner. They all work together to hold your foot in place. Most of these are made of breathable materials, while some are also waterproof.

The **midsole** is designed to provide cushioning, stability and shock absorption. Long distance running shoes have a thick midsole, whereas racing flats, which are designed to be lightweight, have a thin midsole. Midsoles are typically made of a foam called ethylene-vinyl acetate (EVA). Firm midsoles may help conditions related to excessive pronation. Soft midsoles can be helpful for shin splints.

The **outsole** is the bottom of the shoe, and this provides grip, hopefully for both dry and wet surfaces. Trail shoes tend to have distinctive lugs (like thick spikes) to gain traction in mud.

Take a look at more terminology you may come across in your search for the perfect shoe...



The heel collar (or cuff)

The soft material that supports your Achilles tendon and ensures a snug fit around your delicate heel. It's essential for the prevention of blisters on the back of your feet.

The heel counter

This wraps around the heel of your foot and holds it in place so hopefully your foot feels secure on every step and doesn't move around in the shoe.

Plates

Thin plates are sometimes used to stiffen the forefoot of the shoe. Plates, often used in trail shoes, protect the bottom of your foot when the shoe impacts rocks and roots. In road shoes, carbon-fibre plates are now being embedded into the midsole foam to propel the runner forward – acting like a spring (both partial and full-length).

// The toebox needs to be roomy enough for your toes to spread as your foot hits the ground. If it's too tight, you may suffer from rubbing and blisters //

The tongue

Traditionally a separate strip on the upper that sits on the top of your foot to prevent the laces from rubbing, as well as making it easy to put shoes on/off. Many shoes now integrate the tongue into a single-piece upper that gives the feel of a slipper.

The laces and eyelets

Together these are adjustable to ensure the shoe fits your foot optimally.

Glossary

Upper: the fabric, usually mesh, that covers the top and sides of the shoe and holds your foot in place.

Heel counter: wraps around the heel of your foot to lock it in place.

Heel collar (or cuff): the soft material that supports your heel.

Toebox: the section where your toes spread out when your foot hits the ground.

Tongue: the padded strip that sits on the top of your foot under the laces.

Sockliner (or insole): the removable layer of foam your foot sits on top of.

Lasting (or last): Underneath the sockliner, the last is how the upper is attached to the midsole.

Midsole: the section in-between the upper and the outsole, which provides cushioning.

Outsole: the outermost layer of the sole that touches the ground, with varying traction and grip.

Lugs: thick spikes on the outsole to grip through mud.

Medial post: in the midsole, but a harder density than normal midsole material. It usually sits under the arch to provide extra support for overpronators.

Cushioning: material to absorb shock; will vary depending on type and terrain – and how many miles the shoe has done.

The toebox

The section of the shoe where your toes sit. It needs to be roomy enough for your toes to spread as your foot hits the ground and ideally shouldn't be tight on the inside and outside toes, otherwise you may suffer rubbing and blisters.

The sockliner (or insole)

The layer of foam your foot sits on top of inside the shoe. Some are thicker, while some offer arch support – most are removable.

Heel-to-toe drop

This is the distance between the height of the heel and the height of the toe and can affect how your foot strikes the ground. Typically a low heel-to-toe drop (0-8mm) promotes forefoot striking and a high drop (8-12mm) encourages heel striking. Zero drop means the sole of the shoe is totally flat from heel to toe.

The lasting (or last)

Directly beneath your foot, when it's inside your trainer, is the sockliner and underneath this is the lasting. The lasting is how the upper is attached to the midsole.



Make your shoes work for you

Knowledge is power and knowing what your shoe does helps you to make the most informed decision when parting with your hard earned dosh (and let's be honest, trainers can be a pretty considerable investment in your running).

What else do you need to know? "Road running shoes can generally be split into three groups," advises Louise Stirk from Pure Sports Medicine (puresportsmed.com), who has a degree in podiatry and a master's degree in sports medicine. "There are motion control, stability, and neutral/cushioned shoes. Historically we have been told there are three main foot types: flat (or pronated), normal (or neutral), and high arched (or supinated).

"However, research doesn't support the belief that assigning shoes based on foot type will reduce injury risk," says Louise. "In fact there is so much varied research on this issue, that you can almost do whatever you want and find a paper to support it."

Louise believes that if someone is new to running, has no injury (or history of injury), cares little about their performance/times (initially at least), is applying good principles of load management, and is dedicating some time to strength training: "then perhaps your best approach is to buy two pairs of different stability shoes which they find very comfortable."

Choose your terrain

Don't limit yourself to running around the block. Think about where you

want to run, as different landscapes and terrain offer such varied running experiences. "If you choose to run off-road you'll require more grip from the outsole and I would advise investing in a trail shoe," says Louise.

Nick Newman, manager at Runners Need Camden (runnersneed.com),

expands: "Road shoes have a flatter outsole in order to get more traction on the ground. Trail shoes have a more aggressive



Feet types



Flat or pronated



Normal or neutral



High arch or supinated

Wear patterns



Neutral pronation



Overpronation



Supination (underpronation)

outsole to help with traction on uneven, muddy surfaces, and they also tend to have a more robust upper to be more durable on rugged terrain.”

Other factors to keep in consideration are the distances you are aiming for. Louise says: “Short sprints should be done in racing flats (which tend to have a low midsole stack and are minimalistic in nature), whereas with longer distances such as a marathon, a runner may want a slightly more stable shoe as it may help with fatigue.”

Shop in-store

For your first pair of shoes, Nick doesn't suggest you buy online. “Ultimately I would discourage people buying their first shoe online and try to make the effort to go to a shop where they can get a gait analysis done and can try on various different brands,” he says. Eventually you will start to become aware of which brands come up bigger/smaller in size and which ones are a good match for your feet. In a specialist running shop, you should be able to

// Take your old running shoes into the shop, so the wear pattern can be seen. And try on both shoes, as most people's feet are different sizes //

get a gait analysis, to show what category of shoe would be most suited to you.

“It's when trying the shoes on where we can use our knowledge to help aid this choice,” adds Nick. “For example, if you have Achilles issues we would look for a shoe with a higher heel drop, to help reduced the loading through the tendon.”

He also advises bringing in your favourite socks when you're trying on new shoes. “It's always best to try on shoes with the socks you'll use when running,” he says.

There are some basic points that can help marry you up with the best shoe for you. Take your old running shoes in to the store, so the wear pattern on the outsole can be seen. Make sure you try on both shoes as most people's feet are different sizes. “At Runner's Need we'd advise accommodating the bigger foot,” says Nick. “Also, get up and walk (or even better run on the shop treadmill) in the shoes, as your feet spread out when standing and take up more room than when you're sitting down.”

If you use orthotics, take these with you when buying, as some brands will accommodate them better.

And try to avoid trying on shoes when wearing tights: “They're generally thinner than most socks, which could affect fit,” adds Nick.

Try various brands on to

How to... choose the right shoes for you

If you have a specific condition, it may be easier to recommend a running shoe

▶ Morton's neuroma (nerve entrapment in the forefoot)

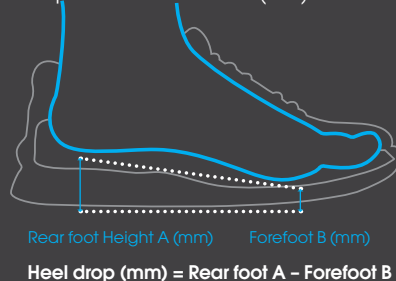
- Requires a wide toebox
- Try the extra-width fitting from New Balance or get a pair of Altras

▶ Tibialis posterior tendinopathy

- Requires increased rearfoot control and support
- Try Adidas SuperNova, Asics Gel Fortitude, Brooks Adrenaline GTS, New Balance 860 or Nike Air Zoom Structure

▶ Achilles tendinopathy

- Requires a high heel drop
- Try using a shoe with a heel drop of no less than 10mm (1cm)



find which one fits the shape of your foot better. It's very common to go up a full size bigger from your everyday shoes or other lifestyle trainers. “Comfort is king,” stresses Nick.

As is choosing function over fashion, believes Louise. “Like all things, it often takes a little trial and error to find the ‘right’ shoe. But once you've found what works for you then don't change it. Ultimately your decision should be based on one main factor: comfort.

“Comfort has been linked to injury frequency reduction and is thought to be the most important variable for sports shoes. If you're still not sure though, make an appointment with your local sports podiatrist.” Good luck, and happy running! 🏃



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KIT

Shoes // Apparel // Tech

WINTER ESSENTIALS

NEW RELEASE SHOES

As training load starts to increase for spring races, make sure you have the right footwear to reach your goals



HOKA ONE ONE

Mach 3

£130 / hokaoneone.eu

Tester **Laura**

The newest HOKA shoe delivers everything you could hope for in a running shoe, especially if you'll be logging some heavy mileage. The Mach 3 is highly cushioned but not excessively so, just enough to offer the comfort and support needed on longer runs and without compromising space within the shoe, especially the toe box. The sole offers plenty of durability and grip on the road and a firm but responsive performance for versatile speed.

Profly Technology makes for a softer landing and more absorbent heel strike. You'll be impressed by the weightless feel; a real benefit when running long and regular miles. The upper shoe is breathable, lightweight and offers good flexibility and comfort, including an inner cuff for a little extra support. This is a fun and attractive shoe.



Women's Running

How we test

Our kit is tested by real runners: passionate women with diverse running experiences, from dedicated marathoners to happy plodders. We wear the clothes, run in the shoes and use the tech on our usual runs to see if they go the distance. We then give each piece of kit our star rating. Prices are RRP and correct at time of printing.

POOR

Disappointing, low level performance

STANDARD

Provided basic levels of performance in function, fit and style

GOOD

Solid all-round performance: a good value, reliable piece of kit

GREAT

Performed above expectations and impressed with function and fit

BEST

Brilliant performance from highly technical, stylish kit

Our testers include:



Sarah Gardiner Works for England Athletics, coaches, completed 25 marathons, now runs for pizza.



Beccy Lord Dog walker and Team GB underwater hockey player, runs for mindfulness, adventure and competition.



Susan Bonnar Promotions and marketing manager, mum of three, discovered running in her mid 40s.



Claire Kelson Photographer and mum of two, who enjoys mixing gym with miles on and off road.



Caroline Trowbridge Actress, children's author, reiki master and mum of two, loves running for wellbeing.



Louise Breckon-Richards Actress, writer and mum of two boys. Runs three times a week in north London.



ON Cloud Stratus

£150 / on-running.com

Tester **Geri**

These shoes feel comfortable straight out of the box, which is what we've come to expect from On. The overall feel of the shoe is all about the exceptional cushioning and stability it offers, due to the new double-layered Helion CloudTec midsole. The Cloud Stratus feels heavier than a normal On shoe, which is due to the much deeper insole. If you're looking for a shoe for half marathons or marathons, this could be the one for you. It offers stability, cushioning and it's also very supportive with a heel cage that locks your foot into the shoe and although it carries more weight than traditional Ons this adds to its durability. The ride still feels good with this level of drop. If you are a heavier runner, these shoes could be your best friends for many, many miles.



MERRELL Bare Access XTR Sweeper

£100 / merrell.com

Tester **Caroline**

There is a lot to love about these shoes, particularly if you like to run 'barefoot'. The overall fit is exceptional; these hug your feet around the arch inspiring confidence on trails. Their performance is brilliant. They easily drain off after wading through water, then keep your footing secure when you take on excessively muddy pathways, all the while retaining incredible agility and flexibility when toe striking up tough inclines. The breathability really impresses – you won't have annoying stinky trainers. All that said, these minimal shoes are a question of taste; if you like to feel the ground beneath you, then these are the ones for you. They are lightweight and ethical too, predominantly made from recycled materials so your footprint really will have less impact on the environment.



