

RaceTimes

**CHASING
BOSTON!**

**What does
it take to
qualify?**

**RACING
EDITION**

**Eating Out
HEALTHY
Made Easy!**

RACE DAY RITUALS

Do they really work?

RUN SMARTER NOT HARDER!
Tips for sharpening your runner's edge



editor's note



9ROUND STRONG!

With the new year rapidly approaching, you'll soon be bombarded with advertisements and incentives for fitness goals and resolutions. I have to admit that I got sucked in last year. I was tired of going to my local gym and wasting my time. I never stayed as long as I wanted nor was I as productive as I could be; I needed a fresh start.

I came across this kickboxing gym called 9Round that claimed to make you stronger in 30 minutes, physically and mentally. The best part about the workout program was no start times. Workouts start every three minutes. There are 9 Rounds, three minutes each. Each round focuses on something different: cardio, strength training, kickboxing, and then you end every session with abs. This high-intensity, full-body workout is only 30 minutes, but you can burn up to 500 calories per session. It's the perfect solution for busy parents that don't have time to spend even an hour at the gym. No matter how busy you are, you probably can find 30 minutes to spare, either before or after work.

My first workout was exhilarating but exhausting. The instructor told me at about 2 o'clock the next afternoon I would feel like I was coming down with the flu. Boy was she right! I felt awful, but it soon passed and I came back for another workout later that week.

Starting a new program at a new gym was both intimidating and scary; I was terrified to walk into that gym the first day. I had no idea what to expect and who I would meet, but I was greeted by friendly owners and soon started to feel like family. The reward has proven to outweigh the risk. Now here I am almost a year later stronger than ever, both physically and mentally.

Finding a new gym saved me. I've lost 10 lbs this year. It has allowed me to have more confidence in myself, wind down from work, and let the stresses of the day go. Sometimes you just need to punch something! Maybe you're like me and looking for a fresh start or need to hit the reset button on your cross-training routine. It's a new year with new possibilities. Start out 2020 with guns blazing and no regrets.

Kirsten Capuano
Co-Editor of RaceTimes

in this issue

1. Chasing Boston: The Journey to 26.2

Colin Hackman is a 3-time Boston Marathon finisher who has qualified for 2020. Once again, he will chase Boston and offers some tips and advice for those looking to land this legendary marathon.

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CHASING BOSTON: THE JOURNEY TO 26.2



AN INTERVIEW WITH COLIN HACKMAN,
A BOSTON MARATHON 3-TIME FINISHER.



26.2

Colin Hackman might look familiar to those who watch the weather report on channel 6 in Wilmington, NC. He's a part-time television broadcast meteorologist that chases storms. Colin has a charming personality paired with a witty sense of humor, so it's no wonder he has quite the social media following. The 43-year-old business owner, husband, and father was raised in Wilmington, and has been running there since he was the captain of the Hoggard High School Track Team in the mid 1990's. He coaches youth athletes and runs a summer cross-country training camp in the mountains of North Carolina. Adding to his list of credentials, Colin is an avid runner and will be participating in his fourth Boston Marathon this coming spring.

We sat down with Colin to ask him about his running routine and how he prepares for one of the most sought-after races in the world.

WHY DO YOU RUN?

It's who I am. It's arguably who we all are. Two million years of bipedal evolution. Our ancestors, out of necessity, adapted the specialization of thermoregulation and anatomical stabilization as the perfect long range running machine. I'm just honoring them, and myself. But for real? I just love the sport. What could be greater than bettering yourself?

WHAT DO YOU DO WHEN YOU'RE NOT RUNNING?

I manage Go Time Race Timing and Event Management. Our company services some of the largest events in the Carolinas. The Battleship Half Marathon, The Wilmington Marathon, The Susan G. Komen Race for the Cure event in Cary, NC to name a few. I am committed to service work in our community and assist as a board member for several local nonprofit boards and government boards. I also enjoy wakeboarding, golfing and hanging with my family.

WHAT CROSS TRAINING DO YOU INCORPORATE INTO YOUR RUNNING ROUTINE IF ANY?

In the summertime I don't usually schedule races as I like to wakeboard. Specific cross training for me is rare. I like to jump on the trampoline a couple times a week with my school-aged daughter. That helps some with strength and flexibility.

WHAT METHODS DO YOU USE TO HELP PREVENT INJURIES?

Trails. I have always preferred trail running to road running. Perhaps a kickback to my cross-country running roots, or perhaps something more primitive. Research and my own experimentation have shown me the best way to prevent overuse injury is for me to get off of the hard surfaces. On a typical training week I probably spend 80% of my running off road. Sure, I dip on to the track once a week, and I typically will do a prep race and a couple of long runs on the roads, but day in and out I'm on the trails.

WHAT RACE HAS MEANT THE MOST TO YOU AND WHY?

Without a doubt the Boston Marathon. As a race manager, an athlete, a spectator – it is the race by which all others are measured.

WHAT'S YOUR FASTEST MARATHON TIME?

2:54 – Rock and Roll New Orleans
2:55 – Boston

WHAT IS YOUR WEEKLY MILEAGE IN PEAK MARATHON TRAINING SEASON? AND WHAT'S YOUR MILEAGE IN YOUR OFF SEASON?

I'm a bit ebb and flow here. My mileage during the twenty or so weeks leading up to the Boston Marathon usually peaks with volume at about 70 to 80 miles per week. But one of the things I have done to stay healthy is take a long break after each marathon cycle. For example, my last two marathons I took over a month off after each - with zero running. Not a step. I believe as we age, our bodies need the extra rest to fully heal. Typical off-season mileage runs between 25 and 40 miles per week.

WHEN YOU STARTED RUNNING, WAS QUALIFYING FOR THE BOSTON MARATHON ALWAYS YOUR GOAL? IF NOT, WHAT MADE YOU DECIDE TO GO FOR IT?

Honestly I always considered myself a shorter distance guy. In high school my best 1600m run was 4:28. That was good for a conference championship and to be in top 20ish in NC. But my 5k times, then and now, aren't as good. I have never run faster than 17:00. So on paper I was much better at the short stuff than the longer high school events. In adult life the 5k was always easy, because there always was another event right around the corner and I could hold my own against the other weekend warriors. I could get away with not training and still run in the high 17:00s. Then in 2012 I was sent to cover the US Olympic Marathon Trials in Houston for the NBC News station I work for. Our hometown harrier Christa Iammarino had qualified for the trials. I was enthralled by the competition and the stories. The following spring the Boston Marathon Bombing happened. Like many others watching the coverage I wanted to push back, to stand with Boston. I wanted to stand with our sport and the goodness it brings the world. I ran my first marathon the following year.

WHAT ARE YOUR TOP TRAINING TIPS FOR PREPARING FOR BOSTON? DO YOU TRAIN FOR OTHER RACES DIFFERENTLY?

It's really the only race I train for every year. Here the coastal North Carolina climate makes for good winter training, so a spring marathon like Boston is much easier to prepare for. The summer training – not so much. The key to distance running of any type is consistency. No one workout or single block will make or break a distance runner. Success is founded from the yeoman's work of chopping wood and carrying water every day. That's what builds success. As a coach I have seen first hand the rewards of consistency. It trumps all else in our sport.

WHAT KEEPS YOU MOTIVATED TO TRAIN?

I am in love with running and the things it teaches me about myself. Every race that I train for and each competition that I enter, I'm given the opportunity to learn more about myself. I don't train to perform because it is easy, I do it because it is hard. There is great joy for me in acquiring a goal that doesn't seem possible.

IF YOU HIT THE DREADED “WALL” DURING A MARATHON, WHAT DO YOU DO TO PULL YOURSELF THROUGH?

