



Search: this site only Welcome! Join or login now

[home](#) [your career](#) [your health](#) [your money](#) [your relationships](#) [your family](#) [your escapes](#) [your looks](#)

Latest in YOUR HEALTH

your health

FEATURE ARTICLES

- Get a Hold On Your Heart
- Single Women and Health Insurance: Between a Rock and a Hard Place

[full archive](#)

WEEKLY COLUMNS

- Home Alone: Should You Call 911?
- How NOT to Run Like a Girl
- Massage Therapy: Why You Knead It

[full archive](#)

ASK THE EXPERTS

- The Environment and Breast Cancer: What's the Connection?
- Wellness Coaching Your Way to Health
- Is There Such a Thing as a Good Carb?

[full archive](#)

COMMUNITY FORUMS

LATEST POST

How NOT to Run Like a Girl

Add your voice to our community by posting your comments on this article.

The Firm

WEEKLY COLUMN

How NOT to Run Like a Girl
Health Advice

By Martin Brown, posted 6/11/2008 at 1:35:48 AM



A couple of weeks ago at the gym, I was on the treadmill blissfully walking the road to nowhere when a woman stopped at a machine next to mine. I notice that she was carrying a large designer bag. I also noticed that she was wearing four-inch open toed platform heels. Out of the bag she pulled a bottle of water, a towel, a Sidekick, and a book. She took several minutes arranging everything. I kept glancing over wondering when or if she was going to put on some running shoes—

But she didn't.

To my amazement, she stepped onto the treadmill in those platform shoes and began walking at a brisk pace.

I winced, wondering when and if she would fall on her face. Fortunately she was petite, so that hopefully helped to minimize whatever damage she was doing to her angles, feet, and other body parts.

Running is the most fun you can have while partially clothed. While I do 10 or 15 minutes on a treadmill to warm-up my muscles before a workout, I think there are few simple pleasures more enjoyable than a brisk walk or a slow steady jog. On a beautiful day when the sun is warm and the air is moving on the wings of a cool breeze you can feel your spirits lifting right out of your shoes.

The best part is that you're burning calories and strengthening your heart and lungs, and toning your legs and butt all at the same time. When you get to the part where you experience your first runner's high, you'll never again doubt the wisdom of your grandmother's advice that "the best things in life are free."

But to get out there and do it, and most importantly to keep at it five times a week, there are seven important tips that you should keep in mind.

1. "Don't run like a girl!" means focus on the task at hand: running, not making a fashion statement, or trying to impress anyone else.

I suppose this phrase can mean different things to different people. To me it means that *running is not a fashion statement*. That said, no designer bags or platform shoes are needed, but real running shoes, a real sports bra, and real running shorts are: this means breathable materials, as opposed to those that don't let the air circulate to your pores. Run like you mean it. Sweat is the currency of your effort. Don't be afraid of it let it show.

Whether you're a petite, or an extra large, it doesn't matter that you bulge in all the wrong places—right now. Take heart: this new running habit of yours is going to make quick work of any extra pounds you're currently carrying.

2. Shoes do matter.

Every respectable sports retailer wants runners with happy feet. If your shoes don't measure up, don't force your feet to go to a place they don't like.

I love a bargain, perhaps as much as you do, but running shoes are not the place to go cheap. That doesn't mean you have to go to Niketown and blow \$250 on a pair of shoes. Somewhere between \$49 and \$69 should land you in a pair of New Balance, Nike, or other reliable shoe that will give you a good start. If when you get on the track those shoes don't feel right, *bring them back in and get another pair*.

3. Measure your progress.

I find a great way to start is to pick a nearby high school track, and start with running whatever distance you can comfortably do. If that's a quarter of the track, a third, or one or more times around, that's fine.

When you have reached your comfortable distance, don't push yourself into *discomfort*. Rather, walk for an equal distance to what you just ran, and then start to jog again. This run, jog, walk, style allows your body to adjust to a pace that is right for your weight and current level of fitness. The track is a measured distance and it allows you to mark your progress during these first couple of weeks.

4. Pace yourself.

Remember, the object in these early days of running is to get out and to start moving. Consider if you can doing it in the morning and evening in those first five days so that your body continues to grow comfortable with the new demands you are putting upon it. Remember also that the only person you are competing with is yourself. I don't care if a star athlete is out on the same track doing trial runs. You're doing a pace that feels right for *you*. The object is to be able to do this again the next day and the day after that. That won't happen if you injure yourself on your first day out.

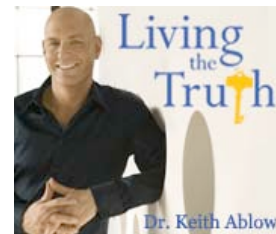
5. Get out and explore the open road.

After two to four weeks on a measured track let your feet point you to the open road for it is there that the real joy of running is found. Are you an urban dweller? That's okay, there are safe routes on quieter streets. Get in your car and find some of those routes or go online to a local runner's chat group and see what routes are popular. Try measuring the approximate distance by car and then see if you can jog two miles without taking a walk break. But break if you need to. Soon you will master that distance and be able to do much more.

6. Beware of injury inducing trails!

All the time I see twenty- and thirtysomethings running down steep grades or a rocky trail. *Bad idea*. Both are likely to bring you to grief. The steep downhill put far too much pressure on your ankles, hips and knees. The rocky terrain only needs to twist your ankle once for you to regret having taken the road less traveled. When terrain is unsafe, slow down and walk through it. Your body may want to keep going at a faster pace, but sometimes your mind has to exercise the caution that your body is unwilling to take.

Further, be mindful of the reality that more than half of us were not built to be runners. Between flat feet, bad knees, pigeon-toed posture, and much more, all athletes were not created equal. Over a few months, or a few years, you may discover that your running days are numbered. If that's the case, walk, bike, or swim. Nearly all of us have some way to keep moving, and your heart and mind will thank you for doing just that.



The **FIRM**



[Running women - For Women](#)
We design running programs for both beginners and veterans. Learn More.
[RunningForWomen.com](#)

[adidas® Season End Sale](#)
50% Off Over 1,000 Products! Save on Men's Running Shoes
[www.shopadidas.com](#)

Ads by Google

FEATURED SPECIAL OFFERS

SoyJoy.com
Visit Soy.Joy.com to print coupons for \$1 off one bar and \$2 off five bars.

eDiets.com
Get a free diet analysis that tells you which of more than 22 weight-loss plans is right for you.
[see more special offers](#)

advertise with **single minded women**
[click for info]

7. You run for the long term benefit, not the short-term high.

When a strained muscle, or a busy travel schedule does not allow you to lace up and go, don't freak out. Take a deep breath and relax into the assurance that before long you will run again. Running is not an all or nothing proposition. It can be addicting and that's why you'll miss it on days when you can't run. But, remember why you got into running in the first place, to create a healthier and happier you. A few days off won't end that dream. Take your running in stride and you'll always land on your feet.

More SMW Health Advice

The Yoga Glow

Choosing Fitness: Running or Walking?

Affordable Fitness: How to Work Out at Home



Recent Forum Postings.

No Forum Entries Found.

[Read the entire forum here](#)