BROOKS Levitate 3

£140 / brooksrunning.com

Tester **Tina**

This is a stylish and speedy road shoe that's been a pleasure to run in, much like the Levitate 2. The updated colours are beautiful – not that the 2 wasn't striking – but the silver or black on offer are definitely more sleek and attractive, making them much easier to match up with casual outfits too. The knitted upper feels like it's more hugging, making the shoe feel secure and uber comfy, especially with the integrated collar. The midsole is brilliant, giving a smooth and energised ride and making every run feel easy. There's also great arch support, plenty of breathability in the upper and the heel tab is a nice touch, feeling soft against the back of your foot. Short socks did get eaten by the shoe, so make sure you wear longer ones that go above your ankle to prevent rubbing.



HOKA ONE ONE Speedgoat 4

£125 / hokaoneone.eu

Tester **Tina**

This bestseller just got better. If you want maximum cushioning for the trails, you really can't beat Speedgoats. The 4 is so comfortable, almost ridiculously so, which means whatever your run entails you choose them over other shoes you are rotating, over and over. They don't need breaking in either. The shoe feels a little roomier in the front without being excessively so. The midsole is tall but stable, and the overall feel is slightly firm so your feet feel they have solid protection, especially over rocky terrain. The outer lugs have a multidirectional patterning for extra traction in mud, reducing sideways slippage. These are definitely your bread and butter shoes for any kind of terrain and they make running on tricky trails feel so easy.



ESSENTIAL ARM SLEEVES

For those awkward runs where the temperature is changeable or hard to guess, these accessories can come in very handy



CANYON Signature Pro Merino Arm Warmers

£32.95 / canyon.com

Tester **Geri**

These arm warmers are an ideal choice for when you need a little bit more warmth during your workouts. They are perfect for enabling you to run with a vest but enable you to layer up and be prepared for all types of weather. They are super comfortable and the merino wool provides excellent insulation and sweat absorption – perfect for the cold weather running sessions. The fit is generous, however, feeling quite loose for a petite runner. So if you are also small and love the look of these stylish arm warmers, order the extra small or perhaps go down a size, just to make sure you get the most benefit from these luxurious sleeves.



ULTIMATE PERFORMANCE Arm Sleeves

£15.99 / 1000mile.co.uk

Tester **Esther**

These sleeves are sweat-wicking and comfortable, but the 'one size fits most' tag is never going to suit all runners: I'm not petite, but these bagged and wrinkled and didn't stay up as promised. That said, they'd be perfect for longer-limbed runners, and the stretch and warmth was fab – especially considering the price. The thumbholes were perfectly positioned, ensuring the sleeves stretched down over the wrists, really helping hands keep warm on very cold mornings. And you can easily bunch them down after you'd warmed up a bit. The comfy material is pretty perfect for wiping runny noses on the move, too (that can't just be me, surely?). A good budget buy, but check the fit before you do so.



SUNDRIED Cycling Arm Warmers

£20 / sundried.com

Tester **Tina**

These are an excellent fit, without feeling too tight up by the shoulders. A size small were lent out to a medium size man and came back washed, still holding their shape, which was impressive. These feel 'right' – with a good fit from wrist up to shoulder and were the ideal length. Even throughout a marathon they didn't budge, and when you warm up they're easy to push down to help you cool off. Flatlock stitching means they don't irritate and the silicone grippers at the top keep them in perfect place. The fabric feels soft and is super breathable. All in all you don't really feel you have them. The Sundried brand is a hot favourite with WR anyway because of their laudable efforts at being ethical.



ESSENTIAL LONG-SLEEVE COMPRESSION TOPS

Enhance both recovery and performance by investing in a compression top

2XU Compression Long Sleeve

£70 / 2xu.com

Tester **Esther**

The fit and compression of this top, as we've come to expect from 2XU, is pretty much perfect: it's lovely and tight, and holds you in from the top of your shoulders right down to your hips. The sleeves are a great length – especially for the longer-limbed among us – but that scooped neck is very generous, so you'll need to double up with another top on cold days. The only real downside, though, is that it rides up almost instantaneously, so it needs to be worn underneath tights to prevent this becoming annoying on your runs. As a base layer, however, it works brilliantly, wicking sweat and moving with you like a second skin. The science behind the fabric is called PWX FLEX, which has been designed to give runners that welcome mix of compression and movement. And as far as that's concerned, it's spot on.



CEP Wingtech Shirt Long Sleeve

£59.99 / cepsports.co.uk

Tester **Tina**

It's hard to fault this top. The fit and function are excellent. The shirt has 'wingstripes', which feel like grooves in the material and claim to provide 'sensorimotoric' stimulation for improved posture. The wingstripes travel from your shoulders, in the shape of angels wings, down to your waist, apparently stimulating your major muscles for breathing. They do seem to help you maintain good posture, without being shouted at by a coach! The compression is nice and tight, which also makes this a great shirt for winter running as it locks out the wind. It transitions well to the bike or other outdoor activities and it feels so good on you'll be wearing it constantly. With some bold and beautiful colours as well as standard black and white, this is a great investment for any runner for the colder months.



Long-distance TEST

Sarah Gardiner has been living in her Paramo jacket this winter



PÁRAMO Velez Adventure Light Smock

£245, paramo-clothing.com

This smock is ideal for active women travelling light, who need to be ready for challenging conditions – as such it's a brilliant choice for trail runners. It offers good wind and rain protection and still keeps you warm. Nikwax Analogy Light fabric gives full directional waterproof performance and great sweat wicking. It's performed brilliantly – thankfully – while coaching out in the elements on dark, cold and wet winter evenings. Other useful features include inner pockets, popped storm flaps, adjustable cuffs, an adjustable hood with a wired peak, and even a map pocket. It's a real investment piece that feels like it'll last as long as any running career!





ESSENTIAL TIGHTS

Can you ever own enough tights? Check out these new releases



CRAFT Eaze Tights

£30 / craftsportswear.co.uk

Tester Jo

These leggings feel like a second skin, and move with you brilliantly, with a fully flexible range of motion for both running and the gym. There's a cord string to ensure they stay put, but even without the high, comfortable waistband ensures they don't budge even during sprint training – it also means they feel flattering, too. There's an inner small (unzipped) pocket, which is useful for keys and gels, but it's a little distracting as it means the fit isn't as seamless as it could be. The fabric is quite thin, so these are best for warmer days or for gym work – but despite that, they still impressively offer full coverage. No VPL here, no matter how low the squat. As well as this crowd-pleasing black pair, the tights are available in a vibrant purple version in a feelgood print, which we absolutely loved. A good value, decent pair of tights.



BROOKS Nightlife Tight

£70 / brooksrunning.com

Tester Sue

These running tights literally glow in the dark, which makes them a great choice if you're an early morning/late evening runner. They also remain well-fitted and supportive throughout your run. The fit around the ankles is very good – no bagging at all, which helps with heat retention – and the other instantly noticeable benefit is a lovely deep waistband that sits comfortably across your waist. They feel very comfortable on, and even though the fit is snug they're just the right stretch to mould to your movements, whether you're hill sprinting or doing time on the treadmill. With two pockets (one zipped for security) there's enough space for keys, phone and gels, or whatever else you like to take with you. A leg pocket would have been a bonus for a phone, but we think that about all leggings these days, so it's not a specific complaint against these ones!



NEW BALANCE Premium Printed Impact Run Tight

£55 / runnersneed.com

Tester Geri

We love these stylish two-tone tights. They are great for runs, indoor gym sessions, yoga or Pilates. They're incredibly soft and comfortable, and have been made with a contoured, high-rise waistband, which offers smooth support, with no digging in at all. The power mesh insets at the leg add breathability – so these will transition well into warmer weather. They have reflective elements, too, perfect for your outdoor, night runs. A back zipped-pocket and two drop-pockets are ideal for phone, cards or keys. However, do bear in mind that these have been designed with taller women in mind. If you're petite, you may find the fit a little baggy in places. A shame, as the design and look are very cool otherwise.



ESSENTIAL RUNNING BELTS

An accessory that helps keep you safe and stocked up whatever your challenge



KALENJI Smartphone Waistband

£6.99 / [decathlon.co.uk](https://www.decathlon.co.uk)

Tester **Holly**

This little belt is so neat that at first sight you'd be hard pressed to believe a smartphone could fit inside. However, through some kind of Mary Poppins magic (or, more specifically, a cleverly-designed stretchy pocket) it can hold your phone whatever its size, as well as a gel or two, depending on your preference. There's also a handy separate section for your keys to avoid any nasty scratch marks on your screen. Once you've found a comfortable position for the belt around your waist, it stays put well (although this may take some practice) and won't alter the balance of your stride. With space for your phone, keys and a card or two, it's ideal for shorter runs or for runners who pack lightly and, in true Decathlon fashion, it's brilliant value for money.



SALOMON Pulse Belt

£28 / [salomon.com](https://www.salomon.com)

Tester **Laura**

This belt is highly useful during even the most intense activity, as it stays exactly where it's put, with no sliding or bounce on your waist. It's made from a four-way stretch fabric that's highly breathable, so no sweaty waistband. The belt includes two spacious pockets: a zipped one and one with a clip to secure your personal items such as a key or phone. There is more than adequate space and you'll find your items are easily accessible. There is also the benefit of two stretchy, horizontal bands that secure two 500ml flasks, so this belt is a great solution if you'd rather not wear a backpack or vest for a longer run. The bands that hold the flasks have rubber grips on their inners to ensure the flasks stay secure. This belt comes in many colours for any taste or occasion, whether that be running, hiking, or just walking the dog. There is also reflective detail to stay visible on those evening or early morning jaunts. Both the usefulness and the simplicity of this belt impress.



ULTIMATE PERFORMANCE Speedwell Runners Pack

£11.99 / [1000mile.co.uk](https://www.1000mile.co.uk)

Tester **Esther**

This offers fantastic value for money. I've always been an armband sort of runner, but this has persuaded me to embrace the way of the belt. You can squeeze in a large smartphone, keys and a gel, but not a lot more than that – so this is perfect for shorter and middle-distance running rather than something where you'd also need a water bottle or more nutrition. It's comfortable to wear over tights and a top, and is easy to adjust with a reassuringly solid clasp. Gratifyingly, it also stayed put during some intense sessions: it stayed secure during hill reps but tended to travel upwards during longer distances. It would be useful for this to be available in more sizes, and the size might be offputting for longer distance running, but it's a solid performer for a mid-week plod.



GROUP TEST WINTER TOPS

A cosy winter top will look after you over the next few months...
here are the ones we *really* love to run in



RON HILL Stride Matrix 1/2 Zip Tee

£55 / ronhill.com
Tester **Claire**

A technical mid-layer with excellent thermal properties, this garment features a grid pattern that insulates your body, traps air and retains heat, while keeping bulk to a minimum for easy layering. Its long slim-line fit is not only very comfortable but also flattering. A long front zip aids ventilation and reflective trim is on both front and back. Full hand mitts offer good coverage, and a small security pocket gives safe storage for essentials. A really well designed, quality garment for winter training.



ICEBREAKER Delta Long Sleeve Zip

£150 / icebreaker.com
Tester **Esther**

This mid-layer in merino has reflective detailing and a good bit of stretch to ensure it moves with you. It has two zipped side pockets for all your gels, keys, cards and whatnot. The fabric is just the right density: snugly when it's cold, but not too thick so it's good for layering. However, it wasn't the softest fabric on test and proved irritating worn next to skin. Over a base layer, though, it proved an ideal light jacket, with a good sleeve length (plus thumbholes) albeit slightly short in the body.



ZONE 3 Performance Culture Long Sleeve Mid Layer With 1/4 Length Zip

£85 / zone3.com
Tester **Louise**

You'll love this stylish winter top in petrol blue and coral. It ensures warmth and breathability while still looking great. With a quarter zip and soft-touch fabric it feels great against the body, with a more snug feel at the top and flattering looser fit at the bottom. Thumb loops keep sleeves in place, protecting arms from the cold, and there is also a hidden, zipped card-pocket, a reflective headphone loop and more reflectivity for nights.



KEELA Merino L/S Top

£54 / keela.co.uk
Tester **Sarah**

This 200g merino top really keeps you warm in cooler temperatures but is still breathable so you don't get damp. It helps your body regulate its temperature when you up the effort. It's odour resistant, too, and feels such high quality. It isn't itchy and flatlock seams make it a comfortable wear. The grey with purple seams design looks great and could be a useful addition to the wardrobe for more than just running.