Preparing for the inevitable fact of suffering is, for me, all about mental callousing. I've learned in racing marathons there will be a point that, regardless of physical preparation, it is tough. Sometimes it comes and goes in waves; one minute I'm about to quit, the next I feel not entirely terrible. Sometimes it hits like a freaking freight train and it takes intense focus to stay on pace. But either way it's coming. Putting myself in the pain cave a few times during workouts and suffering some in prep races during the build for Boston prepares me mentally for the internal argument that accompanies the suffering. The will to press on in a marathon is a byproduct of having had to recently do it in simulated circumstances. Mentally being ready to suffer in the moments when it counts separates the good from the great.

WHAT'S YOUR BIGGEST PIECE OF ADVICE FOR OTHER RUNNERS HOPING TO QUALIFY FOR BOSTON?

Consistency is key. Never let a single session (or season) define you as an athlete. Boston is a worthy and honorable pursuit. The key to making it – with the age graded qualification standards – is to stay healthy for a lifetime. Another key aspect for me has been having a coach and a training group. I joined the Without Limits training program, popular here in the Carolinas, back in 2010. There I get personalized coaching and I am held accountable to a group of other runners setting and acquiring performance goals. No athlete serious about becoming better goes at it alone. Training with a coach and team makes a big difference.

WHAT DO YOU LOOK MOST FORWARD TO AFTER CROSSING THE FINISH LINE?

Boston's finish is unlike any in the world. As you take a left on Boylston Street you can see the finish a half mile ahead. For me it's the moment I can finally smile. Each year the four or five miles before Boylston Street have been very difficult. So turning that corner, both metaphorically and literally, is a huge relief.

WHAT'S YOUR FAVORITE PRE- AND POST-RACE MEAL?

Boston is unique in that it starts a little later in the morning, so there is time for breakfast. For me that's a small bowl of cereal and a half gallon of water. My ultra-marathon training buddy Ed George got me on a night before race day regimen of brown rice and lightly fried egg. It has prevented any GI issues on race day. We stay with our good friends in Boston. Every year after the race we get lobsters and Wegman's pies. God I love pie. It's such an awesome experience.

IS THERE A SPECIFIC RACE STILL ON YOUR BUCKET LIST?

I suppose having knocked off a couple of the World Majors (Boston, New York) perhaps I would want to do more of those. But, as an event owner and manager I would really LOVE to run some of the events we put on. The Battleship Half Marathon in November is probably one of the best events on the planet. Am I allowed to say that? Not biased at all, but our team over delivers on participant experience. I would love to run this 2000 person hometown half-marathon with all of my friends. But as the event managers our team is deep into production with a great responsibility and honor to serve athletes and help them achieve their goals. Other bucket list experiences for me would be the Comrades Marathon, UTMB, City2Surf and Western States.



How to *Sharpen* Your Runner's Edge

By: Terri Rejimbai, RRCA Coach

Cold weather has finally arrived, and along with it a season filled with road races from 5Ks to marathons. Through the summer you trained consistently, gradually increased your mileage, and even hit your splits while running speed work in miserable heat. I'm often asked, "Is there anything else I can do to better prepare myself, besides running more miles?" The answer is, yes, there is! The following tips can help send you on your way to a personal record this season.



Be Familiar with the Course and Elevation Profile

Knowing the course, turns, and terrain provides an opportunity to employ race tactics and identify points where to push the pace.

Tip: If you're racing in another city, attempt to drive the course, even just a portion of it the day before, so you know what to expect. If you're running a local race, run the course during your training. Whether or not you're running locally, run your pre-race warm up on the final mile of the course. Having visual landmarks helps to mentally prepare you and to gain confidence heading

to the finish. Often times, runners lose focus and their ambition to push/drive at the end of a race. It has been my experience that warming up on the last mile enabled me to see how close I am to crossing the finish line.

Tip: Line up properly at the start so you don't spend time and energy weaving around slower runners. If the start of your race is narrow or crowded, you may have to run an initial surge to avoid "traffic" or a bottleneck. Remember to dial the pace back, so you don't fatigue too early. One strategy for running a faster race is to run the tangents, the shortest distance possible by

running straight from one curve to the next.

What about races that have hairpin turns?

Tip: Instinctively, runners slow down to maintain balance and to try to take the hairpin turn narrowly. To effectively navigate a sharp turn: **SURGE!** Concentrate on foot placement and keep your inside arm close to your body while throwing your outside arm wide. Another option is to aim for a point farther out while maintaining your current speed. You can practice both of these options by setting up a cone or marker in your driveway.



2

Stealth Running

You can catch up to a competitor or throw one off your tail by using the course and terrain to your advantage.

Tip: If someone is hanging on your tail, next time you approach a bend on the course, surge ahead until you have nearly completed that curve or section. By the time they respond, you will look much farther ahead, which can discourage your opponent when they are already tired from trying to stay with you. If they come back on you, surge again at another point. A well-timed surge can blunt a competitor's strong kick or put enough distance on them to render it meaningless. When you surge mid race, only you know how long it will last. This uncertainty can unsettle those around you, and they may let you go. This will allow you to build a gap before settling into a rhythm you can maintain for the rest of the race. If you believe your opponents will follow you, wait until you're close enough to the finish, so you can carry your speed to the finish line. A sustained surge from $\frac{3}{4}$ -mile to a $\frac{1}{2}$ -mile out can leave even the speediest finishers with rubber legs.

3

Don't Zone Out -- Stay Present and Alert

Once your race begins, attempt to stay mentally in the current mile and not think too far ahead. It's easy to get overwhelmed thinking, "I still have 23 miles to go!"

Tip: "The zone" is a present state and you want to be in the zone as much as possible. One of the best ways to accomplish this is by focusing your attention inward. Think about what you are doing - pay attention to your breathing, form, rhythm, etc.

Tip: Set small goals throughout the race. It can be as simple as catching up to a runner ahead of you, or running to a landmark in the distance. Once you reach your goal, set another. Continue to do this until you finish. Reduce your anxiety by staying more in the moment than focusing on the remaining distance. Keep wandering thoughts to a minimum.

Tip: When you start to feel tired or begin to zone out, throw in a small surge. A trick I use to help pick up my cadence is to count from 1 to 100, then backwards, if I still need more of a pick up.



4

Conquer the Hills

Runners often try to charge/surge up a hill in attempt to overtake a competitor on the climb. Whether you're trying to pass a competitor or running to set a PR, this tactic can ruin your race by wasting too much energy, and causing you to fatigue early. As you ascend the hill, try to maintain the same effort/rhythm (not pace) by shortening your stride; keep your head up and chest out. Think parallel to incline. Pick up rhythm as you near the top by increasing your arm swing. This helps to pull you over the top and gets you ready to use gravity for the downhill.



Tip: When running downhill, let gravity and increased rhythm help you. Have a slight forward lean. Don't lean backwards, thus landing on your heels as it will cause you to brake. Lengthen your stride slightly, but don't over stride. If it's too long, you'll lose control and your quads will take a beating.

When planning to pass a competitor, save your speed for the last third of the climb and strategically make your move on the downhill. You will get an oxygen boost and momentum as you crest over the top. Relax your legs as much as possible and zoom by them as if they are standing still!

5

Challenge Yourself, Don't Settle For Average

I just want to finish. I'm not competitive. I just do it for fun. If you're going to invest time in training and, at times, sacrifice your social life, you owe it to yourself to see what you are capable of. Life is too short to do things halfway or average.

