



HEALTHHAUS HEALTH & FITNESS TIPS AND TRICKS





TIPS AND TRICKS

All about the preparation

Congratulations – you have signed up to one of the biggest challenges there is & you have already done the scariest part – committing to do it!

The first thing to do is tell everyone you know about your decision – making yourself accountable will be a great motivator on the



nights/early mornings when you don't really feel like going out to train.

Now it is time to build a plan which will fit around the rest of your work and family commitments but which is also going to get you in condition to enjoy the day and enjoy the event. The more you can prepare, the more you can enjoy the day, but keeping a balance between overdoing the training and risking injury, versus not being prepared on the day is tricky to achieve, so try to take on some advice.

Schedule in your workout sessions

It is worth taking some time to work out your plan, and then try to stick to it as closely as possible. Be sure to factor in any holidays, although sadly not very likely currently! And other big events to avoid. If you can be an early riser and get your workouts done before the rest of the day gets in the way, then even better!

Be flexible with your workouts

Work and life in General will always throw up 'curveballs'. A plan is great & you should stick to it as much as possible, but when life throws up these obstacles, juggle your plan around as best you can – but if you miss 1 session, it wont ruin the big day!





Mental Preparation

Right from the start of training, it's important to visualize yourself crossing the finishing line and how that will feel. You also need to be ready for the fact that the last few miles will be the toughest, so you need to work on that never-say-die attitude as much as you need to work on your leg strength and speed!



Listen to your body

Preparation is key – the more you prepare, the more you will enjoy the day. HOWEVER – every runner experiences niggles & injuries at some stage – even Eliud Kipchoge! It is vitally important to listen to your body and take extra rest when you need to. A week or two of last training can be overcome – a small injury that turns into a serious one cannot! If you have to miss a little training, come back gradually and mix your training up with low impact exercise.

Warming up

Warming your body up is vital to reduce risk of injury and improving running performance, yet probably the most commonly overlooked and missed out part of any training. Mobility exercises for the muscles and joints with dynamic movement are key - save static stretching for after the run. Warming up will increase your core temperature, help the flow of blood reach the muscles required to work and gets you ready for the hard work ahead. You should aim to warm up for at least 10 minutes prior to your run to gain the benefits.





Fire those glutes!

The biggest muscle group in your body is your gluteal muscles (your bum!). Your bum is responsible for keeping your pelvis in the correct position and in particular when running during the single leg movement, to absorb the weight, momentum and power from the force of landing and pushing off with each foot. If your glutes are not activated or firing properly, then other body parts will have to compensate – most commonly leading to injuries and excessive tiredness of the quads, hip flexors and tight IT bands. The best way to counter this is by regularly exercising this muscle group;



Exercises to activate your bottom

Here are some exercises to incorporate into your warm up to get your glutes ready for your run:

- Single-leg glute bridge
- Side-Lying Clam Shell
- Lateral Band Walk
- Hamstring curls with the swiss ball
- Single Leg squats (to 30 degree bend)
- Squats with resistance Band
- Sumo Squats with Dumbbell
- Mix up and do 3 or 4 of the above in every strength session
– 3 * 12 reps on each leg/side.

Speed training

Even if you don't plan on running for any particular time goal, speed work is still key. Speed work helps strengthen your heart and improves your CV system (VO2 max reading if you have an advanced sports watch) to work and train harder. You will build power in your legs, improve Balance and proprioception and will train your nervous system and muscles to increase force





production with each stride. It will also help vary your training sessions, helping to prevent boredom & will help maintain a better running form,

Speed training suggestions

To include speed work in your training you can either focus on:

- Interval sprints on the treadmill or outdoors
- Hill Sprints
- 'Fartlek Training'
- Join a HIIT class

Incorporate the following explosive exercises in your workout routine:



- Jump squats
- Box jumps
- Knee Tuck Jumps

Your aim is to work on short and intense bursts of exercises at maximum ability and include recovery phases in between.

Key strength exercises

As a runner it is important to work on your strength and get strong before working on specific running technique exercises.

