



Your

Wellbeing

Issue six 2021

Running: setting off on the right foot.



In this issue

Running is a great way to keep fit while enjoying the great outdoors. But before you head out for your first run, it helps to be prepared.



Running can reduce your risk of long-term illnesses, such as heart disease, high blood pressure and type 2 diabetes. It's also great for your mental health, as it can help to relieve stress and may even boost your mood.

But while going for a run sounds simple, it's not always easy, especially if you're a beginner. If you're not used to exercise, you'll need to build up gradually so that your body has time to adapt. Doing too much too soon could make you more likely to get injured.

Getting started

- Decide on the best time of day to begin your new running routine.
- Start off by going for brisk walks and increase your pace as your fitness improves.
- Over a few outings, slowly add in some short periods of running. Run for a bit, walk for a bit, and then run again when you feel ready.
- Gradually increase your running pace and distance, until you don't need to walk to recover anymore.



Ideally, aim to run two or three times a week to improve your fitness and stamina. Think about what works for you and set yourself simple, realistic goals. You may find it helps to follow a set training programme at first. Aim to find the right one to suit your fitness level. This can help you build up your time, distance and speed.

[Bupa's walk to run 5km programme](#) is the perfect programme if you're just starting out.



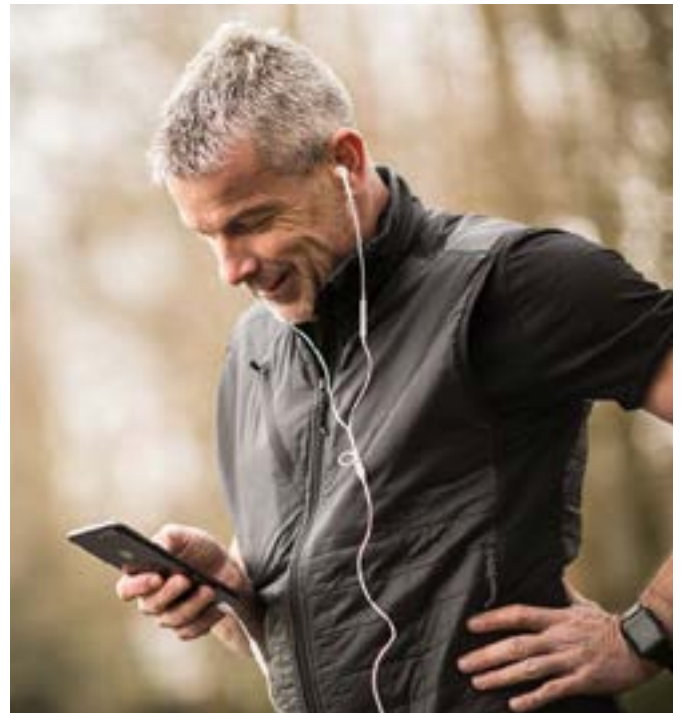
Staying motivated

Plan when and where to run, jotting down the details in your diary or phone, so you don't forget.

It might be helpful to print out your running plan and stick it on your fridge or somewhere it's easy to see. Keep track of your progress by logging when you run, your route, the distance, the weather and how you felt afterwards. There are lots of great apps to help you do this.

Add variety to keep your runs fresh and exciting – plan and explore new running routes in your local area. If possible, head out when the weather is good to reduce your risk of injury.

You may find it easier to keep running regularly if you run with someone else. Find a local running group or ask a friend to join you, socially distanced. If you're on your own, listening to a podcast, audiobook or music while you run may help keep you motivated and entertained. But make sure you're still aware of what's going on around you to keep safe.



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Replace your trainers
as they wear out.



Listening to your body

Most running injuries are caused by overuse or too much pressure on your legs, especially on your knees, lower legs and ankles. You're more prone to injuries when you start any new form of exercise, but running on uneven or hilly surfaces increases your risk of injury.

- Make sure you're wearing comfortable trainers that suit your feet and specific running style.
- Give yourself rest days – don't go for a run every day.
- Always warm up before you run and cool down afterwards.
- Replace your trainers as they wear out.
- Make sure you stay hydrated before and after your run.