Tip: During your next race, find runners who run your pace, or just a bit quicker, and focus on staying competitive with them. Another option is to remain within eyeshot of a competitor that's ahead and try to close the gap in the last quarter of the race. A good trick is to look at whoever is in front of you and think about racing the runner in front of them.

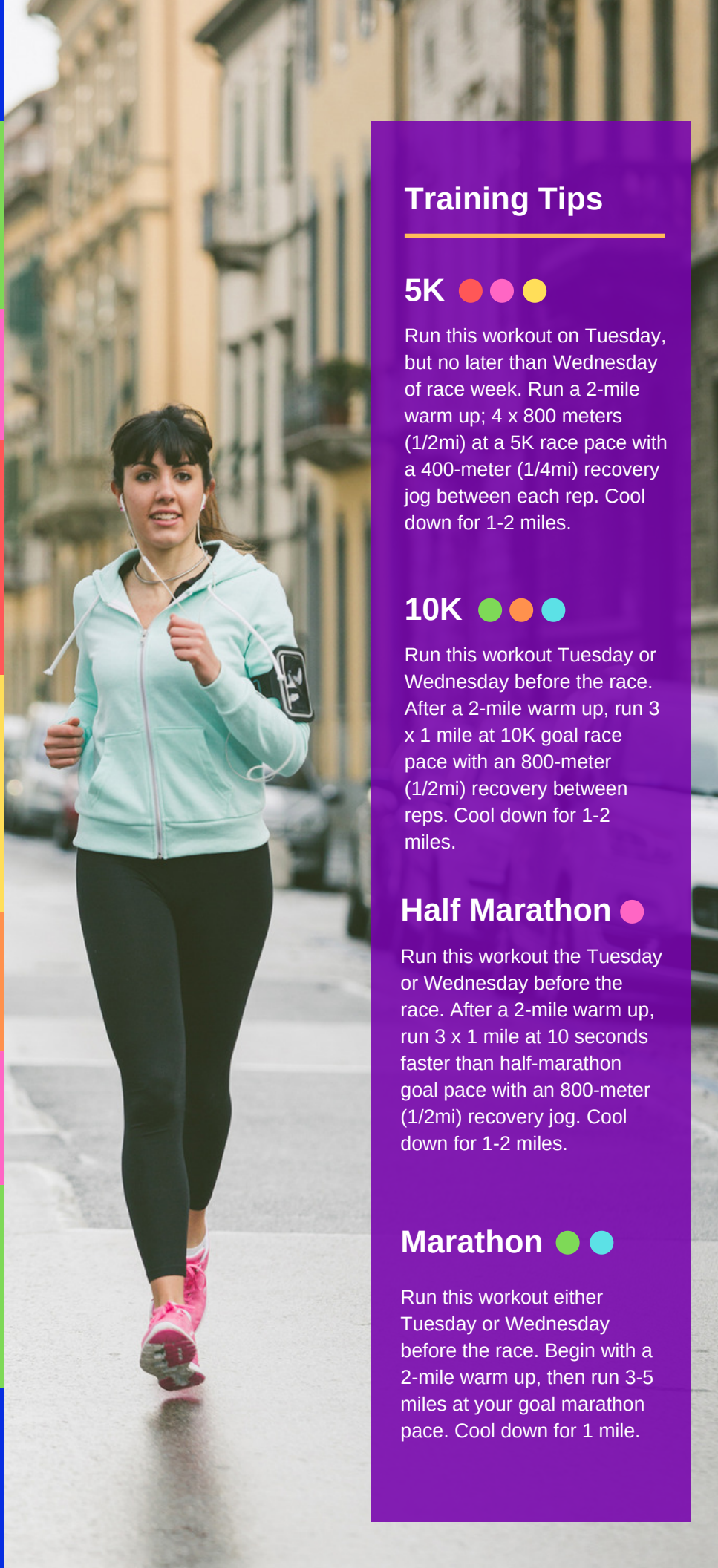
Whether you aspire to win, place in your age group, or to race just for the fun of it, I hope you will try these tips in your next race. Don't be afraid to challenge yourself. You might be pleasantly surprised with the outcome. I'll leave you with one of my favorite quotes from Meb Keflezighi, who sums racing up perfectly:

"Winning doesn't always mean getting first place; it means getting the best out of yourself."

Always consult a doctor before starting any exercise program.

About the Author:

Terri Rejimbail is a competitive Masters athlete, a 3-time winner and 8-time Masters champion of the Gasparilla Distance Classic half-marathon; 6-time Disney Masters marathon winner, 6-time Florida USATF Athlete of the Year, and a New Balance product tester. Terri is a RRCA certified running coach and is available for consulting or coaching services. Contact Terri at tarejimbail@gmail.com or Instagram [@bayshorerunner](https://www.instagram.com/bayshorerunner).



Training Tips

5K ●●●●

Run this workout on Tuesday, but no later than Wednesday of race week. Run a 2-mile warm up; 4 x 800 meters (1/2mi) at a 5K race pace with a 400-meter (1/4mi) recovery jog between each rep. Cool down for 1-2 miles.

10K ●●●●●

Run this workout Tuesday or Wednesday before the race. After a 2-mile warm up, run 3 x 1 mile at 10K goal race pace with an 800-meter (1/2mi) recovery between reps. Cool down for 1-2 miles.

Half Marathon ●●●●●●

Run this workout the Tuesday or Wednesday before the race. After a 2-mile warm up, run 3 x 1 mile at 10 seconds faster than half-marathon goal pace with an 800-meter (1/2mi) recovery jog. Cool down for 1-2 miles.

Marathon ●●●●●●●●

Run this workout either Tuesday or Wednesday before the race. Begin with a 2-mile warm up, then run 3-5 miles at your goal marathon pace. Cool down for 1 mile.

5

Reasons 5Ks Are AWESOME!

Family Friendly ▶▶▶

Thanks to the shorter length, a lot of 5Ks are okay with strollers, children, and even your beloved fur babies. These differ depending on the race and city, so make sure you read the rules before signing up.

Shorter Training Time ▶

Marathons, ultras, and triathlons all take months of planning and training. For a 5K, most people can be race ready within 4-8 weeks.

A lot of Options ▶▶▶

5Ks are EVERYWHERE! They are very attractive to race directors because they can draw both seasoned and novice runners. They are also a popular way to fundraise money for different causes.