Here are some key exercises to focus on to build your strength:

- Squat (various types - body weight or with Dumbbells/Barbell)
- Deadlift
- Single leg exercises e.g. single leg deadlifts
- Step ups
- Push movements e.g. press ups
- Pull movement e.g. pull ups
- Core e.g. plank, russian twist, woodchops
- Back extensions





Key strength exercises for runners

When running, most of your time is hopefully spend in the air, but when you are in contact with the ground – it is on one leg at a time, so the importance of doing single leg exercises is clear! Building strength, and mimicking running leg movement is key. Exercises include:

- Single leg squats
- Single leg deadlifts
- Single leg calf raises
- Single leg glute bridges



- These specific exercises will isolate the glutes, hamstrings, quadriceps and calves on each side as well as improving balance.

Additional exercises for runners: core exercises & more

A weak core can lead to poor running form and in turn increases the likelihood of injury. Core exercises are great for building strength and stability to help with your running form. As running is a dynamic movement it is important to incorporate similar patterns to replicate the running movement:

- Abs cycles
- Russian Twists
- Wood chop
- Dead bugs
- Bird dog

Key areas to bear in mind when running:

Focus on your stride - Ensure your landing foot is positioned under your body and not ahead otherwise you are over striding.





Don't pound the pavement heavy footed - Aim to land as lightly as possible, the less time you have on the ground, the faster you will move.

Cycle your legs - Drive your heel to your bum and hamstrings and work through a cycling motion, this will shorten your stride length. Some of us are prone to just flick our heels up and therefore not create a proficient stride.

Arms are as important as your legs - Your arms create the speed, balance and rhythm, followed by your legs - your arms should



move from 'chin to back pocket', forwards and backwards with elbows tucked in.

Try not to change everything at once, work on each technique and build on it each time you run.

Training terms explained

You may have come across various running terms but have no idea what they mean and why we do them. Here is a summary on a few types of running you can include in your training:

Fartlek - This means 'speed play' in Swedish and is a type of conditioning that applies stress to the aerobic and anaerobic systems. The intensity and speed will vary when doing this type of running making it fun, interesting and not monotonous. This style can be done on any terrain and you can decide the amount of times you change up the intensity as long as you stick to the total time planned for the session.

Hill training - As it reads, running uphill is a great style of training. Try and vary the types of hills from short, medium and long. Hill climbs will help with speed, power, endurance and require a real focus on technique. Try not to lean forward into the hill, instead run tall, drive your arms and lift your knees up high.





Interval training - This is repetitive intense work periods followed by a recovery section. Interval training helps you prepare for bursts of intense work or stress when running and will improve the efficiency of the heart. The fast and intense stress on the body will help you get faster and can be done on any terrain.

Tempo /Threshold run - Tempo runs will prepare your body at a pace that is just outside of your comfort zone. These runs will improve your anaerobic or lactate threshold and should be at a pace which is comfortably hard! The style will help you get through those tough times and enhance your stamina.



Stretching

Stretching should be completed after running and not before, focus on static stretches held for 30 secs to feel the benefits.

Stretching should not be painful, the purpose should be to increase flexibility and relax your muscles. Make sure you stretch the key areas:

- Glutes Hamstrings
- Quads
- Calves
- Adductors
- Hip flexors
- Chest
- Upper back

The countdown to race day!

When you are a couple of weeks out from the big day you will need to start reducing your mileage and focus on resting your body. Your muscles need to fully recover from the extensive training you have undertaken. Decreasing the length and intensity of your runs will prevent you from getting injured and prepare your body for race day. Swapping some of your runs for none impact sports like indoor cycling and swimming is a great way to maintain fitness, but allow your running specific muscles





to rest and recover. (This will also help with the frustration you will feel at this point and your desire to get out there and run!)

Race day!

Remember to smile and take in every moment, you have worked incredibly hard to get yourself to that start line. Especially if this is your first marathon, this is a day and an achievement you will remember for the rest of your life! Write a list of all of your kit needed for the day at least a week before – and check everything twice the day before and ask a partner or friend to do the same –



the more you can do to rest easy and not stress the night before the better!

Arrive early and find somewhere to sit and relax – nervous energy on the day can really sap your energy reserves.

Perhaps most important of all - don't do anything on race day which is different to the routine you have practiced on your long runs already. DO not change your nutrition plan last minute, and definitely do not treat yourself to new kit or running shoes for the big day – 26.2 miles is long enough already – doing it with blisters is not something you want to have to face!

Trust your training – either you have prepared really well and you have got this covered, or you haven't and it will be a long day ahead – either way, you can't change anything now so save energy, stick to plan and enjoy what you can..... it will be a day to remember one way or the other!

