

7 reasons to get

RUNNING

We all know that it's a good workout, but actually heading out the door for a run can sometimes be a struggle. PT **Chloe Bowler** reminds us of all the wonderful benefits that will have you reaching for your trainers!

1 Bag a freebie

The best thing about running is that it's free. There are no gym memberships, no classes and no commitments – just throw on some trainers, step outside and you're good to go. Nowadays there are so many gyms, group sessions and bootcamps to choose from it can be easy to forget the simple things available on your doorstep. And running won't only save you money

but minutes too, as it's a good way to use your time effectively. Rather than spending hours travelling to and from the gym, fit running into your day where it best suits you, such as on the way home from work.

Lose pounds

If you are looking to lose weight but don't want to venture into a gym, running can be a great way to achieve your goal. Slow running will mean you are exercising aerobically and this type of long, slow duration exercise uses fat as a main energy source. Contrary to what people believe, you do not need to run for very long to get a good workout. A 30-minute run should burn approximately 300 calories, so it's a great way to blast fat in a short amount of time.

3 Up your fitness

Running is one of the most effective ways to increase your fitness. Take it at your own speed and even walk at the beginning if you need to, then start to increase the amount you run and decrease the walking until you can manage a run from start to finish. Working your core, heart, legs and arms, running is a total body workout and wonderful for your cardiovascular health. Mix it up with low impact workouts too, such as swimming, to give your joints a rest. There are plenty of free apps available to help you track your progress, which is a great way to keep you motivated.

4 ANYTIME, ANYWHERE

This really is the golden ticket where running is concerned. Not only can you do it anywhere but you need very little equipment, apart from maybe a map! Wherever you are, you can always find somewhere to go for a run. If you're going on holiday, research popular routes before you go and discover the city that you're staying in by foot, or hit the beach for some extra leg work (making sure you apply a strong sunscreen and wear a hat if you are in a hot country). If you don't know where to start, look up the local running club for that area online as there are often forums full of information and tips.

5

Boost other sports

One of the interesting things about running is that there are so many factors to it meaning you don't have to measure everything by distance or time. Keep it simple and go for a steady jog, or use your training in a specific way to help increase your fitness for a certain sport. Running from point to point and turning will increase your agility, which will really help you if you play other sports such as tennis or netball. I like to pick a point in the distance and sprint to that, then jog to another spot, then walk for a bit. Keep mixing it up so it's fun and use intervals to continually test your body.

Get happy

It has been well documented that exercise in general can produce feel-good endorphins, and running is definitely a workout that will put you in a positive frame of mind. Whenever you're feeling reluctant about going for a run just remember how good you feel after you've achieved it. Go at your own speed and I promise that when you're done and back at home you will feel better for it, safe in the knowledge that your health and fitness are improving.

7 Make new friends

Some people are very happy going for a jog on their own and enjoying some real 'me time' to think and relax. However this isn't for everyone, and if you're new to running or lacking motivation, it can work wonders to have a running buddy or be part of a fun, social group.

Running clubs are a great way to meet new people and there is usually a broad spectrum of ability, so you will always find someone to run with happily. If it's a competitive edge you need for motivation, then a club where your runs are timed is the one for you.