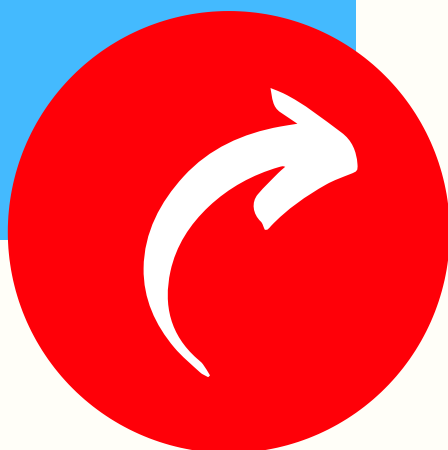
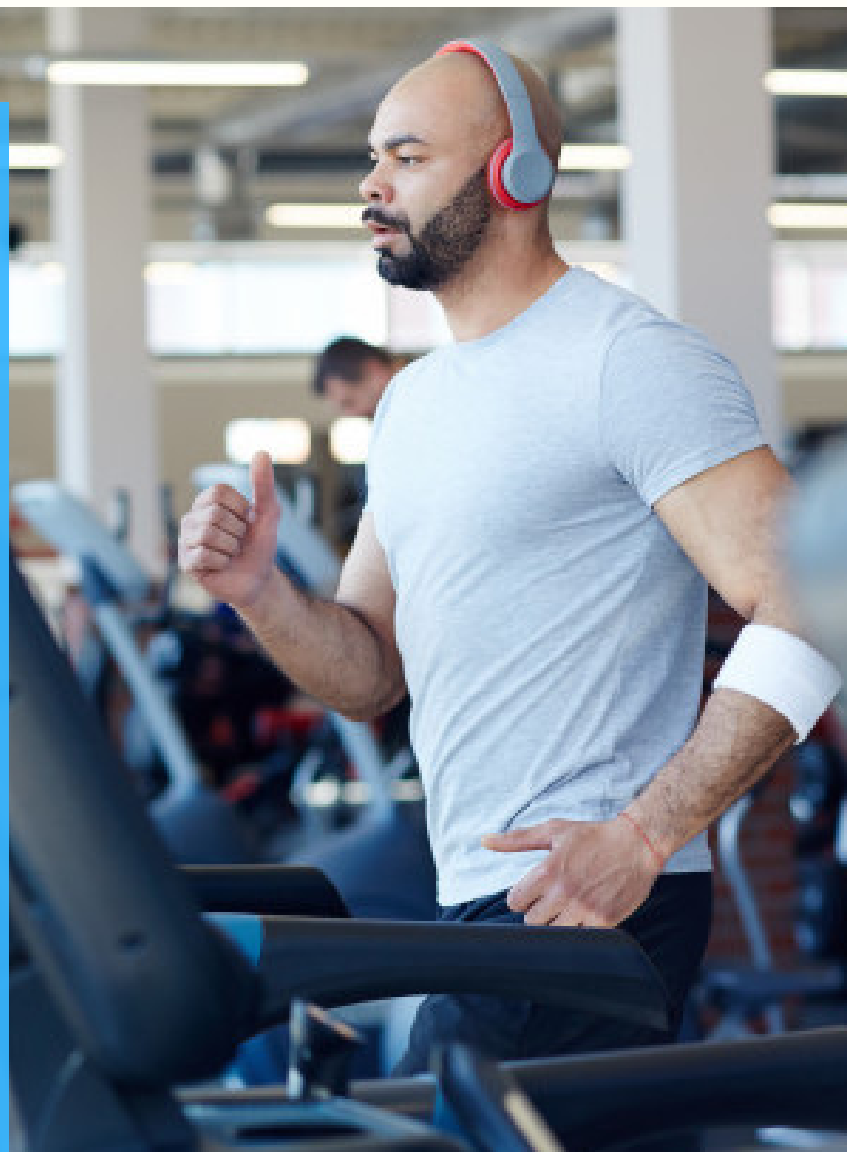
Get in Shape ▶▶▶

Not a runner? Or you're coming off of an injury or break? A 5K is the perfect distance to get you back into running.

Do it for the Cause ▶▶

A lot of 5Ks benefit local and global causes. Find one that is helping a charity near and dear to your heart and sign up!

QUICK FIX ON INDOOR CARDIO



Using a treadmill or any cardio machine can easily become mind-numbingly dull. With a chilly winter here to stay for awhile, a lot of runners have reluctantly headed indoors to get in their cardio. No need to resign yourself to a tedious run! Here are 7 ways to put a quick fix on your indoor cardio routine.

QUICK FIX

WATCH T.V. OR A MOVIE

Running inside can make a 30-minute workout feel like a chore. Combat this by setting up your treadmill in front of a t.v. and watch a movie or show. This will keep your mind off of your run and make the time fly by.

FOCUS ON YOUR FORM

Running on a treadmill is the perfect time to focus on your form. Double check that your shoulders are pulled back, your chest is open, and your arms are at a 90-degree angle close to your sides. Your head should be facing forward; don't look down as this will strain your neck.

HIIT TRAINING

The great thing about machines is that you can control your training with a touch of a button. Switch up the speed and duration for some high intensity interval training.

COVER UP THE DISPLAY

When you're running outside, you probably carry your phone or watch, but you don't have a display right in front of your face showing you how far you've run, what time it is, your average pace etc. This can be a major distraction. Cover up the display with a towel. Time will go by a lot faster when you aren't constantly sneaking peeks at the clock.

AUDIOBOOKS

Multitasking can be great! Is there a book you've been meaning to read but just can't find the time to sit down and actually read it? Then don't! Download some audiobooks from your favorite site or a local library and listen to them while you run.

MAKE IT A COMPETITION

Challenge a friend or someone in your running group to a competition on who can work out longer, or burn the most calories on a treadmill. Have weekly goals and check in with each other often. If bragging rights isn't enough, the loser can treat the winner to a meal or another small prize that was previously agreed upon.

POPPING PLAYLIST

Running with music on is a great way to keep yourself entertained. Make a custom playlist with songs that keep you motivated and moving. Challenge yourself by having certain songs be your "run" songs where you noticeably increase your pace, and other songs be your "cool down" songs, where you slow down.



8 ways to stay fit this winter





Stairs



In addition to taking the stairs throughout the day, it's also beneficial to incorporate them into your workout routine. Stairs can be found pretty much anywhere, which makes them easily accessible for most and a great way to kick your runs up a notch. If you run by stairs, take an extra 5 minutes and run up and down them. You can also use them for stretching and strength training, such as box (stair) jumps.



Shoveling



If or when you have snowfall at your disposal, turn it into a great workout. Shoveling snow burns about 223 calories per 30 minutes. Instead of paying your kids or a neighbor to shovel, get out there and do it yourself! Bonus: after the work is done and the driveway is cleared, have some fun by recruiting the whole family to build a snowman.



Ice Skating



There's no better way to enjoy winter than to go ice skating. It's fun for the entire family, fairly inexpensive and offers a great workout. Depending on your schedule, you can either head to the rink by yourself for some peaceful laps, or bring your kids. Ice skating is awesome because it doubles as an enjoyable outdoor activity and a calorie burner.



Indoor sports



Whether you miss playing or are new to team sports, they provide a perfect opportunity to be active, social, and to reconnect or start fresh with a sport you love. Basketball, soccer, hockey, tennis, and volleyball are just some of the options available to get you back on the court or out on the field.



Dance

There are a variety of different places where you can enjoy dancing, such as dance schools, social venues, community halls, or even in your own home. Dancing is a great way to be active and keep fit. Most fitness clubs now offer dance classes in their group exercise programs. To get started, simply choose a style you enjoy, or would like to try, and then look online for dance schools or available classes in your local area.



Home Workout

Never underestimate the power of an at-home workout. With just a few items you can create versatile workouts. Break out your weights, resistance bands, medicine ball, whatever you have on hand. Don't have any small workout equipment? No problem, bodyweight exercises such as burpees, push-ups, tricep dips, squats, and lunges can be just as effective.



SNOW sprints

Snow can make for a messy commute to work, but its use as a workout tool can be beneficial. Put on some water-resistant shoes, the appropriate clothing, and find an open, snow-covered field to run or jog on. Ice doesn't usually form on grass, so it's typically safe to run on a field of fresh fallen snow. There is something thrilling about running through snow, while taking in the sights and sounds of winter.



swimming

It's cold outside, so stay inside and get in a productive and low-impact workout by swimming. Swimming is a stellar workout because you need to move your whole body against the resistance of the water. The result is an increase in heart rate with some of the impact stress taken off your body. A few benefits of swimming can include: endurance, muscle strength, and cardiovascular fitness.

Always consult a doctor before starting any exercise routine.

Can Rituals, Superstitions, and Strange Habits Actually Improve Your Running Performance?

By: James Williams

Have you got a pair of lucky pants that you always wear to races?

Do you always kiss the ground before a race?

Or have you used the same safety pins to attach your race number for years? (Like Paula Radcliffe).