BROOKS Notch Thermal Hoodie

£60 / brooksrunning.com
Tester **Beccy**

You just won't be able to resist slipping on this warm hoodie at every opportunity; it's nicely fitting, light and good-looking. It lacks the bulk of most hoodies, making for a layer that can comfortably be worn running, but still keeps your neck and ears warm, without resorting to a buff. The fabric is soft, sweat wicking and quick drying. The thumb-hole design in the snug cuffs keeps a bit more of you that bit warmer.



MEGMEISTER Winter Baselayer

£54.95 / shop/megmeister.com
Tester **Esther**

Out of the box, this base is so tiny it looks like it's made for a Barbie, but it's a revelation once on: incredibly stretchy, nicely tight yet soft, and a fantastic length in both the body and sleeves. The only downside is that, as with all snug tops like this, it's prone to riding up during a run unless it's tucked underneath tights. So do that, or keep it for other outdoor pursuits – either way, it's an excellent base layer. And that colour! Lush!





BAM Flat Lock Long Sleeve Bamboo Base Layer

£38 / bambooclothing.co.uk
Tester **Tina**

Such a reasonably priced baselayer, this long-sleeve gets top (pun unintended) marks for comfort and warmth. It's a simple garment but in lovely colours that look great under an outer layer. It's a cosy number, due to the bamboo fabric, and has been worn more than much more expensive baselayers this winter. The thumb loops are brilliant for office work to keep hands warm – and it won't cost you a ridiculous amount, either. Both the Caspian Sea and Blackberry versions are ideal for this time of year – and both are beautiful.



DYNAFIT Alpine Wind Jacket

£120 / dynafit.com
Tester **Geri**

If you don't like running with a jacket, this wind top may well change your mind. Breathable, windproof and water resistant, it fits superbly. It can also be carried in a small pocket as it's so easy to pack away. This wonderful little number has everything you need: a hood that stays in place while running (and can be clipped away when not in use); underarm laser perforations for ventilation; a zip chest pocket, thumbholes and reflective stripes.



ODLOI-Thermic 1/2 Zip Midlayer

£249.95 / odlo.com
Tester **Tina**

This is a revolutionary top. Initially the impression is of a very thick, warm layer, with a double-layer collar for neck warmth, rear laser-cut ventilation holes and long sleeves for hand warmth: all impressive. Then in the side pocket you can change your whole experience; via a smartphone app, you can set the temperature for your shirt for your chosen activity. It's innovative and incredible.



CRAFT Eaze LS Net Tee

£25 / craftsportswear.co.uk
Tester **Esther**

This is an exceptionally lightweight top, so it's ideal for layering when it's cold, but it will also be great in the summer as a standalone sunblock top for those of us who don't like running in vests. The featherlight mesh gives fantastic breathability, so you'll keep your cool – although the design on the arms means the fabric around the elbows can irritate a little. In the winter, it's best paired with a close-fitting top underneath – in fact, it works perfectly with the Megmeister over there on the left. There's no arguing with that price, either.



PROVIZ Reflect360 Long Sleeve Top

£39.99 / provizsports.com
Tester **Sue**

The Reflect360 is a superior long-sleeve top that will be a smart addition to your kit. Extremely light and well-fitting with exceptional wicking ability, it will keep you dry and comfortable. The Reflect360 pattern on the arms is stylish while providing multi-directional reflectivity. Machine washable and quick drying, this top will become your go-to for a quick turn-around. It comes in a choice of five colours, but we were rather partial to this one.



ZONE 3 Women's Seamless Longsleeve

£65 / zone3.com
Tester **Caroline**

This baselayer in neon coral is certainly eye-catching and great for visibility. Thankfully, its ergonomic, feminine cut matches style with substance. The breathability of the four-way stretch fabric is very comfortable and so soft. You will love the longer arm length and seamless construction, designed for optimal fit to encourage good posture while running. The longer length can ride up annoyingly across your hips, which can be distracting. Nevertheless, it's very pretty and will keep you noticed and toasty on cold winter runs.



BEST IN TECH HEADPHONES

You'll find ultimate distraction from the pain locker with these new release headphones



LIBRATONE Track Air +

£179 / amazon.co.uk

Tester Esther

Many of us assume that headphones don't fit us: whether it's the shape of our ears or the shape of our heads (that might just be me...), headphones never stay put. So we are basically in awe of these, and have no hesitation in recommending them. They stay put – completely, utterly and comfortably. On longer 10-plus mile runs, they've not budged a millimetre. The comfort is pretty much astounding, not a bit of irritation, the sound quality is awesome, and the charge time is impressive. It really is worth pushing the boat out budget-wise for clear sounds and comfort. Do it.



AFTERSHOKZ Aeropex

£149.95 / aftershokz.co.uk

Tester Tina

Impressively lighter and smaller than their previous model, the Aeropex sit comfortably at the front of, then over, your ear, for a good, hardly noticeable fit. These are easy to use, effortlessly to turn the volume up or down, although the button is small, and they work with sunglasses. They feel secure while running, and are great if you want to be able to hear background noise so that you feel safer. For running on roads or in an area that isn't very busy, these are ideal.



JAYBIRD Vista

£159.99 / jaybirdsport.com

Tester Sue

These come with three earbud sizes, so you can get the perfect fit, and with no wire, they're suitable for all sports. Sound quality is excellent for both music and the spoken word. By tapping the earpiece you can adjust the volume, skip a track or turn them off. They work perfectly well as a single ear bud too. They charge quickly within their own portable charging box and last six hours. Light years ahead of many other headphones on the market, these are a good investment piece.



HOUSE OF MARLEY Uprise 4.0

£49.99 / thehouseofmarley.co.uk

Tester Laura

The sound from these bluetooth headphones is rich and flawless. They're easy to set up and use and the function buttons are simple to learn. They stay in place even during a vigorous workout and sit comfortably in your ears thanks to the adjustable ear pieces. The style is fun and attractive, and the water resistance is very welcome. The charge seems to go on forever so there's no panic of running out mid-podcast. They have been responsibly made too, from a mixture of recycled and recyclable materials, so they get a big green tick from us.





BOOTCAMP

Yoga nidra // Workout // Perfect form

Yogic sleep

The perfect recovery tool

Yoga nidra, also known as yogic sleep, is the practice of the deepest relaxation you can experience between waking and sleeping. But how can it help improve your life and your running?

Words Tina Chantrey

Yoga nidra is an ancient and powerful meditation technique that guides you through the four stages of consciousness; beta, alpha, theta and delta – using sensing, breath work and visualisation.

“The practice is not only calming and relaxing as it stimulates the ‘rest and digest’ branch of the nervous system, but it’s also restorative and healing,” says Allison Marlowe, a yoga nidra practitioner. “Benefits can be physical, mental and physiological including greater clarity, focus, calmness, improved sleep, increased dopamine and a strengthened immune system.” Recent studies on this ancient practice show positive results in stabilising blood sugar levels.

Personal secret weapon

Yoga nidra restores, renews and rests the layers of the body. The best way to understand the powerful benefits of yoga nidra is to experience it for yourself. “With a regular practice, yoga nidra can become your personal secret weapon for the stresses of everyday living,” says Allison.

As a runner, as well as recharging the body and your energy, a deeper practice will enable you to rewire your brain. All those worries you have in your conscious state have their roots in the subconscious. And as Allison confirms: “It’s not as easy to change your thought patterns in your conscious mind, because you filter and distort a lot of the information you receive from your outer world. When you enter a deep state of meditation, you are able to access your subconscious and here the mind is more malleable and open to suggestion.”

Say your sankalpa

In yoga nidra you will use a ‘sankalpa’, an intention or personal resolve that is set at the beginning of the practice. This intention holds an energy that enables you to start changing your limiting beliefs – your samskaras, or wounds.

“Although a sankalpa is very personal to each individual, an example could be, ‘I am strong, I am motivated, I am

capable, I run confidently’. They’re always stated in the present tense as if it’s already happening,” advises Allison.

So how can yoga nidra benefit you if you run and are dealing with the normal level of stress caused in our modern lives where we juggle many different roles – mother, friend, daughter, sister, partner, colleague, teacher – as well as running?

“Now we begin to reveal some of the deeper secrets of yoga nidra!” Allison enthuses. “Yoga nidra brings you back to your true self: who you are at your essence, revealing your hidden identity that so often gets lost when you give care to others.”

How? As we enter yoga nidra, our thoughts gradually begin to recede and we get to witness them with awareness and yet without judgment. “A regular practice – it’s said that you need

11 sessions for lasting change – has the potential to help you transform your lifestyle for the better and free you from what no longer serves you,” believes Allison. “It’s a

ANCIENT IDEA
The ancient technique from India is used by the US Army to help soldiers recover from PTSD

great tool for helping you take better care of yourself, and as you commit to a practice those around you will see the changes in behaviour.”

Will yoga nidra make us stronger as women *and* stronger as runners? Allison says: “Nidra makes you mentally stronger. You find focusing becomes easier, you feel better about yourself generally, so your motivation remains high, which is excellent for anyone training.”

Strength through balance

Striving for balance in your life will help you enjoy and achieve your goals in running, whatever they may be. “When you commit to rest as much as you train, you naturally come into harmony and feel much more balanced,” she says.

There are three aspects of yoga nidra which are particularly beneficial to helping any runner striving for balance. “First is known as the rotation of consciousness, where you rotate your awareness to named parts of the body; it’s also known as a 61 point rotation.”

Rotating around the body, you come to be aware of sensations you may not have previously noticed while in your conscious state. Your body is always talking to you; this is a great opportunity to learn to pay attention, notice where your body is tense and learn to communicate with it.

“This 61 point rotation is also a great tool to implement during a race to bring yourself back into the present moment if you are tiring,” she adds.

Visualisation techniques that accompany yoga nidra can also have a hugely beneficial effect. “Two techniques

spring to mind,” says Allison. “Holding sensations in the body, for example hot and cold, tired and refreshed, light and heavy. These visualisations help balance you. Then there’s quick fire visuals, which help to keep the mind focused, and more meditative guided visualisations, which can help change your physiology.”

Focus on the breath

Finally, there is focusing on the breath during a session. “Practising a variety

// Benefits can be physical, mental and physiological, including greater clarity, focus, calmness, improved sleep, increased dopamine and a strengthened immune system too //

of breath techniques while you are in a relaxed state can only be beneficial,” states Allison. “This helps your breath come naturally when you are running, helping to train your diaphragm for maximum effect.”

Having awareness of how we breathe is so important whether we are running or not. Most of us don’t breathe fully. “If you watch a baby breathe you will notice the rise and fall of the belly. Watch an adult breathe and more than likely the breath will be higher up in the chest. The breath no longer expanding all the way down into the abdomen,”

says Allison. “All the techniques you use in nidra will help support you in your running, helping you to have a calm, clear mind, and maintain stamina in a race.”

One such technique that helps strengthen our focus is counting down backwards from 11 to 1: 11 I am breathing in, 11 I am breathing out, 10 I am breathing in, 10 I am breathing out and so on to 1.

Starting your training or a race in a calm and serene state, can only help you enjoy the experience more.

Rest and digest

“We live in a society that values productivity more than ever, so it’s no surprise that more people are experiencing burnout, chronic fatigue and other autoimmune diseases,” says Allison.

Long term stress impacts the nervous system. When the sympathetic branch is stimulated more adrenaline is released so that the muscles receive lots of blood, the heart pumps fast enabling the body to run faster, but we don’t want to become stuck in this state of hyperarousal. “To combat this and switch on the parasympathetic branch, the rest and digest branch is equally important,” says Allison. “The more we can activate the parasympathetic branch, and stimulate the vagus nerve, the calmer the mind and the more focused you will be. Finding this balance is key.”

Yoga nidra helps you to stay in the present moment. It teaches you to accept whatever situation may arise in your outer world. “It also helps you deal with situations with more compassion – for yourself and others.

“Experiencing yoga restores, renews and rests the layers of the body and mind,” says Allison. “Yoga nidra techniques are a convenient tool for your everyday busy life.”



