

The onset of autumn, although still warm at times on a good day, brings those cooler crisp mornings and evenings. Whether you are a recreational runner just getting out there and enjoying yourself, or a more competitive runner hoping to use this time of year as a springboard to next year's goals, here are some tips to ponder.

Three Autumn Training Tips

1. Get yourself off the beaten track

Autumn is a great time to explore the parks and trails near you. The changing cycle of the seasons brings new smells and experiences, whether you live in the town or the country, as the leaves start to fall and that first heavy dew is felt early in the morning. Take an evening to pore over a few maps and plan a few new weekend routes in areas you haven't been to for a while.

2. Try cross country

If you're a club runner, you will know all about the joys and benefits of cross country events. They help to build strength and stamina, and if your long-term goal is to improve your road times at any distance, the benefits of a cross country season will show through in the spring. If you feel an urge to try cross country, check out your local club or running group who will have details of all the local events. If cross country sounds too extreme or serious, then check out the growing number of trail and multi-terrain events which also help to build strength and stamina.

3. Stick with it

If you are just a recreational runner who has no desire at all to enter a race, that is fine, running is still one of the easiest and simplest ways of keeping fit. If you run regularly through spring and summer, but tend to question why you run, as soon as the days shorten for fear of getting cold and wet, remember you have three choices:

- **A)** You can carry on as normal and still hibernate and not run a step till the spring (not good).
- **B)** You can buy a treadmill for your garage or spare room, or hit the gym.
- **C)** You can discover that well-known Scandinavian expression "there is no such thing as bad weather, just the wrong clothing", and with a small investment even in some basic winter running kit, you can see that autumn running can be just as exhilarating in its own way, as you kick up those autumn leaves.

Three Autumn Kit Tips

1. Check out your autumn/winter wardrobe

Is all last year's kit still fine, or does it need one or two additions? If you are new to running and want to keep running through the autumn and winter months, as it gets cooler in the mornings and evenings, you will need to put on an extra layer.

2. Remember the accessories

On colder mornings, that first few minutes when you get out of the door, are when you will feel the chill. Lightweight hat and gloves will help you cope with this.

3. Are you visible?

With the shortening days, just make sure you are safe. There are many hi-vis tops and jackets in our clothing ranges and reflective accessories and head torches to help you see and be seen.

So no need to think that autumn is a time to ease back on your running, whatever your standard, and whatever your goals. Many runners find autumn the most exhilarating time of the year to run, whether you are just trying to keep up a gentle 3-4 day a week routine, or starting to lay the foundations for a spring event. Enjoy yourselves this autumn.