If the answer to these is yes, you probably do them even though there's no evidence that they actually improve your performance. You continue to practice them because they help you psychologically prepare for training and for races. I've got my own set of weird and wonderful things that I do, which helps me believe that I'm going to have a great running performance. Most of them have no solid evidence to prove that they help, and I can't even remember where I first heard about these techniques, but I still do them! My rituals might inspire you to laugh at me, or they might inspire you to adopt some of your own weird habits.



"For athletes who feel the outcome of a competition is unpredictable, superstitions provide a way for them to gain a bit more control."

Rituals and superstitions can be helpful in a number of ways. With all of the uncontrollable parts of a race, you know you have control over this one part. They can boost your confidence. They have been linked to improved performance. There's no cost to doing them (providing your ritual isn't harmful). So it's basically a win-win. The only danger that I see is becoming over-reliant on them. For example, if you don't do it in a race and it completely messes up your game plan. One study showed that rituals have an even greater impact for especially important moments, like a final. And there are lots of examples of elite athletes who have strange rituals that they believe help them improve their performance. Paula Radcliffe, the women's world record holder for the marathon, had a number of superstitions.

Count Runners When I Overtake Them (and When They Overtake Me)

Maybe it's my competitive nature... Or maybe I liked math too much when I was younger, but whenever I'm running, I need to count runners when I pass them. I give myself one point for every runner I overtake. I lose 10 points for every runner that passes me and I get 10 points if I pass a bike, but I don't lose points if they pass me. So, by the end of a run, and after a lot of challenging arithmetic, you have a score. There are various other silly rules to this game. For example, if I'm

just about to overtake someone and they start walking, I can't count them as a point. You also can't 'uncount' someone. So if someone passes me and I lose 10 points, and later I overtake them, I don't gain 10 points. Fairly crazy! It gets difficult to keep count in big races, but it keeps my mind entertained! I think my best score was +237.

I Have An Alter Ego - The GameChanger!

There is power in having an alter ego. Todd Herman is a high-performance coach, who has a theory that one secret to success could be to adopt a secret identity! Sounds cool, right? Even Tiger Woods and Dwayne Johnson have alter egos to help them perform. I was so interested in this theory that I started practicing it when I was training for my world-record attempt to run more than 800 miles in 9 days. Much to my friends' and family's amusement, I adopted an alter ego called "The GameChanger." I used this technique in times of pain and suffering. "Switching" to my alter ego allowed me to think that I was no longer in pain. How did I switch into "GameChanger" mode? It was all about the sunglasses! When I put them on, I was The GameChanger. It was fairly embarrassing to admit to people, but it's definitely a technique I'll use again. So, look out for The GameChanger near you!

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I Need to Touch Wood...

Many people have probably heard of the phrase and action "knock on wood." This is typically used to keep bad luck away, particularly when you are having a run of good luck. A lot of people tap on their own head, rather than tapping on an actual piece of wood. I use it a lot in training and races when a thought comes into my mind that things are going well... "Wow, things are going really well in this race so far".... "Wow, I've not been stopped by any red lights on my run so far".... "Wow, I've not yet been hit by a truck, even though I'm running down this main road." After each of these sayings, I would then "knock on wood" by tapping my own head. So if you see me madly tapping my own head, you'll know why!

I Sit On A Tennis Ball in the Office

I tend to keep my ultra-running activities quiet in the office. Many of my colleagues don't even know that I've sometimes run more than 30 miles before starting work. So it probably makes me seem even stranger when they see me sitting on a tennis ball while working. The hypothesis is that a tennis ball helps with self-massage, but it raises a few eyebrows when I stand up from a chair and people see that I've been sitting on one.

Always consult a doctor before starting any exercise routine.

I Have A Cold Shower in the Morning

A few months ago I came across the Wim Hof Method, which includes taking ice cold showers. There are lots of studies which show the supposed benefits of cold showers - they reduce stress, make you more alert, improve your immune system, help with weight loss, increase circulation, and reduce muscle soreness. But as far as I know, there is no strong evidence to support the theory that cold showers benefit running performance. I like a cold shower in the morning because it wakes me up and gets me ready for the day. I treat myself to a warm shower in the evening to relax, wind down, and get ready for bed.

About the Author:



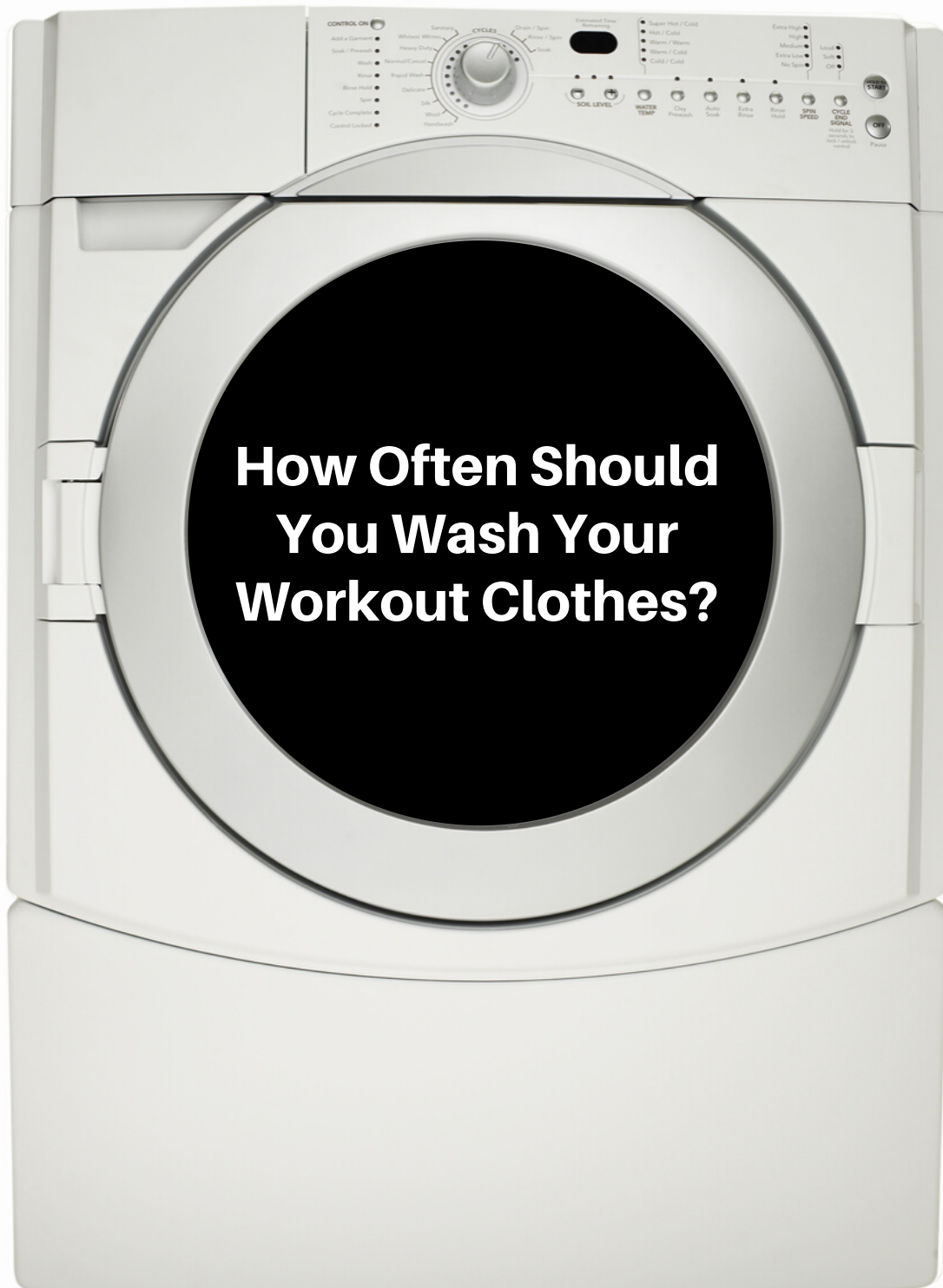
James Williams is a father of two, husband, and runner with race victories at 100 miles, 100km, marathons, half-marathons, 10k's and 5k's. Most recently, he attempted to break a world-record by running more than 800 miles in 9 days from the bottom of the UK to the top. He writes informative articles to help other runners improve their own performances and achieve their dreams on www.JamesRunsFar.com

Rituals and superstitions might improve your running performance by making you feel more in control. And there's evidence that they are even more effective for bigger events.