Keeping safe

Dos

- **DO tell someone when and where you'll be running** – always carry some identification and your phone.
- **DO wear the right clothes.**
If it's dark outside, wear reflective clothing. If it's cold or wet, wear layers (including a waterproof and windproof jacket, gloves and a woolly hat). If it's warm and sunny, wear sunglasses, sun cream and a cap.
- **DO watch out for cars** – always run facing the traffic.

Don'ts

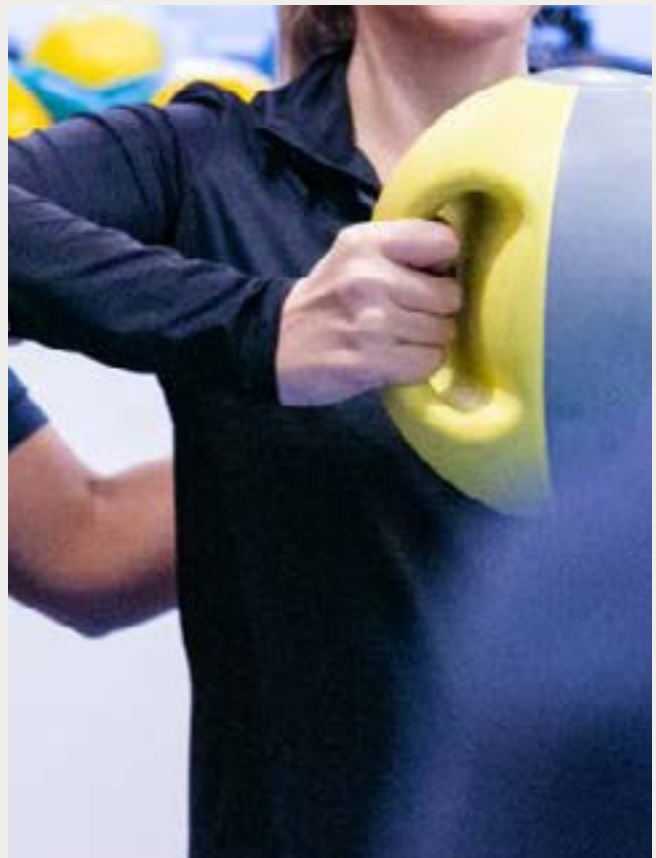
- **DON'T begin a running programme if you have any long-term health conditions** (such as asthma or joint problems) without speaking to your GP first.
- **DON'T go for a run if you're tired or in pain.**
- **DON'T run in remote areas,** especially if you're running alone.

Hear from our experts



Karen Gambardella,
Bupa Physiotherapist

To reduce your risk of injury when running, consider doing other forms of exercise alongside your running programme. This may include strengthening exercises, such as squats, a core stability programme or using a cross-trainer. These exercises build strength and can improve your running performance.”



Keep running

Choosing a running plan to suit your fitness level can help to keep you motivated and injury-free. If you do injure yourself, it's important to stop exercising and give yourself time to recover. If your symptoms haven't cleared up after five to seven days, get some medical advice or see a physiotherapist.

Bupa Running Hub

Visit [Bupa's running hub](#). The free running training plans can help you get the best out of your running. From 5k to marathon, beginner to advanced, we've got a plan to suit you.



Bupa Knee Clinic

The [Bupa Knee Clinic](#) can help you find information and support if you've injured your knee or have a long-term knee problem.



Chartered Society of Physiotherapy

The [Chartered Society of Physiotherapy](#) is a charitable organisation offering advice on exercising without injury and the role of physiotherapists.



Upgrade your running routine with Fitbit devices

All Fitbit devices come equipped with 'Active Zone Minutes,' which uses your resting heart rate to set you personalised target heart rate zones to hit during exercise. Your device tracks how long you spend in each target zone, and updates your targets as you progress.

You'll see how your efforts add up and whether you're meeting the World Health Organisation's recommendation for 150 minutes of moderate activity or 75 minutes of vigorous activity per week.