» TURN OVER TO SEE HOW YOU CAN START YOGA NIDRA



Allison Marlowe is a trauma awareness advocate, a writer, nature lover and yoga nidra champion

Let's do this

Allison gives us five ways to bring rest into your everyday life

4 Get the app
Visit allisonmarlowe.com for a short download or try using an app like Insight Timer which offers plenty of yoga nidra recordings. It's an app, so there's no excuse: you can take it with you anywhere!

5 Do it anywhere
Keep it simple – you can practice yoga nidra anywhere. Allison often uses it sitting stationary in my car waiting to collect her kids (NB do not attempt relaxation techniques while driving).

1 Prioritise rest
Commit to resting. But not the sitting down with a cuppa resting, where you are still cognitively switched on doing something else like watching TV or reading a book. We all have the same amount of hours in our day: for optimum function rest needs to be prioritised.

2 Make a rest den
Create your own designated 'rest den'. Can you find an area just for you to use simply for rest, somewhere with no distractions, somewhere you can make cosy and uplifting? You may like to have some objects that make you feel good placed there.

// Create 'a rest den', an area just for you to use simply for rest, somewhere with no distractions //



3 Learn skills
Learn the basic 61 point rotation – this will bring you back into the moment by gently focusing the mind from the external world and it connects the mind to the body. You can use this when running or when sitting quietly.





Perfect form The lunge

Lunges involve a wider range of motion than running – so they will make running feel easier

// Leaning forwards while lunging can happen if your legs and core muscles aren't strong enough //

Running is a linear move that require all of your leg muscles to work in different capacities. Lunges work the same muscles, just in a larger range of motion. The benefit of the increased range of motion is that your muscles will get used to the harder work, which will make your running a lot easier.

What are the common mistakes?

The two most common mistakes are not having your legs wide enough and leaning forward with your upper body when you lunge down.

So why should you care?

When your legs are too close together a lot of pressure goes through your knees. Most people will complain their knees hurt while doing the movement. By increasing your stride length you will reduce the pressure on your knees. Unless corrected, this could lead to long-term knee pain. Leaning forwards with your upper body while lunging happens because your legs and core muscles are not strong enough to push your body weight up, and without the support of your deeper

stomach and back muscles (core muscles) it's hard to maintain an upright position. Tightness in your hip flexors and front thighs will increase the stretch in your back leg, which also makes it harder to keep your upper body upright.

Technique check

- Stand with your right leg in front of your left
- Keep your back straight and your core muscles tight
- Bend your knees until you have a right angle in your knees
- Ensure your upper body stays upright

GET IT RIGHT

TIPS

Perform the exercises in front of a mirror to check you are not leaning forward with your upper body. If you are unsure about your foot position, kneel onto the floor and adjust your feet until you have right angles in both knees.

WORKOUT

Get marathon strong

Avoid injury by ensuring your lower limbs and core are strong enough for marathon training this spring, with these key exercises, says **Anne-Marie Lategan**

Your spring marathon is only a few weeks away and you might feel you haven't done enough training. Just hitting the pavements trying to catch up on lost sessions is not the best solution. Stick to your normal running programme but add these eight effective exercises in to your routine.

► Warm up

Jog on the spot for one minute. Swing your right leg forward and backward 10 times, followed by side to side. Jog on the spot with high knees.

► Sets and reps

Exercises 1-4: perform three sets of 20 repetitions.

► Cool down

Perform these four stretches after every running and strength training session.

Exercises 5-8: hold each stretch for 60 seconds. Repeat twice.

// Hip roll

Strength

AREAS TRAINED

Side muscles (obliques)

WHY DO IT?

By improving your range of motion and spine mobility you will reduce back stiffness after a long run.

TECHNIQUE

- Lie on the floor with your legs at a right angle
- Take your arms sideways and place your hands flat on the floor
- Slowly roll your legs over to the right side
- Allow your knees to touch the floor but try not to rest
- Ensure that your shoulders stay on the floor
- Lift your legs up to the starting position
- Roll your legs over to the left
- Alternate between the two sides

BE SAFE

Keep the movement within your comfort zone.



// Standing glute-lift

Strength

AREAS TRAINED

Bottom (glutes)

WHY DO IT?

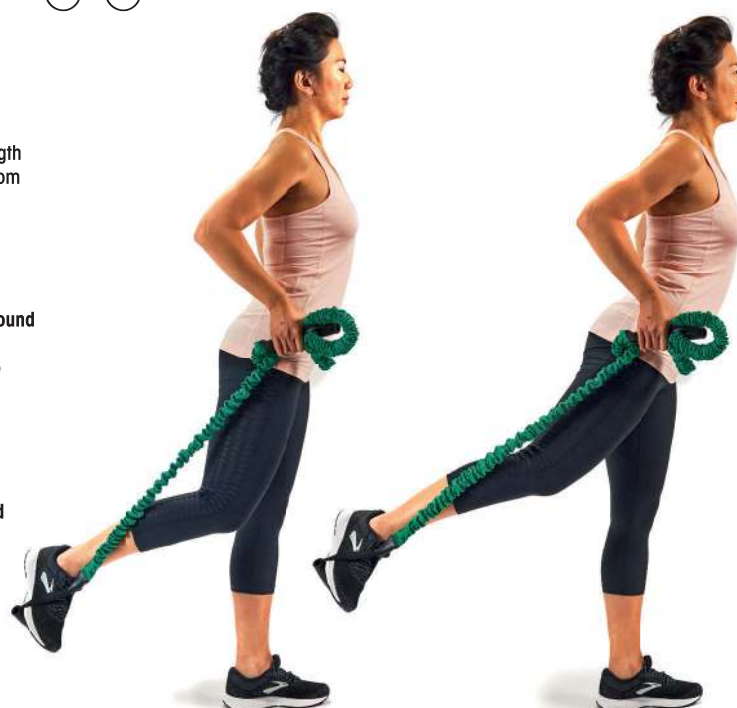
This will increase the strength of the muscles in your bottom and therefore also improve your balance.

TECHNIQUE

- Stand on your left leg
- Tie a resistance band around your right foot
- Hold the other end of the resistance band in your right hand
- Ensure you have enough resistance on the band
- Bend your right knee
- Push your heel backward
- Complete one set on the right before changing to the left

BE SAFE

Ensure you have enough resistance on the band.



GO PRO!

Add additional ankle and wrist weights or increase the strength of the resistance band.

// Kneeling Superman

Strength

AREAS TRAINED

Back muscles (erector spinae)

WHY DO IT?

Balance forms a very important part of running but it's often neglected.

TECHNIQUE

- Kneel on all-fours with your shoulders directly over your hands and your hips directly over your knees
- Ensure your back is straight and your core engaged
- Extend your right arm and left leg out in front of you
- Aim to have a straight line between your arm, body and leg
- Tuck your arm and leg in
- Allow your elbow to touch your knee
- Extend your arm and leg again while maintaining your balance
- Complete one set before changing over to the other side

BE SAFE

Focus on one point in front of you to aid balance.



// Marching bridge

Strength

AREAS TRAINED

Bottom (glutes)

WHY DO IT?

Strengthening your glutes will help with glute activation while you run.

TECHNIQUE

- Lie on your back with your knees bent and your arms next to your side
- Lift your hips off the floor until you form a straight line between your knees, hips and shoulders
- Hold this position and lift your right leg up
- Place your right foot back and left foot up
- Alternate between right and left

BE SAFE

Don't drop your hips down during the move.



// Hamstring stretch

Stretch

AREAS TRAINED

Back thigh (hamstrings)

WHY DO IT?

Flexible hamstrings are very important for runners as tightness causes you to change your running stride and can lead to different injuries.

TECHNIQUE

- Lie on your back
- Extend your right leg up to the ceiling
- Grab hold of your leg and pull it towards you until you feel a stretch
- Pull your toes down to increase the stretch

BE SAFE

Don't bounce your stretches as it may cause injuries.



// Quad stretch

Stretch

AREAS TRAINED

Front thigh (quadriceps)

WHY DO IT?

Flexible front thighs can prevent knee injuries.

TECHNIQUE

- Lie on your right side
- Grab hold of your left ankle with

your left hand and pull your heel towards your bottom until you feel the stretch through your front thigh

- Hold the stretch for 30 seconds before changing over to the other side

BE SAFE

If you can't reach your ankle, grab hold of your shoe or your leggings.



Jyn wears Brooks apparel and shoes.
Visit brooksrrunning.co.uk
Photography: Joe Branstons

// Pigeon stretch

Stretch

AREAS TRAINED

Hip flexors (piriformis)

WHY DO IT?

Tightness in hip flexors can lead to lower back injuries and also negatively influence your running stride.

TECHNIQUE

- Kneel on all fours
- Straighten one leg backward and turn the lower part of the other leg inwards and under your body
- Keep your pelvis straight
- Place your hands on the floor
- Lift your upper body up
- Lower your upper body to the floor if you feel able to
- Hold the position for 20 seconds

BE SAFE

Don't over stretch initially. Hold the stretch and once it has eased off try to stretch a bit further.



// Calf stretch

Stretch

AREAS TRAINED

Calf muscles (gastrocnemius)

WHY DO IT?

Suppleness in your calves will increase your ankle mobility and your speed.

TECHNIQUE

- Stand with the toes of your right foot on a weight
- Step forward with your left
- Keep your right heel on the floor

BE SAFE

Keep your back straight.



**PROTEIN
B VITAMINS
HEALTHY FATS
AND A LOT OF
YUM**



NUTRITION

Beetroot // Recipes // Inspiration

Superfood Beetroot

Exactly what does this beautifully coloured vegetable have to offer runners?

Beetroot juice can commonly be found among the protein shakes and energy drinks in health food shops or on websites selling supplements. This purple wonder-drink has earned its spot in the market primarily thanks to the dietary nitrate found within this earthy purple globe. So what exactly does this dietary nitrate have to offer runners? And how can you ensure you get enough of it?

Why is dietary nitrate beneficial to runners?

After dietary nitrate has been eaten the body converts it into nitric oxide. Within the body nitric oxide causes our blood vessels (such as arteries, veins and capillaries) to widen, meaning oxygen can travel around the body more efficiently. When our muscles are working aerobically, as they are during a run, they require a constant supply of oxygen in order to keep producing energy. An improvement in oxygen delivery therefore means the body can work more efficiently during periods of aerobic exertion. As dietary nitrate enables the body to work more efficiently, it often results in an improved aerobic performance, which is why it's of particular interest to runners.

Is beetroot the only source of dietary nitrate?

Dietary nitrate is not only found in beetroot. It can be found in a range of vegetables – in particular green leafy varieties such as rocket, spinach and lettuce. The dietary nitrate content of any given vegetable can vary widely however, depending on the variety, growing conditions, time of year the vegetable

is grown and harvested, time between harvest, and cooking methods. As yet, the other nitrate-rich vegetables are not available as concentrated drinks (lettuce smoothie anyone?). So beetroot is the poster food for dietary nitrate, thanks to its ability to easily be turned into a palatable drink.

Beetroot juice offers a convenient way to accurately consume a high concentration of dietary nitrate, so the consumer can be sure they're actually getting a beneficial amount. To consume the same from whole beetroot it's thought that a person would have to eat between four and eight beetroot daily, which would be quite a challenge.

How much dietary nitrate is required?

The current guidelines suggest an Acceptable Daily Intake (ADI) of 3.7mg dietary nitrate per kilogram of bodyweight is required to ensure a beneficial amount of dietary nitrate is ingested. So for a 65kg person this would work out as 241mg. Shop-bought beetroot juice products contain between 240mg and 300mg of dietary nitrate, which is why they are so appealing. They also offer a far more convenient way to consume beetroot than munching through four on the bus.

When should dietary nitrate be eaten?

The current body of evidence regarding dietary nitrate suggests it has both an acute and a cumulative effect. In other words, it's thought to be effective within two to three hours of consumption. But research suggests the effects are even greater when reasonable dosages are

regularly consumed. More evidence is needed to know exactly how long runners should be consuming a sufficient amount of dietary nitrate for before a race in order to reap maximum benefit, but ensuring the ADI is met as regularly as possible in the lead up to an event is most definitely a good idea.

