

Tips for running at any age

Our bodies change as we age, so we've broken out some tips to help you make the most of your training across decades!

In your 20s:

- Build discipline to last a lifetime. Find a set time to train each day that allows you to be consistent and accommodates your work schedule.
- Create good eating habits, and pay attention to pre- and post-run nutrition.
- Protect your body for the long run: cross train with low impact exercise between hard runs. This will minimize impact on your joints, helping to keep them healthier as you get older.

In your 30s:

- Make the most of your time. You may have a family or more work-related responsibilities, and less time to train. Add intervals or tempo runs to make efficient use of your time.
- Pay attention to what you're eating. You may need to eat less than you did at age 25. However, some of this change in metabolism can also be offset with adequate cross training.¹
- Strength-train to prevent injury and maintain your lean muscle mass from your 20s. You lose muscle mass as you age, so it is important to keep building it now. You'll likely be the strongest runner you've ever been this decade, so make it count!²

In your 40s:

- You may not be as fast as you once were. Strive to be the fastest in your age range, or simply strive to race a little faster than you train.
- Be sure to cross train and allow for adequate recovery. Lifting weights can help you retain your bone mass and allowing for rest time can prevent future injury.³

In your 50s:

- Use age-graded times to evaluate your performance. Age graded times convert your times to what they would have been in the prime of your career or show you what percentile you fall in for your age range.
- Cross train to keep your calves and hip flexors flexible but strong. If you haven't already, incorporate stretching and strengthening into your training program.
- Run on a track, trail or grass to minimize the impact on your joints. Avoid pounding on concrete for all of your runs.

In your 60s:

- Appreciate all your prior successes and future ones. You're still moving!
- Discover how long it takes you to recover between runs. It is more important now than ever that you fully recover before pushing yourself in your next run.
- Train less than you did in your younger years. Expert coach, Tom McGlynn says you can train at 60% volume and still perform 80% as well.⁴

Beyond your 60s:

- Weight train. You may have lost 30% of your muscle mass since you were 30 years old.⁵
- Reduce your training load. Walk when you can't run and rest when your body tells you to.
- Find peers or a club to run with. This can add a social aspect to your workout that builds mind and body.

While your focus may shift throughout the decades, regardless of age it is always important to consider cross training, rest, and recovery.⁶ Be mindful of your body at any age and reap the benefits of your runs. Protect your body and enjoy the benefits throughout the years!

1, 2. Dimity McDowell, "Running Your Best in Your 20s," Runner's World, accessed October 2016. <http://www.runnersworld.com/running-tips/running-your-best-in-your-20scom>

3,4,5. Richard A. Lovett, "Mastering Running As You Age," Runner's World, accessed October 2016. <http://www.runnersworld.com/masters/mastering-running-as-you-age/slide/1>

"Age Grading," USATF Masters, accessed November 2016. http://www.usatfmasters.org/fa_agegrading.htm

6.Ed Eyestone, "The Rest is Easy," Runner's World, accessed October 2016. <http://www.runnersworld.com/running-tips/the-importance-of-rest-days>

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