Many elite athletes use strange rituals to help them improve their sporting performance.

I use some of these rituals and superstitions to improve my own performance - including counting runners as I overtake them, having an alter ego, and "touching wood."

FRESH & CLEAN



It's gym day and you have no clean clothes. You reach into your hamper and pull out an outfit you wore earlier in the week. It passes the sniff test, so it's okay to wear right? It depends, but as a general rule sweaty clothing shouldn't be worn more than once because it could pose a health risk.

Rewearing old sweaty clothes isn't the best idea, unless you're cool with breakouts, yeast infections and bad odor. The sweat that our body produces is surprisingly odorless. The sebum (an oily, waxy substance produced by your body's sebaceous glands) mixed with bacteria is what causes sweat to smell.

The more bacteria mixed with your sweat, the more likely you are going to smell. When you workout, the stinky sweat seeps into your clothing and gets trapped there, especially on fabrics like spandex and polyester, which collect the most odor-causing bacteria.

Even more interesting is that if you don't wash your sweaty clothing immediately after use, the bacteria will continue to multiply. So, no it's not just you, your clothing does get stinkier the next time you check it to see if it smells.

Unwashed and reworn clothing can lead to chaffing and skin irritation. Let's also not forget about breakouts. Re-wearing the same workout clothing is a breeding ground for acne. To top all this, gyms are just plain germ, which makes it easier for bacteria to get transferred from one person to another.

Next time you hit the gym and work up a sweat, once home, leave your workout clothes out to dry and then toss them in a hamper. Launder workout clothing as soon as possible. It's best to wash your workout gear in cold water if you want them to last. Hot water breaks down fabrics and can lead to shrinkage. Lastly, air dry clothing or select the low-heat setting on your dryer.

TANKS & T-SHIRTS

After a low-impact workout, a second wear can be acceptable. Once you get home, hang your shirt where it can air dry. If your shirt is soaked in sweat, then the "wear only once" rule applies, so toss it in the hamper (after it's dry).

LEGGINGS, YOGA PANTS & TRACK PANTS

Again, a second wear can be acceptable if you don't sweat and wear loose-fitting shorts or pants. Any pants/leggings that are tight-fitting in the groin area should definitely only be worn once.

SPORTS BRAS

Due to the close fit of sports bras, it's recommended to wash after each sweat session. If you're wearing a sports bra under your regular clothes, then it's okay to spritz with fabric refresher and set aside for an upcoming workout.

SOCKS

You should know the answer to this one! Always wash after each wear/workout.

RUNNING SHOES

Keep the outside of your shoes clean by wiping them down. The inside of your shoes should stay fresh as long as you always wear clean socks. If your shoes get stinky, it's probably time for a new pair of insoles or a new pair altogether.





HEALTHIER HOLIDAY RECIPES

The holidays can be a stressful time. You're busy visiting family and running all over for last-minute gifts, while still trying to get a holiday meal put together. The last thing you want to worry about is your diet from all the delicious but unhealthy holiday meal classics. We've rounded up three dishes and put a healthy spin on them to help you enjoy the holidays on the lighter side this year.



Sweet Potato Casserole



This is a great recipe to make prior to having guests come over for a dinner party. To make ahead of time, simply follow steps 1-7, cover and refrigerate. When you are ready to serve, add the pecans and continue with steps 9-10. Enjoy!



Why It's Healthier:

Excluding the marshmallows from this classic holiday dish cuts out the majority of sugar. You will get plenty of flavor from the cinnamon, nutmeg and toasted pecans.

Ingredients

Yield: 10 servings

- 2 lbs sweet potatoes
- 3 Tbsp of coconut oil, melted
- 1 cup unsweetened applesauce
- 2 tsp ground cinnamon
- 1 tsp sea salt or to taste
- pinch of ground nutmeg
- 1 cup chopped pecans
- salt & cinnamon/sugar for topping (optional)

Directions

1. Preheat oven to 450 degrees.
2. Wrap sweet potatoes in aluminum foil and bake in preheated oven until soft (about 1-1.5 hours)
3. Remove from oven, cut in half and let cool.
4. Remove skins and set sweet potatoes aside.
5. Reduce oven to 375 degrees.
6. Add applesauce and sweet potatoes to your blender and blend until smooth.
7. Add melted coconut oil, cinnamon, salt and nutmeg and blend until combined. Transfer to a 9" baking dish.
8. Sprinkle the top with pecans and optional topping.
9. Bake at 375 degrees for 25-30 minutes or until potatoes begin to slightly bubble and topping is lightly browned.
10. Let it cool for 10 minutes before serving.

Roasted Turkey Breast



The main event to any holiday meal, this recipe cuts out all the unnecessary calories without compromising the flavor.



Why It's Healthier:

The breast of the turkey has less fat and calories than most other cuts of meat. Not to mention if you remove the skin after cooking, you will have yourself an even leaner cut of meat.

Ingredients

Yield: 8 servings

- 1/2 cup unsalted butter softened
- 3 sprigs fresh rosemary
- 10 leaves fresh sage
- 2 cloves of garlic, minced
- 1 Tbsp dried thyme leaves
- 2 tsp salt
- 2 tsp coarse ground black pepper
- 1 turkey breast 4-6 pound, patted dry

Directions

1. Preheat the oven to 325 degrees. Set up oven so there is only the bottom rack. Add the turkey breast to a large roasting pan and pat dry with paper towels inside and out.
2. Combine the butter, herbs, salt and pepper in a small bowl. Set a few tablespoons aside for later.
3. Lift the skin from the turkey breast and spread butter inside. Smooth the skin back down to spread the butter all over the breast. Be careful not to tear the skin as the butter will drip out when cooking.
4. Roast for 90 minutes, or until the innermost part of the breast is cooked to 165 degrees.
5. Top with remaining butter and let rest for 20 minutes before serving.

Chocolate Mocha Muffins

Who doesn't love chocolate for breakfast? Prepare these muffins on Christmas morning as a special treat.



Why It's Healthier:

Simple and wholesome ingredients are used, including whole wheat flour and cocoa powder. The sugar in this recipe is derived from the honey and bananas. Enjoy a chocolatey treat without the guilt this holiday!

Ingredients

Yield: 6 servings

- 1 cup whole wheat flour
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1 teaspoon espresso powder
- 1 tablespoon cocoa powder (70% cocoa or more)
- pinch of fine sea salt
- 3 ripe bananas, mashed
- 1/4 cup unsweetened applesauce
- 3 tablespoons honey
- 1/2 teaspoon vanilla

Directions

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees and line muffin tins with parchment paper liners.
2. In a large bowl combine dry ingredients.
3. In a separate bowl whisk together wet ingredients.
4. Slowly combine the dry ingredients into the wet, mixing until just combined.
5. Fill the lined muffin tins 2/3 of the way up.
6. Bake for 15 minutes, or until an inserted toothpick removes cleanly.




