

personaltrainer

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Running to better shape

For marathons or morning jogs, now is the time to get going with these helpful tips

IT WAS around this time last year that I decided I would take my running to a higher level. Being a Personal Trainer, I was active and fit, but I wasn't an avid runner. I had done some 10ks here and there, but I wasn't serious about it. I was more of an exercise class kinda gal, I love the music and the atmosphere in classes.

Unfortunately, my leap into the running world wasn't powered by a desire to help a worthy cause or conquer personal demons; it was a lot more selfish than that.

I got married in May 2012 and had heard so many people talk about the post wedding blues and how you feel lost after months of wedding preparation. I knew I needed to get a focus and I figured a marathon was as good an option as any!

So I signed up, started training and never looked back. I am now one of those people who loves running; I hated those people this time last year, so I understand if you want to throw the paper in the bin, but please wait! If there is any part of you that wants to try to run, more than just for the bus, please read on...

Running is not about marathons, it isn't necessarily about races at all. I love running because it is personal. You run the distance you feel, as fast as you want, when and where you choose. There are no

choreographed moves to follow or reps to complete; it is your personal space. Don't be turned off by people talking about races and paces, we are all running for different reasons and that's ok!

With my running clients I find the biggest obstacle to overcome is your mind. Once you silence those voices, you are on the road. We tend to set limits for ourselves, sometimes without even realising!

I used to say "I can't do more than 35 minutes or my knee problem starts to kick in". I went as far as to invent a knee problem! Similarly, on week one of my 10k running class I heard every fearful excuse under the sun, "I can only do 20 minutes," "5k really was my max, I won't be able to keep up."

Every one of those girls ran 6.5km in week one and all lived to tell the tale. They had no choice but to silence the voices (they couldn't hear them over my whistle!!).

If you want to run, you can, you just need to set realistic goals and get a running plan that fits in with your life so that you can give yourself the best chance. Here are a few things to remember when setting out on what can be one of the most liberating and rewarding journeys of your life:

GET THE RIGHT GEAR

The first thing I would recommend you do is get Gait Analysis done.



Most of the big sports shops do this. It takes 5 minutes and will make a world of difference to your running.

Your running style is assessed so that the right trainer can be selected for you. The right running shoes are so important as they can maximise your performance, as well as minimise the risk of injury

such as shin splints and painful knees, hips, and lower back.

PICK A PLAN

Decide on what you want to achieve, whether it's run 3k or 30k it doesn't matter. You just need to have a focus, otherwise you will give up on the bad days, and there

will be a few of those. Once you have your goal then you need a plan. The internet has thousands of plans, there are apps you can download or ask a fitness professional for a custom-made running schedule for you. You need this to ensure you train safely and effectively so that you will progress and keep you motivated.

GO SLOW

This is the biggest mistake for beginners. My runners always bolt on week one, and then they learn! It is not about the pace, at the beginning it is about the distance.

If you are starting off you want to get the muscles in your legs, and your lungs, accustomed to this new form of exercise.

The most important thing is DO NO STOP! Even if you are running slower than the walkers, who cares, just run! Your pace will increase naturally, so be patient and stick to the plan.

HAVE FUN

If you can, train somewhere that you like, the beach, a park, a forest. I run most of the time in the park and I just love it, my surroundings take my mind off the pain! I also run regularly with a friend, we call it Therapy Thursday, we try to solve the problems of the world while running, it's great fun!

Trust me, when you pull on those trainers and get out there, you will discover a world that will help improve your mental and physical health, and that will give you great satisfaction and sense of achievement.

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