// As dietary nitrate allows the body to work more efficiently, it often results in an improved aerobic performance //

Does dietary nitrate have any other benefits?

Dietary nitrate is not only of benefit on the running course however. Research has found that dietary nitrate reduces blood pressure, particularly in those who have higher than preferred readings. In turn this lowers a person's risk of stroke and therefore is beneficial for longevity. If consuming dietary nitrate for general health, then it's more beneficial to get it from whole food sources, in order to reap all the other benefits from those foods; there is far more to gain from vegetables than dietary nitrate. Regularly consuming a wide variety of vegetables provides carbohydrate and a wide range of vitamins and minerals, including dietary nitrate. In short, heed the advice to eat at least five portions of fruit or veg every day, and do your best to 'eat the rainbow' (a variety of colours). Not only will your running performance benefit, but your overall health will as well. 🌈

BIG BEETS
Beets are a great source of fibre, folate, manganese, potassium, iron, and vitamin C

Get your beetroot fix

BEETROOT BOOST SMOOTHIE

- 2 small beetroot
- 1 small apple
- Handful of blueberries
- Thumb-size piece of ginger
- 300ml water
- Optional: 1-2 tbsp of natural yoghurt



Peel and chop the beetroot and apple. Grate the ginger. Rinse the blueberries. Place all ingredients in a blender and whizz until smooth. For a creamier smoothie add natural yoghurt.

BEETROOT AND GOAT'S CHEESE SALAD

- 2 beetroot
- 4 tbsp olive oil
- 3 tbsp balsamic vinegar
- 50g goats' cheese
- Bag of salad of your choice
- Seasoning

Preheat the oven to 200°C/fan 180°C. Peel the beetroot and in a roasting tin mix with one tbsp of both the olive oil and the balsamic vinegar. Roast for 25-30 minutes until the beetroot is sticky. Cut the goat's cheese and cooked beetroot into bite-size chunks. Place leaves in a bowl and mix with remaining balsamic vinegar and olive oil, as well as some seasoning. Place on a plate followed by the goat's cheese and beetroot. Enjoy!



ROASTED BEETROOT

- As many whole beetroot as required
- Foil
- Kitchen towel



Preheat the oven to 200°C/fan 180°C. Chop the leaves off, leaving a little stalk at the top to hold. Wrap each beetroot in foil and place in a roasting tin. Roast for 50-60 mins, checking regularly and adding a little water to the foil if the beetroot looks dry. Once cooked, allow to cool fully. Then, holding the remaining stalk, use a kitchen towel to rub the skin off. Once peeled, store in the fridge and consume within a week. These beetroot can be heated and used as a side dish, or alternatively, chopped/grated and added to salad, smoothies, lentils or hummus.

GREAT WELSH MARATHON

GREATWELSH
Marathon

GREATWELSH
Half Marathon

05.04.20



GREATWELSHMARATHON.CO.UK #RUNCYMRU



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That inspiring moment



LIFE ON A PLATE

Lina and Sanna El Kott

Skyrunning superstars Lina and Sanna talk about their passion for their plant-based diet

Swedish skyrunners Lina and Sanna El Kott have only been on the scene since 2016, but they've made a huge impact in the sport in just that small amount of time. The twins have raced all over the world, covering single-stage, multi-day and adventure races. Keen skiers, cyclists, kayakers, they take on everything that's thrown at them!

What sort of running do you do?

We mostly run on trails, and we mainly take part in skyrunning race. We run in mountains and at high altitudes, technical trails, and high elevations. We started off with some lower mountains and some orienteering. We have friends that were into skyrunning, and we followed that dream, and got into it in that way. We are quite adventurous, I guess!

Tell us about your love of food

We've been vegetarian for about 15 years. Our family ate everything else, so we had to cook for ourselves. You learn so much. We trained so much, we know when we're full and not full.

What do you normally eat?

A lot of colourful food; veggies and fruit. We always eat some nuts, and we also need protein, so lots of beans and lentils. We love

panini, and all nut butters.

We often just eat a big bowl of veggies and chickpeas, and tofu is our favourite. When it's cold, we like warm stews with quinoa or pasta.

What are your favourite snacks before a race?

It depends on the distance. If it's a half marathon we don't eat, we just make sure we hydrate and maybe have a gel. We eat breakfast two or three hours before the race. With longer races, we rely on the aid stations.

Do you have any nutrition secrets?

If you make a smoothie you can hide so much! Even oatmeal! You can really fill up on protein with a smoothie.

What do you like to eat when you come back from a run?

We have a banana before cooking something. Then we like to have fresh vegetables, and raw beetroot – we love that. Before a run we want something lighter and not much fat, afterwards we want carbs and fat.

What are your favourite foods?

Tofu! We love tofu! You can do so much with it! We could eat it raw! 🍷

Lina and Sanna are GORE® Wear athletes. Follow @elkotts for recipes and inspiration.

LINA AND SANNA

Aged just 25, the twins are on the cusp of world domination in their sport. Together they have been the joint winners of the 255K TransAlpineRun in 2018 and 2018. And again, they completed the 70K ELS 2900 in Andorra 2017 as the only female team. And this year? Watch this space!



Vegan feasts

The whole family will get stuck into these delicious family favourites from *BOSH! Healthy Vegan*

ULTIMATE VEG TACOS

Serves 4 // Prep 25 mins // Cooking 30 mins

FOR THE ROASTED PEPPERS

- 1 red onion
- 2 orange peppers
- 1 tbsp olive oil
- salt and black pepper

FOR THE ROASTED CORN

- 1x 200g tin sweetcorn in water (no added salt)
- ½ tsp smoked paprika
- ½ tbsp olive oil

FOR THE BANGIN' BLACK BEANS

- 2 garlic cloves
- 1x 400g tin black beans in water
- 1 tbsp olive oil
- ½ tsp ground cinnamon
- ½ tsp ground cumin

FOR THE SIMPLE SALSA

- 50g cherry tomatoes
- 1 spring onion
- 5g fresh coriander leaves
- ¼ tsp chilli powder
- ½ lime

FOR THE AVO' TANG

- 1 ripe avocado
- 1 lime

TO SERVE

- ½ fresh green chilli / 2 limes / 8 small corn tortillas / 10g fresh coriander leaves



PHOTOGRAPHY COPYRIGHT: LIZZIE MAYSON

1 First, roast the peppers | Peel, halve and cut the red onion into 5mm thick strips | Halve, core and cut the peppers into 5mm-thick slices | Put the onion and pepper in a bowl, drizzle over the olive oil, add a pinch each of salt and pepper and toss to combine | Spread out on one of the lined baking trays, put in the oven and bake for 25-30 minutes

2 Get the roasted corn in the oven | Drain and rinse the sweetcorn, pat dry with kitchen paper, then tip the kernels into a bowl with the smoked paprika and stir to combine | Sprinkle over a little salt and pepper, tip the sweetcorn onto the second baking tray, put the tray in the oven and roast for 30 minutes, stirring halfway through | Take both trays out of the oven, drizzle the corn with the oil and set to one side

3 Meanwhile, make the black beans | Peel and grate the garlic | Drain and rinse the beans, tip them into a bowl and mash with a fork | Heat the olive oil in the small saucepan over a medium heat | Add the garlic and stir for 30 seconds | Stir in the cinnamon and cumin | Add the black beans and stir to combine, adding the water to loosen the mixture. Taste and season to perfection with salt and pepper

4 Make the simple salsa | Quarter the tomatoes | Trim and thinly slice the spring onion | Roughly chop the coriander leaves | Put the chilli powder in a bowl, squeeze in the lime juice and stir | Stir in the tomatoes, spring onion and coriander leaves, and set to one side

5 Make the avo' tang | Halve and carefully stone the avocado by tapping the stone firmly with the heel of a knife so that it lodges in the pit, then twist and remove | Halve the lime | Scoop the avocado flesh into a bowl, squeeze in the lime juice and mash with a fork to a textured cream

6 Lay all the elements of your Ultimate Veg Tacos on the table | Trim and thinly slice the chilli | Cut the limes into wedges | Spoon a layer of beans and roasted pepper and onion onto each tortilla | Spoon over some avo' tang and simple salsa | Sprinkle with roasted corn, garnish with coriander leaves and chilli, add a squeeze of lime and serve

← You can upweight the chilli if you like it hot!

It's easy to find
vegan filo sheets
in supermarkets
these days – no
rolling necessary!

ROOT ONE

Parsnips are a great
source of vitamin C,
vitamin K and folate.
Have seconds!





EASY & HEALTHY ROAST DINNER

Serves 4 // Prep 45 mins // Cooking 2hr 10 mins

FOR THE ROAST VEGGIES

- 6 medium Maris Piper or other floury potatoes (about 1kg)
- 3 medium carrots (about 300g)
- 3 medium parsnips (about 275g)
- 150g Brussels sprouts
- 1 tbsp olive oil salt and black pepper

FOR THE RICH GRAVY

- 2 small red onions
- 2 garlic cloves
- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 1 tbsp cornflour & 2 tbsp water
- 1 tbsp tomato puree
- 1 tsp yeast extract (eg Marmite)
- 1 tsp maple syrup 300ml red wine
- 350ml vegetable stock salt and black pepper

FOR THE WELLINGTON FILO PARCELS

- 3 garlic cloves
- 2 tsp olive oil
- 4 large chestnut mushrooms, plus 150g chestnut mushrooms for the filling
- 1 small red onion
- 2 sprigs fresh rosemary
- 3 sprigs fresh thyme
- 80g vacuum-packed pre-cooked chestnuts
- 50g pecans
- 1 slice wholemeal bread (about 50g)
- 30ml white wine
- 4 sheets vegan filo pastry
- low-fat cooking oil spray
- salt and black pepper

1 Peel and quarter potatoes, carrots and parsnips. Trim and halve sprouts. Place potatoes and pinch of salt in large saucepan, cover with water. Put pan over a high heat, bring to boil and simmer for 6-7 mins. Drain potatoes, return them to pan and steam-dry for 2-3 mins, shaking pan gently to fluff edges. Put olive oil and pinch of salt and pepper in a large bowl. Add potatoes, carrots, parsnips and toss to coat. Remove potatoes, place on baking tray and put tray to one side. Add sprouts to bowl with carrots and parsnips and toss to coat.

3 For gravy, peel and thinly slice red onions. Peel and grate garlic. Heat olive oil in saucepan. Add onion and a pinch of salt and cook, stirring, for 5-6 mins. Add garlic and stir for 1 min. Combine cornflour with water in a cup and stir to make a slurry. Add slurry to pan with tomato puree, yeast extract and maple syrup, stir to combine. Add red wine and cook, stirring, for 3-4 mins. Add vegetable stock, stir, increase heat and simmer for 10-15 mins to thicken, stirring occasionally. Taste, season with salt and pepper.

4 While gravy is thickening, peel and grate a large garlic clove into a bowl. Add a pinch of salt and pepper and a drizzle of olive oil and stir. Place large mushrooms on the second baking tray facing up. Rub the garlic paste into the gills of the mushrooms. Put mushrooms in oven and bake for 10-12 mins. Remove from oven and set aside.

5 While the mushrooms are cooking, prep the first part of your Wellington filling 1 Peel and halve the red onion 1 Peel the remaining 2 garlic cloves 1 Put the red onion, garlic and 150g chestnut mushrooms in the food processor and blitz into a fine mince 1 Transfer to a bowl and put to one side 1 Remove the leaves from the rosemary and thyme and finely chop 1 Put the chestnuts, pecans and wholemeal bread in the food processor and blitz to form a textured filling.

6 Now, start roasting 1 Put the potatoes in the oven and roast for 40 minutes.

7 Carry on building the Wellington parcels 1 Warm the remaining teaspoon of olive oil in the frying pan over a medium heat 1 If the onion and mushroom mixture has released liquid, drain it briefly in a sieve 1 Add the mixture to the pan with a pinch of salt and cook, stirring, for 4-5 minutes 1 Add the finely chopped rosemary and thyme and stir for 1 minute 1 Add the white wine and stir for 3-4 minutes 1 Take the pan off the heat 1 Add the chestnut and bread mixture and fold it into the rest of the ingredients to form a thick ball of filling 1 Taste and season with salt and pepper.