6 TIPS FOR EATING HEALTHY AT A RESTAURANT

By: Julia Barber

An out-of-town race can make things tricky when it comes to your diet. Even if you run locally, what are the chances post-race that you will drive all the way home and cook yourself a healthy meal? More often than not, you will probably grab something to eat at a restaurant when you're on the go. No reason to fret, here are six tips on how to keep your diet healthy when eating out.





**By failing to prepare, you
are preparing to fail.
-Benjamin Franklin**

1 BE PREPARED

Being prepared is one of the most important steps to eating healthy at a restaurant. Most menus can be found online with nutrition information, which gives you a head start on what to expect. You're more likely to make unhealthy choices when you're hungry or distracted. Choosing your food before you get to the restaurant can make it easier for you to avoid bad decisions made out of spontaneity or hunger.

More importantly, being prepared means knowing what "healthy" means to you and being aware of your own personal dietary needs. Are you trying to stick to a low carb diet? Look for meals that have veggies as a side instead of something starchy like rice or pasta. Do you usually eat 5-6 ounces of protein per meal? Opt for the 6 oz sirloin vs the 8 oz that's advertised with the mouthwatering picture.

Being prepared and having an idea of what you're in for is half the battle and a sure way to ease the uncertainty and concern that is associated with eating healthy at a restaurant.

2 ASK QUESTIONS

I know...no one wants to be "that person" who orders off the menu with special requests and a million questions. But when you're committed to your goals and healthy lifestyle, nothing should stand in the way. Servers do more than just bring you your food—they should know the restaurant, the food, how it's prepared, etc. Talk it up with your server! Don't be afraid to ask if the side of fries can be swapped for a side salad instead, or if you could have the dressing/sauce on the side.

I bet you didn't know that you could order "off-menu" at quite a few restaurants. Ask if the chef is able to prepare you a vegetarian dish or if it's possible for you to just get grilled chicken and veggies. Often times off-menu items are easily prepared with only some minor tweaks. How do you know if the restaurant you're going to will accommodate your special requests? Ask! You can even be prepared and give the restaurant a call before you arrive.

3 UNDERSTAND THE WORDING ON THE MENU

As you're reading through the menu and descriptions of meals, pay close attention to the wording that is used. The description of a meal usually gives you clues as to how the meal is prepared.

Look for words such as "steamed," "grilled" or "broiled." These mean that the food is more than likely prepared with less fat. Avoid dishes with descriptions like "fried," "breaded," "smothered," and "creamy." This could mean that there is extra fat from oil or cheeses that you normally would avoid.



4 WATCH OUT FOR EXTRA FAT AND SODIUM IN "HEALTHIER" OPTIONS

In an effort to get with the times and cater to healthy eaters, many restaurants will offer a "lighter" or "fit" section of the menu that you can order from...which is great! But make sure you're taking into consideration more than just the amount of calories in the meal. While the calories may be low, saturated fat and sodium could be high.

For example, Shrimp Stir Fry is an option offered on a popular restaurant's "Lighter" menu. It's low in fat and calories but packs 2,460mg of sodium. Yikes! That's more than the daily recommended intake of 2300mg for healthy adults in just one meal. This is likely from the stir fry sauce, so request your sauces on the side to take control of your sodium intake.

This is often the case with sandwiches and burgers as well. That club sandwich may seem like a healthy choice based on the calories but the cheese, bacon, and mayo hike up the fat and sodium. Toppings are another thing to request on the side, so again, you control your portions. Or simply request for these fatty and high sodium toppings or sides to be left off of your meal completely so you're not tempted.



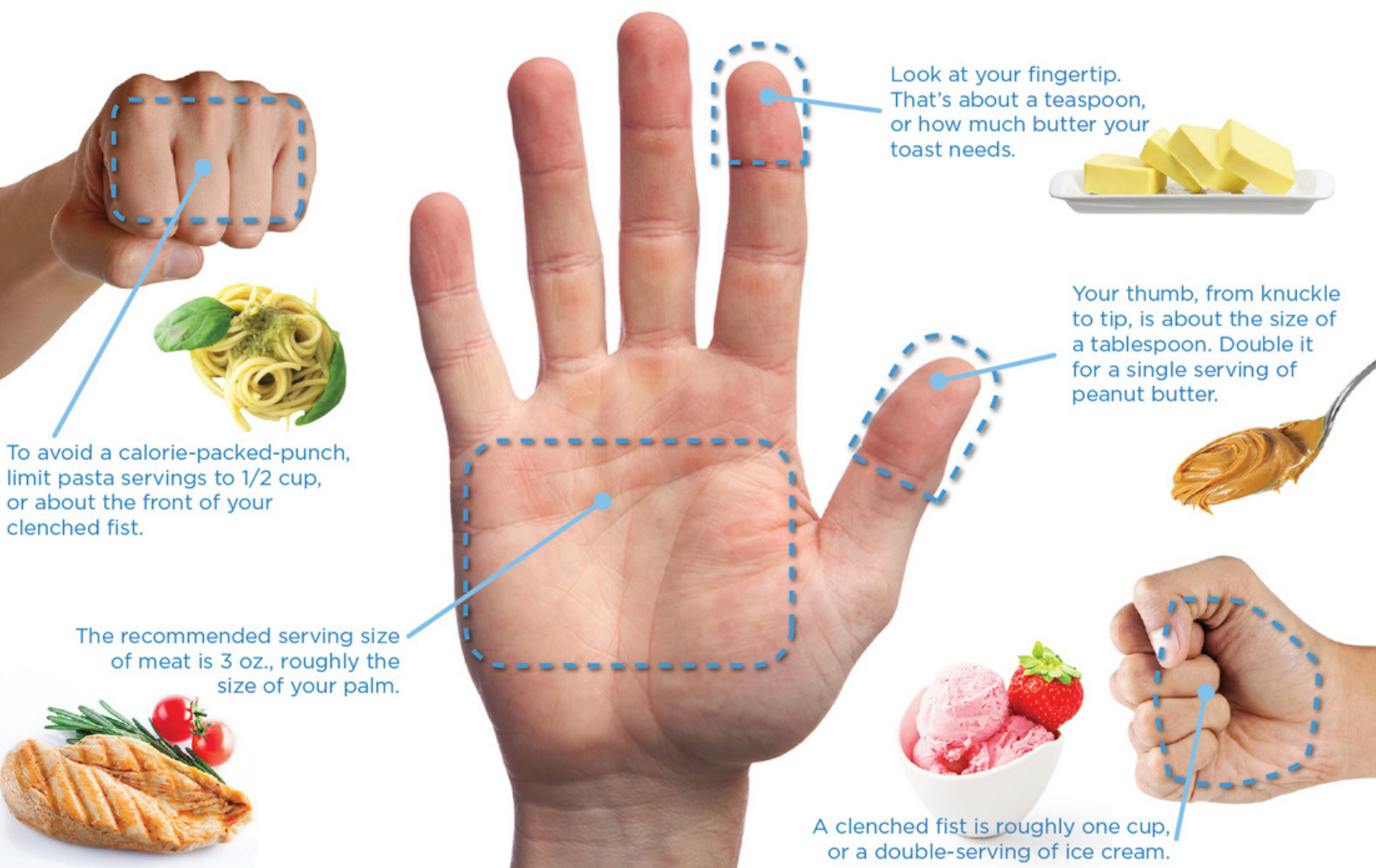
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KNOW YOUR PORTION SIZES

Often times the meals you order at restaurants are 2-3 times the recommended amount of food you should eat per meal. This is why knowing appropriate portion sizes and portion control are important. Your plate should be approximately $\frac{1}{4}$ complex carbohydrates, $\frac{1}{4}$ lean protein, and $\frac{1}{2}$ fresh fruits and vegetables along with 1-2 tablespoons of healthy fat. But how do you measure this without pulling out measuring cups or a scale at the table? Easy—use your hand!

