

Cross Country

Why take up running?

Running....

- is the simplest, fastest, most accessible way to fitness and good health.
- is the quickest and most efficient means of weight loss.

An example is a 130 pound woman would burn 324 calories in a half an hour running 9 minutes per mile as compared with playing basketball, cycling 12-14 mph, or swimming (236 calories), rowing (206 calories), aerobics (177 calories) or playing volleyball (118 calories).

- reduces your risk of cardiovascular disease.
- lowers your heart rate and blood pressure.
- reduces your risk of stroke and some cancers.
- enhances your immune system and your respiratory system.
- prevents muscle and bone loss.
- gives you energy.
- reduces stress.
- elevates your mood.
- enhances creativity.

How does running enhance your immune system?

Researchers have found that we have higher concentrations of lymphocytes during and after exercise. Lymphocytes are white blood cells that attack disease-causing antigens.

What is a “runner’s high”?

Running causes the release of endorphins. These are our bodies’ natural painkillers. The harder and faster you run the more endorphins your body releases. Those same upswings in endorphin levels increase your ability to learn and remember.

What is good running form?

- Good posture. Imagine a big helium balloon attached to your head and pulling your body straight up.
- Look ahead, not at the ground.
- Arms bent at a 90-degree angle. Keep your arms relaxed and close to your body. On the back swing, your arms should pass your body at hip level. As they move forward they should cross your torso to about the midline of your chest.
- Relaxed hands (no fists). Imagine you are holding an egg in each hand as you run.

How do I prevent getting a stitch?

During a relaxed run you want to inhale for three steps and exhale for two steps. Inhalation should be relaxed, whereas exhalation is shorter and more forceful. For example:

Foot strike:
Left

Breathing pattern:
Inhale

Right	Inhale
Left	Inhale
Right	Exhale
Left	Exhale
Right	Inhale.....

When racing your breathing should switch to a 2:1 breathing ratio

How do I stay motivated?

- Think about how good you'll feel
- Choose a fun route
- Do speed work. Run at your normal pace for about 10 minutes then pick a point in the distance and run there as fast as you can, then slow back down and repeat.
- Run like a little kid. Don't make any rules. Don't take a watch. Run wherever your feet take you. Run fast, run slow. Stop and start. Keep going until you feel like stopping.
- Bargain with yourself. Tell yourself you will just go and if you feel crappy you will stop. Usually once you get warmed up you'll go farther than you anticipated.
- Go with a friend.
- Keep a training log.
- Set goals.
- Run to school.
- Try a treadmill.

What kind of shoes should I wear?

Before you decide what shoes to buy you have to look at your feet. Have a look at your old shoes. If wear is mostly on the inner side or the big toe you are an overpronator. Also, if you have flat feet or low arches you probably overpronate. Wear on the outside or by the little toe means you are an underpronator. Lastly, wear in the middle of your shoe means your foot motion is normal.

Overpronators: Motion control shoes.

- Rigid construction
- Firm midsole
- Often have a medial post built into the inner or arch side to stop your foot from rolling too far.
- Also good for heavier runners.

Underpronators: Cushioned Shoes

- Soft midsoles, good shock absorption
- Allow the greatest range of foot motion during running.

Normal pronators: Stability shoe

- Like motion control shoes but provide a bit more cushioning.

Runners who are normal pronators and are not prone to injury may want a lightweight training shoe. This is for the runner who is speed training or racing.