8 Now, continue roasting 1 Take the roasting tray out of the oven, turn the potatoes and put the carrot and parsnips on the tray 1 Put the tray back in the oven for 20 minutes.

9 Build your Wellington parcels 1 Cut the filo pastry sheets in half so you have 8 squares 1 Lay the sheets out in piles of two, arranged so the two sheets are overlapping at different angles to create star shapes 1 Divide the filling into 8 equal pieces, roll one of the pieces into a ball, place one ball in the centre of a pastry star and press it to form a 1cm-thick disc 1 Take one of the roasted mushrooms and place it in the centre of the disc 1 Take another piece of the filling, roll it into a ball and flatten it out into a 1cm-thick disc between your hands 1 Place the disc of filling on top of the mushroom and mould the two pieces of filling around the mushroom to form a ball, ensuring the edges are sealed 1 Pull the exposed sheets of filo pastry up around the ball and twist the tops together so the Wellington pastry parcel is tightly wrapped, being careful not to rip the pastry 1 Spray the tops of the pastry parcels with a little cooking spray 1 Repeat this process with the remaining ingredients to make four Wellington parcels.

10 Now, complete the roasting process 1 Take the tray of potatoes, parsnips and carrots out of the oven and add the Brussels sprouts to the tray 1 Put the Wellington filo parcels on a separate tray and put the trays back in the oven for 20 minutes until all the vegetables are well roasted and the parcels are golden and crispy.

11 Serve 1 Warm the gravy through so it's hot and gently steaming 1 Remove the trays from the oven, plate up the Wellington parcels and roasted vegetables, pour over the gravy and serve immediately.



BOSH! Healthy Vegan by Henry Firth and Ian Theasby is out now (HQ, HarperCollins).

Meditation Head first

Tuning into your mind while training your body could help you to fulfil your running goals

Words Louise Pyne

We already know how pounding the pavements has the power to inject our mood with the feel-good factor. But there's another way to sustain the flurry of positive emotions that come from running and smashing your running potential.

Experts believe that mental training is just as important as physical training, and when it comes to seeing results meditation can help. Scientifically proven to improve resilience and focus, merging meditation with running (otherwise known as MAP or mental and physical training) can help to relieve feelings of low mood and depression. In one study, parents with severe depression who took part in 30 minutes of meditation and 30 minutes of aerobic exercise over eight weeks had improved mood and lower levels of depression. Scientists found that the brains of participants underwent neurogenesis (growth of new brain cells called neurons) in the hippocampus region of the brain which is responsible for mood, memory and learning.

"Meditation is about training in awareness and getting a healthy sense of perspective," says Director of Sport at Headspace, Lindsay Shaffer. "You're not trying to turn off your thoughts or feelings. You're learning to observe them without judgment. And eventually, you may start to better understand them as well."

While seated meditation practice done separately from your running routine can help to improve performance, run meditation

(where you bring awareness to your physical movement while eliminating distractions) is also hugely beneficial as it enables you to tune into your body and throw away the clutter.

The benefits

Leaving those swirling thoughts behind and staying present in the moment can make you more positive, feel relaxed, confident and can help to blast away negative emotions, which, in the long run (pun unintended) enables you to be more focused. "This means you can make gains towards your end fitness goal, taking it one stride at a time," says Lindsay. And there's more: athletes who consistently practise meditation can help their body recover faster, especially if an injury occurs, as it enables you to observe discomfort without judgement in order to overcome pain.

When running an endurance race, we spend a lot of time with our inner dialogue, therefore our relationship with our inner dialogue can influence how the race goes. "There is a lot of time for doubt and distraction to creep in. When pushing our body to the limits, the ability to keep the mind calm and focused is as important to our physical training. And that ability doesn't just come, we have to

work at it, just like we have to work at our physical training, says Lindsay.


How to get started

Meditation is like taking up a new sport and like any discipline, the first step is to master the basics – starting small and building up self-awareness skills slowly. Just like running, repetition is key when it comes to mastering meditation. "Think how you would when training for a race. Starting with a small distance and steadily increasing how far you go. Begin meditation with short exercises, increasing the length of time you meditate as you get more comfortable sitting with your mind. Many of the skills in meditation that lead to that performance mindset are from basic meditation principles such as self-awareness and being present."

When you're pounding the pavements, try to actively participate in an awareness of what's going on around you, be it other runners, cars, trees blowing in the wind or anything else you pass along the way that grabs your attention.

Set clear goals

Setting clear goals helps us reach them effectively. Just as you set clear running aims, equally having meditation intentions can help you to boost performance. "Reminding yourself why you have a goal helps quiet the



// Scientifically proven to improve resilience and focus, merging meditation with your running can help to relieve feelings of low mood and depression //

distractions that create pressure. Practise setting clear intentions to keep your mind calm as you train. Setbacks will occur but practising meditation and mindfulness will help train your brain to stay resilient,” says Lindsay.

Stay present

Meditation can increase mental resilience as well as enabling you to perform to the very best of your ability. It is also a powerful tool to help you stay in the

present moment, listen to your body, and breathe, as well as aid the recovery process if injury occurs.

One of the key components of meditation is observing your breath. Often running feels like a struggle because your breath is out of sync, but meditation can help by normalising your breathing pattern. Before you head outdoors try this pre-run one-minute meditation exercise to warm up your body and mind: “Sitting down, take a nice deep breath, in through the nose and out through the mouth. Feel the mind in the body more present, more aware, more focused. Notice how the body feels, whether there’s a sense of energy or lightness, heaviness or discomfort,” says Lindsay.

»TURN OVER FOR MEDITATION TIPS

Meditate while you run

A simple step-by-step guide to meditating on the go



1 Consider your emotions

Before you start to run, think about how you feel. Are you happy, anxious, confident or unsure of your emotion? Take a few minutes to sit down and allow your mind to rest.

2 Scan your body

Once you've observed how you feel mentally, think about how you physically feel. Are your shoulders stiff? Your legs heavy? Once you've noticed how your body feels, take a few deep breaths to get grounded, breathing in through the nose for two counts and out through the nose for another two counts.



3 Avoid judgement

Start running slowly and relax as you ease yourself into the zone, constantly bringing your awareness back to your breath as thoughts start to creep in. Focus on this sensation and notice how your breath changes the warmer your body gets.

4 Maintain your focus

When your mind wanders, gently bring it back to your focus, doing this for around 5-10 minutes at a time, building in regular checks to make sure that you're always staying in the present.

// Think about how you feel: are you happy, anxious, confident or unsure of your emotion? //

TOP 4 MEDITATION AIDS

These zen-inducing buys will help to guide sitting-meditation practice effectively

1 Nike Run Club App

Bring focus to your body and mind with Nike's selection of guided meditations for running, which have been specially developed in conjunction with Headspace.

Available on iTunes.



2 The Organic Company Meditation Mat

Ease yourself into seated meditation with this



comfortable padded meditation mat, which cleverly also doubles up as a yoga mat. £205, chalkandmoss.com

3 Root & Flower Yoga and Meditation Atmosphere Mist

Purify the space around you in preparation for a calming meditation practice with this botanical spray which combines cardoon and frankincense. £21, rootandflower.co.uk



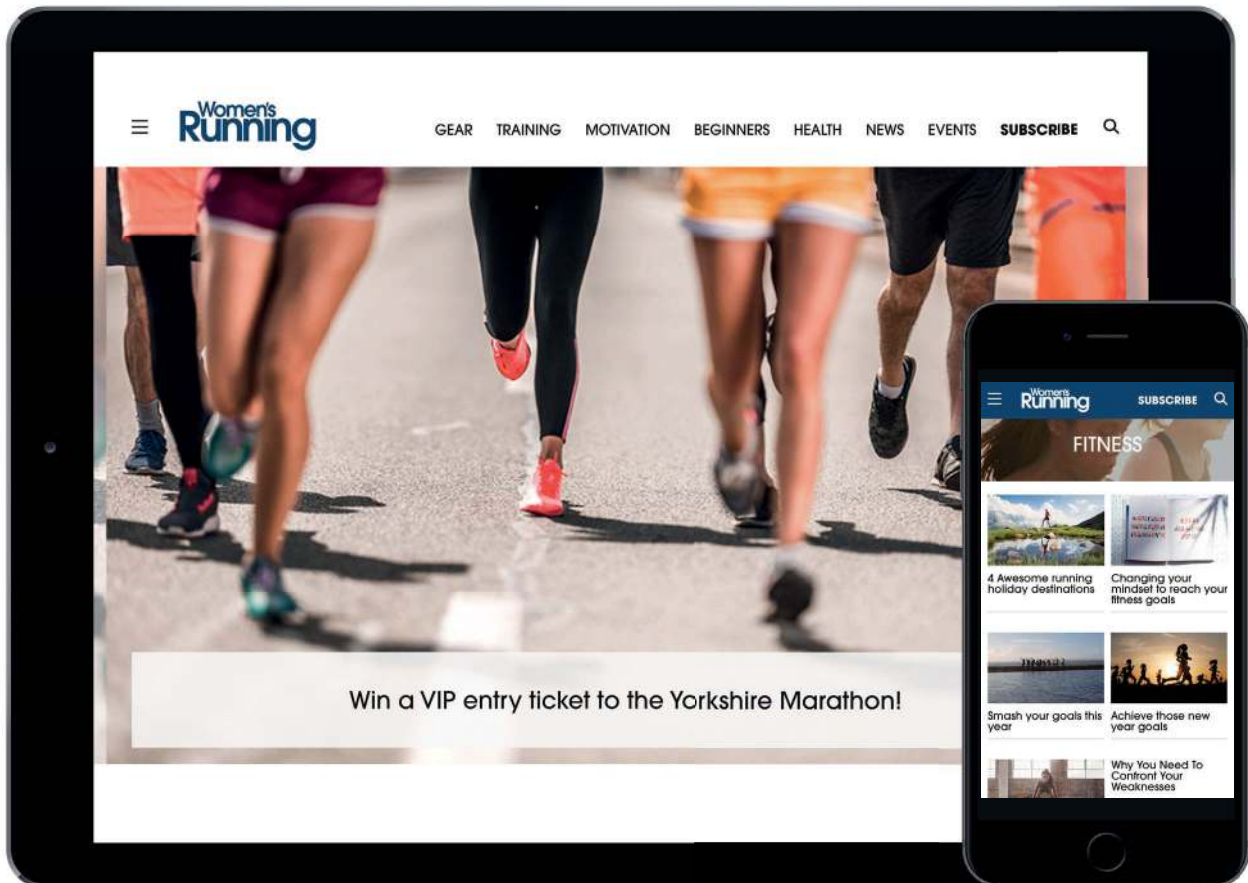
4 Neals Yard Remedies Organic Aromatherapy Balancing Candle

Help to create balance in your surroundings with this beautifully scented bergamot and geranium candle. £29.50, nealsyardremedies.com



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THE EXPERTS



Dr Juliet McGrattan is our resident health expert. She is the author of *Sorted: The Active Woman's Guide to Health*. drjulietmcgrattan.com



Anita Bean is a nutritionist for the London Marathon and the author of 28 books including *The Runner's Cookbook*. anitabean.co.uk



Jen Benson has an MSc in sport and exercise medicine, and is the author of *Wild Running* and *The Adventurer's Guide to Britain*.



Ashleigh Wienand is a physiotherapist and the founder of Ultra Sports Clinic. ultrasportsclinic.com

SUPPORT NETWORK

Your questions answered

Essential advice from our expert team on everything from keeping safe on night runs, to stinky running kit, calcium intake and hysterectomy recovery. Plus, how to make the most of very, very limited running time

Q My GP has said I'm at risk of getting osteoporosis. How can I up my calcium intake?

