

TOP TEN WINTER RUNNING TIPS

Winter is here: it's cold, the days are short and the evenings dark. This can mean some of us need a bit of extra motivation to keep us running, or at least to do more than the minimum. There are all sorts of reasons to enjoy winter running: from knowing you'll be fitter next summer, to getting new warm gear, to enjoying the clear crisp winter days when we get them. Here is a list of 10 tips from our staff on how we motivate ourselves over the winter months.

1. Make the Most of Daylight

Some of us like running in the dark, but if not, run as much as possible during the day: during lunchtimes and weekends. Utilise off-road routes for pretty scenery: beaches, trails and hills. It's also a couple of degrees warmer in the daytime!

2. Plan a Weekend Away

Who doesn't have fun on a trip away? Choose somewhere you've never been and explore new running routes, or re-visit a favourite area you know well and enjoy running in.

3. Enter a Spring Race

From 5k to a marathon or triathlon, give yourself a goal to train for throughout the winter. Challenge yourself to run a different distance, or choose a race you've not run before. Or if your favourite race is in spring, try a new training plan to build up to it this year. Newness will bring freshness and enthusiasm into your running!

4. Be Adaptable to the Elements

When the weather is really bad, take the opportunity to do strength conditioning in the gym or at home. Do workouts on CV equipment such as elliptical trainers or take a spinning class. Or adjust your training schedule and realise the weather might not be ideal for a hard tempo session, but fine to just go out for a run. You will become stronger running in adverse conditions and the feeling of 'I didn't miss my run' is great!

5. You CAN Run in Snow!

Okay, you do have to be very careful some days, and sheet ice is a different situation. Most of all, stay safe, and use commonsense. Go easy if you're not used to it. There are plenty of trail or fell shoes with grippier treads to stop you slipping about too much. When it's icy we have found **Get-a-grip** soles very good. These slip over your regular road or trail shoes and have small spikes to grip the ice. You may find you run a little slower than usual, but that's a chance to maybe enjoy the pretty snowy views 😊

6. Find Friends to Run With in the Dark

If you're not keen on running in the dark, run with a friend. Kit yourselves out with plenty of reflective gear so you can be seen and feel safer. If your friends don't run, then make some new running friends by joining a local running group or club.

7. Get Warm Winter Running Clothes

There is a huge and exciting range of technical clothing for running in winter, so don't be scared of the weather, just get the right kit and you'll be fine. Ideal items to invest in would be a **thermal base layer**, a **running jacket**,

lycra tights, hat and gloves. As running clothing wicks away the sweat from your body to keep you warm and dry, it also dries quickly overnight after washing so you don't need to buy a whole new wardrobe if it's your first winter of running.

8. Inspire Yourself with a Running Book

There are hundreds to choose from – fascinating biographies, training advice (**Running is Easy** by Bruce Tulloh has something for everyone), different approaches to running (**Born to Run** covers the barefoot running phenomenon).

9. Give Yourself a Treat

If you've put in a good week's training or just finished a longer run and can't face cooking, go out for Sunday brunch or afternoon cake at your favourite café. Food is an important part of recovery! Don't forget to drink plenty in winter too – it may be cold but you're still losing fluid through sweat.

10. Plan Quality Rest After a Long Run

One staff member's approach is to work on equal running versus chill time. 2 hours of running equates to 2 hours of guilt-free time on the sofa with a movie or book afterwards. A great thought to help you through your last mile or two!

Have fun. And if you really don't like winter running, then remember every day that passes is one closer to spring...