Your hand reflects the proper portion for you and can be used as a measuring tool to determine how much to eat at a restaurant. Measure out how much you should eat for one meal then ask the server for a to-go box to take the rest home for another meal.

You can always share with a friend, but sometimes even half of a meal served at a restaurant is way more than enough. So just stick to your portions and you'll be okay.



6 BE MINDFUL WITH MULTIPLE COURSES

Eating at a restaurant makes it easy to overeat due to the social norm of multi-course meals. So in addition to an entree, you also might have bread, an appetizer, salad, and dessert. That's a lot of food! That doesn't mean you can't enjoy it, though. Just be mindful when ordering these extras in the following ways:

- **Appetizers** - Choose appetizers that contain primarily vegetables, fruit, or fish (lettuce wraps, edamame, shrimp cocktail, fresh fruit compote).
- **Soup** - Opt for broth based or tomato based soups. Creamed soups and chowders can contain extra fat from cream.
- **Bread** - Ask if whole grain bread is available or just skip the temptation completely by asking the server not to bring bread to the table.
- **Salad** - Try to limit the high calorie add ons that can come on salads—cheese, croutons, bacon, other meats. Ask for dressing options on the side.
- **Dessert** - Finish your main meal before ordering dessert. Consider sharing dessert with a friend or ordering a healthier option if it is offered, such as fresh fruit or sorbet.

DON'T STRESS, ENJOY YOUR MEAL

Whether you're with family, friends, coworkers, or complete strangers, eating out at a restaurant should be an enjoyable experience! You shouldn't feel nervous or guilty for getting out of the house to enjoy a meal. Instead of focusing on foods that you can't eat, focus on healthier options and all of the foods that you CAN eat. After practicing these tips, you're sure to build the confidence to enjoy your next meal at a restaurant, while still staying committed to your healthy lifestyle. Bon Appetit!



About the Author

What you put in your body is the most important piece to achieving your goals. That's why trainer, nutrition coach, and chef Jillian Tedesco shared fit-flavors to help other succeed. See how they can help you at fit-flavors.com.

FEATURED EVENTS

FOR RACETIMES READERS

Featured Event: [Beer Run](#)

December 7, 2019

[Gilbert, AZ](#)

Details: Get ready for this easy 5K that welcomes all fitness levels. The best part? It's located right by a brewery! Hang out after the race to grab a pint and listen to some live music.

Featured Event: [Tis' The Season 3.1 - Ugly Sweater 5K Walk & Run](#)

December 7, 2019

[Lafayette, IN](#)

Details: Back by popular demand, don your favorite ugly sweater and get running with this fun race. Ugly sweaters encouraged, but not required! All finishers will receive a custom medal and long sleeve t-shirt. Special awards will go to the top overall male and female and the top 3 male and female in each age group.

Featured Event: [Gingerbread Man 10K/5K](#)

December 8, 2019

[St. Augustine, FL](#)

Details: This is a great way to kick off the holiday season! The real Gingerbread Man will be out running amuck around the course...catch him if you can! Holiday socks, hats and general candy cane striped attire are encouraged. Pets are also welcome! Finishers will receive a medal, t-shirt, and a gingerbread man cookie. Pets will get a dog treat.

Featured Event: [Run Like the Dickens](#)

December 13, 2019

[Wetumpka, AL](#)

Details: Celebrate the craziness of the holidays by participating in this ridiculously fun-filled 5K run/walk. This night event will lead you through Christmas lights and the Griswold Family Christmas! Runners are encouraged to wear hilarious holiday-inspired running attire. Glow necklaces provided for all runners as well as a S'more Station and Hot Chocolate. Families and strollers are welcome.

Featured Event: Frosty 5K Fun Run/Walk

December 14, 2019

Cedar Falls, IA

Details: What a way to celebrate the holiday season! This race has it all; goody bags, pictures with Santa, raffles, photo booths, coffee, hot chocolate, and Christmas cookies! Bring a non-perishable food item to the "Giving Tree" and receive a handmade ornament.

Featured Event: Reindeer Dash/ Santa Stroll

December 14, 2019

Delton, MI

Details: Jingle all the way with this easy 5K! Participants will be given a Santa hat, t-shirt, and a bell to use during the race. Have a favorite holiday costume? Wear it to spread the holiday cheer! A one-mile stroll will be held after the 5K for those that want to take it easy this holiday season.

**Featured Event: Wrightsville Beach Jingle Bell Run**

December 14, 2019

Wrightsville Beach, NC

Details: Historic cottages and beautiful winter marshes are part of the scenery participants get to experience during this 5K. This will be a celebratory holiday event, so race participants are encouraged to dress in holiday apparel. Dogs can also compete in the costume category! Awards will go to the top 3 overall male and female, top 3 over masters male and female, and the top 3 male and female in each age group. Awards will also be given to: Best Overall Holiday Costume, Best Group Holiday Costume, Best Family Holiday Costume, Best Pet Costume, and Best Decorated Stroller.

Featured Event: Ohana Holiday Run 5K

December 15, 2019

San Diego, CA

Details: This race has it all! You will receive a finisher's medal, t-shirt, goodie bags, live music, food, and drinks! Spread the holiday cheer by donating an unwrapped toy for a child to open on Christmas Day. The race is timed and the course is certified. Virtual racing is available to those who can't make it to the event.

Featured Event: [Holly Half Marathon & 5K](#)

December 21, 2019

[Natchez, MS](#)

Details: Run through the beautiful streets of Natchez, MS, on this invigorating route. All finishers will receive a medal, along with a t-shirt. Proceeds will go to local charities and the Juvenile Diabetic Research Foundation of Mississippi.



Featured Event: [Carolina Beach State Park Trail Half Marathon & 5K](#)

December 28, 2019

[Carolina Beach, NC](#)

Details: With 13.1 and 3.1 mile courses, all levels of speed and ability are allotted an opportunity to race in one of the most unique settings in North Carolina. With rolling pine laced single track along the coast, participants have tons of interesting terrain to take in while they run. After the race, join the party at the Courtyard by Marriott Carolina Beach Oceanfront.

Featured Event: [Bighorn Rush Sled Dog Challenge](#)

December 28-29, 2019

[Antelope Butte Ski Area, Bighorn Mountains, WY](#)

Details: The third annual Bighorn Rush is a continued effort to promote dog-powered and winter sports in the Bighorn Mountains. The trails mostly sit between 8,500 and 9,800 feet above sea level. This is a two-day event, with mushers racing the same course both days. The event features 5 different races to choose from, so be sure to choose the one right for you! Food and drink will be available to purchase.

Featured Event: [City of Newman Resolution 5K](#)

January 4, 2019

[Newnan, GA](#)

Details: Help at-risk youth with this chip-timed, certified 5K. The course will take you through the historic downtown area and commercial district. Awards will go to the top overall male and female, overall male and female masters, and top three male and female in each age group.



NEXT ISSUE

February/March

COMING SOON

Full of content for the endurance sports industry, *RaceTimes* is a digital magazine that delivers featured articles, awareness of brands and products, and announcements of upcoming events and races. Published six times a year, *RaceTimes* targets a demographic of up to 700,000 athletes and race organizers.

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