A The recommended daily intake is 700mg (three servings of dairy products a day). If you don't consume dairy, get your calcium from a non-dairy milk or yogurt with added calcium, tofu (made with calcium sulphate), beans, chickpeas, tahini, tinned sardines, broccoli, sesame seeds, dried figs and almonds. However, calcium in dairy is more easily absorbed than calcium from other foods. Don't take calcium supplements unless advised by a healthcare professional – there isn't any evidence that they prevent fractures in healthy people. Vitamin D is also important as it helps your body absorb calcium. The best source is sunlight but, as it's in short supply in the UK in winter, Public Health England recommends taking a daily 10 microgram supplement. **AB**

Q I've just had a hysterectomy – what's the best way to return safely to running?

A Slowly is the key. A hysterectomy is a big operation, both physically and mentally, and every woman and every operation is different. I would normally advise against running until at least eight to 12 weeks post-surgery, but it may take much longer than this before you feel ready. Begin by strengthening your pelvic floor to ensure it's strong before returning to high-impact exercise. Start with gentle walking and build up day by day. Downloading the NHS's Couch to 5K podcast is an ideal way to introduce running gradually again. Above all, set your own goals and don't fall into the trap of comparing yourself to others and don't be afraid to cut back when you need to, either. **JM**

Q I have a painful knee. Will buying a knee guard help?

A I wouldn't recommend buying one until you've had it properly diagnosed by a physio, since you first need to establish why your knee is sore. Knee guards come in a variety of forms and they do a multitude of things – some guide your kneecap (to keep it in the right groove), some provide support for ligament injuries or cartilage tears, and others protect your knee from hyper-extension or shifting from side to side. It has to be the right type of guard for your specific problem in order to give you relief. A physio will be able to tell you whether a knee guard is necessary and which type to get. Generally, they'll tape your knee, and if this provides relief, a knee guard may be deemed helpful for your recovery. **AW**



ASK US
YOUR QUESTIONS!

Email womensrunning@anthem-publishing.com



Q My high-tech running kit really smells. What can I do about this?

A The average armpit boasts an incredible 300 different strains of bacteria, but it's our choice of fabric that makes the biggest difference when it comes to odours. That distinctive smell is caused by bacteria in the fabric living off oils from our body. Natural fibres such as merino wool are absorbent, locking everything inside where we can't smell it. Synthetic fibres, however, aren't absorbent, so the bacteria sticks to the outside of the fibres, along with the smell. To keep your kit fresher for longer, always hang it out to dry after use if you're not washing it straight away, as bacteria thrive in damp environments. Also, consider washing it using a specialist detergent such as Nikwax BaseFresh, which cleans and deodorises while also inhibiting further build-up. **JB**

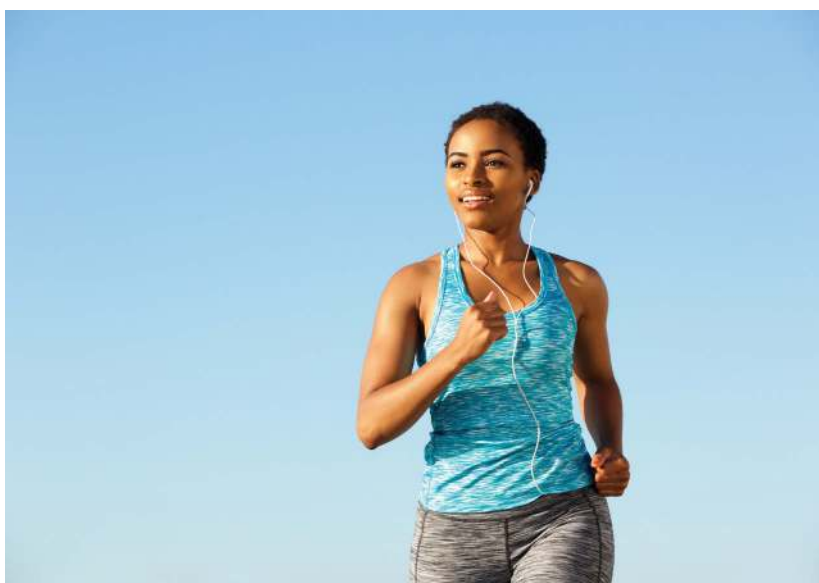
Q I have to run alone, often when it's dark. Do you have any tips on keeping safe?

A Heading out for a solo run can be a great way to find time for yourself, particularly at the start or finish of a busy day. Over the winter months this can often mean heading out in the dark, so it's important to make sure you're safe and visible on the run.

Light-coloured clothing shows up best at dusk or dawn, while reflective details shine brightly under headlights in the dark. A high-visibility reflective vest that can be worn over the top of your existing kit is a great investment – Proviz (provizsports.com) sells several different options.

A good headtorch is essential and the Petzl Reactik is light, stable and uses reactive technology to vary the intensity of the beam as you run. Wearable LEDs are great for extra visibility – try Ronhill's armband and clip-on models (ronhill.com). Awareness of your surroundings is even more important in the dark, so consider not wearing headphones or choose a bone-conduction model that leaves your ears free, such as AfterShokz Aeropex. If you're running alone, particularly if it's somewhere with few other people, it's always worth taking a charged mobile phone and telling someone where you're going and what time you expect to be back. Finally, running with company can be great fun and excellent for motivation. Check out Sport England's Run Together project (runtogether.co.uk), look for local running clubs or see if you can convince a friend, partner or colleague to take up running, too. **JB**

// Hang kit out to dry after use if you're not washing it straight away, as bacteria thrives in damp environments //



Q I can only spare 20 minutes twice a week to run. How do you suggest I best spend that time?

A Enjoy it! When you're really tight on time for running, the main goal is to love the time you do have. Start and finish each run with a few minutes of easy jogging to warm up/cool down in order to get the most out of every run and reduce your risk of injury.

Try to run somewhere scenic if you possibly can – a local park, woodland or riverside trail gives you all the added benefits of being outside in nature. If you find you're really enjoying running you may want to start trying to find ways to fit in a couple more sessions each week: how about trying a run commute, a working 'runch', or joining a club or group that heads out in the evenings? **JB**

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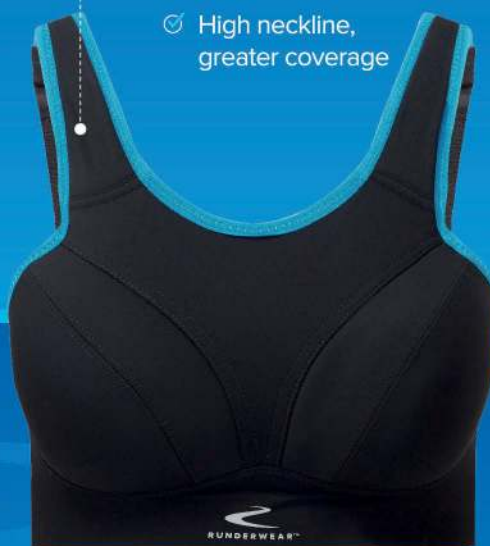
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RACE

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USA

LAS VEGAS MARATHON

A marathon in Las Vegas: you know it's going to be crazy, but you can't imagine *how* crazy! **Tina Chantrey** ran the Rock 'n' Roll Las Vegas Marathon, to roll her running dice and see where the chips would fall

The RnR Las Vegas race weekend is like no other in the world. Not only because you are in Las Vegas, where the sun always shines, but being able to get up and gamble at breakfast, while have a beer (not a great pre-race plan, though plenty were doing it!), running along the Strip and just being in the Nevada desert... think of merging Disney World

for adults with a leading part in *Frozen* and you get the idea.

Everything starts on Saturday evening, when over 9,000 runners participate in the 5K in the Festival Grounds, finishing with a concert where you could chill or dance to Kesha. The course winds its way around the grounds, with a short out and back along the main road, though it may

take up to half an hour to cross the start line. This gives you extra time to absorb the lights, music and fun. The medal is epic and you'll get a tee as well, and feel really geared up for the races on Sunday.

Sunday showdown

Sunday is the 10K, half marathon and marathon. The 10K kicks off the schedule, followed by the half and full. As the only event to shut down the famed Strip, the Rock 'n' Roll Vegas is a unique opportunity to completely breathe in this surreal and sparkling city. The marathon starts just as the sun is setting and as the city is coming to life.

Back to the half marathon, though, which is mainly run on Las Vegas Boulevard, which means you have music and lights at almost every mile – plus plenty of support. For the most authentic Vegas experience go for the half, it will blow you away.

The marathon, in contrast, felt more like a race of two parts; the miles along the Strip are exciting, stimulating and



// Other races around the world, and our big city races here in the UK, could learn many lessons on raising inclusivity from the approach Rock 'n' Roll take in LV //

with a high energy atmosphere. You won't have time to worry about your watch. You will never forget these miles. The later stages, that lead away from the Strip, were much quieter and not well lit – these are the miles that will be tough. Compared to thousands in the shorter distances, it is immediately noticeable when you first head off on to the marathon course how few runners choose to run the full distance.

In the second half, there are a lot of turnarounds which would hamper you if you're really gunning for a PB. Towards the end you enter the Festival Grounds, where the 5K is held, and cover quite a lot of ground through endless switchbacks. This section was mentally tough as you feel you're never going to head back to the Strip. Eventually you do. The relief! When you finally exit the ground you'll want to shout 'Hallelujah!', as you finally



filter back on to the Strip with the half marathoners. There is one more section where you head away from the action for a mile or two (and this felt cruel!) but then you are there, at the electric finish. There is no other finish in the world like this one. NONE.

As smooth as a spinning roulette wheel

The race organisation was impressive. The starting corral is massive, yet everything flows smoothly as thousands upon thousands of runners of all abilities set off. There is so much fuel at the aid stations, including potatoes, that you don't have to carry any food or water if you don't want to. The bands make this race fun – if you are a runner wanting to dip your toes into the world of marathon running, chose this one.

The bling is very, very pleasing, with spinning parts to mimic the casinos; Rock 'n' Roll don't scrimp on your race experience. It's a gold stand race. You're encouraged to enjoy this experience, whether you're walking or running. You are part of a crazy road show mile after mile. The finish leaves you looking around thinking, wow, did I just do that? I had to sit down just to take it all in. It's a destination, bucket list race that has blown my mind.

Everything about this race is cool: running beneath the Statue of Liberty

and the Eiffel Tower, the seamless organisation, the high performance, stylish t-shirts. Upgrade to the Gold VIP experience if you can, to include access to Drais nightclub for a post-race massage (heavenly even when you are sweaty and stinky), food and drinks. If you run on both Saturday and Sunday you get a bonus medal, too. And yes, you can have a run-through wedding during the race if you want to! Aww...

A word on inclusivity

Would it be accurate to state that I've never run in a big city marathon as inclusive and community focused as this one? Yes. It was joyful running with so many runners pushing buggies, as well as pushing wheelchairs (of all sizes). There were a lot of wheelchair participants, and in this race they all turn up with their rig fully lit. Everyone was shouting out to these folk. And a mention of the vast number of walkers has to be made: it seems the residents of Las Vegas figure if their city is being closed down, they may as well get involved in the race. Other races around the world, and our big city races here in the UK, could learn many lessons on raising inclusivity from the approach Rock 'n' Roll take in LV.

► Sign up at runrocknroll.com to register your interest for the 2020 marathon. ►



ITALY

THE SKYMASTERS

The world's best skyrunners battled it out for the Series win in Italy. **Katie Campbell Spyрка** watched in awe

One of the first things you notice as you arrive in the pretty Italian town of Limone, besides its stunning Lake Garda location, is the looming mountains. Jagged and magnificent, they're the reason I'm here in Limone in October – I'm about to watch the world's best skyrunners run up and down them for the inaugural SkyMasters race.

This is the grande finale of the Migu Run Skyrunner World Series, skyrunning's official race circuit, and the last of 16 races on the worldwide calendar, each chosen for their extreme technicality and elevation gain. Only this time, SkyMasters is reserved for the season's best athletes who qualified via

their 2019 race positions. And when they line up on the start line, they're battling it out not only for a podium spot but for their place in the overall Series ranking. In other words, this race



Sheila Avilés tackles some of that mind-boggling ascent

is for the crown of the best skyrunner in the world.

Abuzz with athletes, picturesque Limone is playing host to three other races this weekend: the Limone Extreme Skyrace, a super-challenging race in its own right with 2,052m elevation in 22K; the 'Vertical Kilometer' and a 10K. But it's the SkyMasters that I'm here to cover: an intense race with a hard, technically demanding course, serving up 2,600m of elevation within just 27K.

World's best

On Friday morning a press conference brings together the top five women in contention for the World Series win,

// At 5K, Avilés is leading by a minute. Still ahead of her is the second climb; 900m of vertical within 4.2K, where athletes ascend towards the 1621m summit of Monte Carone //

including Sheila Avilés of Spain, who leads the ranking with 580 points, and 2018 Series defending champion, and Ragna Debats, who sits behind by just 60 points. With 250 points for a win and 200 for a second place at SkyMasters, Avilés can't relax; this is the first time the 'best of the best' have raced together in one place. As she says, "You can top the leaderboard but then lose everything on race day."

Soon we learn that Saturday's race start will be brought forward from 1pm to 8am due to a forecast of heavy rain. This means a 4am alarm for most athletes. There's suddenly more excitement in the air.

Lung-busting climbs

On Friday afternoon, I explore the start of the first of two brutal climbs, following the yellow marking (skyrunning races are marked courses) up crazily steep paths of loose rocky limestone and gravel, slipping several times on my way up. Runners will be hurtling down this type of terrain in race mode and I wonder how. The first climb is relentless – 3,900ft of vertical in just over 4 miles. Skyrunners, I decide, are superhuman.

Race day

It's dark when I return to the trail head on race day to find a viewing spot. About ten minutes up, I have a stunning view of Lake Garda, including the lakeside start/finish 3K away. The race organisers count down to the start, then 60 elite athletes speed through the narrow streets of Limone at 6-minute mile pace before crossing the road to the trail where the climbing begins.

Romania's Denisa Dragomir, who isn't in contention for overall ranking,

Denisa Dragomir celebrates her incredible win



Sheila Avilés is the 2019 Skyrunner World Series Overall Champion

leads the women on the steep ascent. She's the only one still running; the others fast-hike, heads down with hands on their knees. Debats follows in second place, Avilés in fourth.

As they zig-zag up the rugged climb, we lose sight of them and the rain arrives. Shortly after, word reaches us that at 5K, Avilés is leading by a minute. Still ahead of her is the second climb; 900m of vertical within 4.2K, where athletes ascend towards the 1621m summit of Monte Carone via steep, edgeless steps leftover from the Second World War. Perilously exposed, this is not the place to slip.

Updates come in and we hear that at 11K Denisa wrestled the lead from Avilés at the start of the second climb, with Ragna running in fourth.

As we wait for news at the finish line, updates dry up. The last 6K includes

serious technical descending including an elevation loss of 1442ft within mile 15 alone. Both Avilés and Dragomir are known for their supreme descending skills. The atmosphere is tense.

Eventually, we spot the first woman in the finishing straight – it's Dragomir, who wins in 3:36:55! Five minutes later, Sheila Avilés crosses the line, cementing her position as the 2019 Skyrunner World Series Overall Champion. Marcela Vasinova is third, and Ragna Debats fourth.

After 3.5 hours of incredibly intense racing, it's a wrap on the 2019 season. 600K has been covered and 11 countries visited. Skyrunners – I don't know how they do it.

► Skymasters 2020 takes place on 10 October. Find out more at [skyrunnerworldseries.com](https://www.skyrunnerworldseries.com)



USA

NEW YORK MARATHON

Seasoned marathoner **Melanie Angel** takes on yet another bucket list race in the Big Apple

When the USA puts on a marathon, it does it in style. From the well-structured expo to an efficient staggered start resulting in an uncongested field, the 49th New York Marathon was brilliantly organised.

It's definitely one for your bucket list, so what do you need to know if you're considering taking part in this year's 50th Anniversary New York Marathon on November 1?

It's an invariably cold start but if you arrive well wrapped in layers of old clothing your cast-offs will be donated to the homeless. Get to your colour-coded village as quickly as possible and you'll be rewarded with fleecy Dunkin Donuts beanies and enough hot drinks, bagels, waffles, bananas, energy sweets and more to keep you going the rest of the day. Don't fret about the long toilet queues: as you enter your start zone there are plenty of portaloos with only a short line of people waiting at each. And it's good to know foreigners are looked after with every announcement repeated in multiple languages.

Be prepared to start your marathon with a lump in your throat. They have Sinatra belting out *New York, New York*

over the tannoy and the sight of your fellow runners touching their hearts during the national anthem can induce goosebumps, which owe nothing to the fresh late autumn weather.

The race itself is full of spectacle. There are hardly any areas which are not heaving with high-volume spectators. Brooklyn is full of redbrick charm, the Jewish Chasidic area of North Williamsburg is an iconic throw-back to history, and when you enter Manhattan, the wall of noise at 16 miles is unquestionably cheering. If you're lucky to have good weather, the sun reflecting off Manhattan's dramatic skyscrapers will take your breath away. Only one minor gripe and a message to the organisers: please exercise some crowd control in Harlem. Towards the end of the marathon, you don't need bystanders trying to zig zag their way across the road in front of you.

That aside, the amazing atmosphere at the finish, together with the fleece-lined waterproof poncho I was wrapped up in and a huge Big Apple medal made it all so incredibly worth it.

▶ The 2020 New York Marathon is on 1 November. Find out more at nyrr.org



DIARY

Races in March, April and May

MARCH

RINGLAND HALF

Now in just its second year, this race sets off from the quirky Roarr Dinosaur Park, a children's adventure park. The route follows mostly quiet, narrow lanes through the Norfolk countryside. Marshalls are super-efficient and friendly – many of them dressed in dinosaur costumes to provide an added photo opportunity. All runners need to finish within three hours.



• Ringland, Norfolk, 1 March 2020, from £24, norwichroadrunners.co.uk

LURGAN PARK 5K AND 10K

Hundreds of runners come together to raise money for the local Southern Area Hospice. Now in its seventh year, runners speak highly of the amazing atmosphere, cheering supporters and friendly marshalls – as well as the high level of commercial sponsorship, which means that 100% of your entry fee can go to the charity.



• Lurgan, Northern Ireland, 1 March, from £7, search for Lurgan Park Fun Run on Facebook

RACE TO RECOVERY 10K

One of the best charity races in the running calendar. Participants include people who have

discovered that running can help their own recovery plus friends, family and runners who just want to keep active and raise money for a good cause. A great atmosphere and a brilliant way to showcase the positive health benefits of running. There is also a family 3K fun run where children and dogs are welcome.



- Ormeau Park, Belfast 8 March 2020, £20 for the 10K communityni.org/event/race-recovery-2020

APRIL ROUGH RUNNER LONDON SOUTH

Dig out the fluorescent Lycra leotard. This is your chance to pretend you are a competitor in the ITV's '90s show *Gladiators*. A game-show inspired obstacle course featuring challenges from *Total Wipeout*, *Gladiators*, *Fun House* and the Japanese TV cult programme *Takeshi's Castle*. Choose from 10K or 5K multi terrain running. Tackle 15 massive obstacles with slightly terrifying names such as 'sweeper's arms' and 'the traveler'.



- Morden Park, London, 18 and 19 April, from £30 roughrunner.com

MANCHESTER MARATHON

This is for you, if you love gigantic events with thousands of competitors and huge crowds. One of the biggest marathons in Europe with more than 25,000 runners, a new route will take the race into the heart of Manchester on a three-mile loop of the city centre. Look out for the city's landmarks including the Manchester Opera House, Spinningfields and the Albert Memorial Hall. The race starts near the iconic Manchester United's Old Trafford stadium.



- Manchester, 5 April, £65, manchestermarathon.co.uk

BLACKPOOL RUNNING FESTIVAL

Perfect for anybody who wants a quiet, low-key race where they can achieve a PB without anybody really noticing. Choose from 2K, 5K, 10K, half or full marathon. The mostly-flat, route is great for PB chasers and is well-marshalled and easy to follow with two laps out and back along Blackpool sea front.



- Blackpool sea front, 25 and 26 April, from £10.50 for 5K, runblackpool.co.uk

MAY BREWERY TRAIL 10K

Trail running and beer. What more could you want? A fun 10K around Chiltern Hills followed by a tour of Tring Brewery – including a free bottle of beer. Perfect for a team of friends. Enjoy the amazing scenery and off-road trail then bond over a beer after the race.



- Tring, Hertfordshire, 2 May, £25, runthewild.co.uk/adventures/detail/brewery-trail-run

BALFRON 10K

This is one the most sustainable events you can enter. Single-use plastics are banned and the goody bag is environmentally-friendly. Even the medals are made by a social enterprise. Enjoy a traffic-free route mostly along Scottish country roads along the Endrick valley with open views

to the river below and Campsie Hills beyond. Enter as an individual or new for 2020 is a team competition with a minimum of three members.



- Balfron, Stirlingshire, 3 May 2020, £20, balfron10k.org.uk

RAT RACE DIRTY WEEKEND

Billed as the 'biggest and best obstacle racing weekend in the world'. It's quite some claim and one of the most expensive races around, but with thousands of participants plus monster obstacles, festival-style camping, a lively after party and huge event village and campsite at Burghley House, it is huge fun.



- Burghley House, Stamford, 9 May 2020, around £164 (cheaper as a team), letsdothis.com/gb/e/rat-race-dirty-weekend-18025

BRIDPORT HALF, 5K & 10K

A small, friendly event that welcomes new runners. The half has a couple of tough hills and the 10K just one. All the races are a mix of flat and fast sections, including some running through town as well as on quiet roads and cycle paths. A safe, scenic route with lots of places for friends to cheer you on.



- Bridport, Dorset, 3 May, from £10 for 5K www.beyondevents.org.uk/

WHAT DID YOU RUN?

Email womensrunning@anthem-publishing.com



FOOTNOTES

Elizabeth 'Beth' Bonner discovered running in eighth grade, at a time when there were few opportunities for high school girls to run distance events. Up until the 1984 in Los Angeles, the marathon distance wasn't even in the Olympics. However, women were finally beginning to be recognised for finishing some of the major marathons. Beth helped pave the way.

During high school it was obvious Bonner had outstanding endurance as a runner, but she dipped her toe into middle distance running at first, competing in the 3,000m at the World Cross Country Championship in 1971.

She became a pioneer in the quest for women's equality in running, showing that females could cope with any distance, just like men. And raise the standard, too.

Beth graduated from high school in 1971 and enrolled at a junior college in Brandywine, Maryland, where she could continue distance training. During the same year she ran two world record-breaking marathons. First was a 3:01:41 in Philadelphia, and later she became the first woman to finish a marathon in less than three hours, when she won the New York City Marathon.

Beth Bonner

Credited as the first woman to run an official sub-three hour marathon, **Beth** set a historical first at the New York City Marathon in 1971

WORLD RECORDS

On May 9, 1971, teenager Beth Bonner ran a 3:01:42 marathon time in Philadelphia at the AAU Eastern Regional Championships, breaking the world best set one year earlier by Caroline Walker. On September 19, 1971, Bonner became the first winner of the women's division of the New York City Marathon at the age of 19, with her sub-three hour run.

Both of these history-making performances were at the age of just 19. In 1971, and again in 1972, she was selected to run for the US in the World Cross Country Championships where she became friends with, and was clearly inspired by, two-time Olympian and five-time World Cross Country Champion, Doris Brown Heritage. Doris had run for Seattle Pacific University and was still coached by Ken Foreman at the college. Beth decided to complete her

undergraduate studies at Seattle Pacific and enrolled in 1973.

After graduating from Seattle Pacific, Bonner decided to return home to teach English in Preston County schools, where she also coached.

Later she received a PhD from Auburn University in Alabama. She was teaching and coaching at Schreiner University in Kerrville, Texas, when she suffered a fatal bike accident and died in 1998, with the world of women's running losing a vital link to history.

An annual 5K run is held in her name in Arthurdale, West Virginia, inspiring future generations of women to take up their own running journey. 🏃‍♀️



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