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WAYS TO INJURY PROOF YOUR BODY

By Phil Robertson - Fitness Aspirations

Get through your training injury free

Follow these 5 top tips to prevent injury

1 Look after your feet

First things first; take a look at your footwear. Running is a relatively cheap pastime compared to other sports, so it is worth investing where you can. Instead of picking the cheapest of trainers, or the prettiest, or the ones that your friend recommends, seek professional advice on the correct footwear.

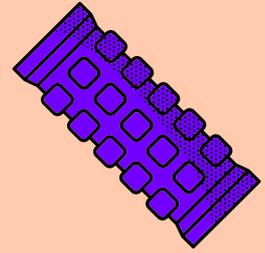
Specialist running shops can carry out various tests to ensure you have the most suitable footwear for your running style. These tests can include gait analysis, pressure pad, and manual biomechanical assessments.

There is also the debate regarding regular heel strike running and barefoot/minimalist running. The impact forces, and biomechanics, vary greatly. If you are interested in differing your technique, then do your research and think about working with a coach. Any change to your technique will affect your body in a different way, so **start off slow and build up gradually**.

2

Regular Massage and Foam Rolling

Running puts significant forces and loads through our body. The repetitive nature of running means we may get areas of tightness and built up adhesions which could lead to potential injury.



There are so many benefits to getting a regular massage, a professional will be able identify any potential problematic areas, as well as help with lengthening muscles and improving blood supply. It is also recommended that you should be foam rolling as part of your daily routine, to keep your muscles healthy. They can also be used during your pre and post running protocol.

On the days you are training, you should aim to foam roll for around 45-60 seconds on each area you are targeting. On the days you aren't training, you can spend longer focusing on tighter areas and breaking up adhesions within your muscles.

3

Strength & Conditioning

Runners love to run. Unfortunately, one area where runners fall short is strength and conditioning.

Strength and conditioning work should focus on helping you build strong foundations to improve your running efficiency and reduce your risk of injury.

Focus on glute activation and core strengthening. Once you are able to engage these muscles, your pelvis will be more stable and you will be able to progress into more running-specific strengthening exercises such as squats and lunges.

4

Pre/Post Running Protocols

A pre-run protocol is to do some dynamic stretches. Two exercises that work well are walking lunges, and leg swings. When it's time to run, start slowly and ease into it.

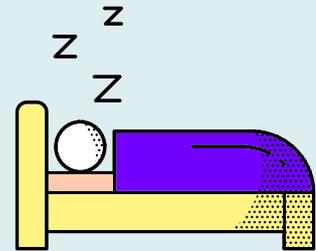
Once you have finished your run, **a cool down is essential**. This will help with blood flow and reduce your DOMS (Delayed Onset Muscle Soreness). After foam rolling, do some static stretches. Focus on all your major muscle groups, hold for a minimum of 30 seconds whilst breathing and relaxing into each stretch.

The quality of your session is more important than the quantity. If you only have a spare 60 minutes in your day, it's better to spend 10 minutes before and 15 minutes after your run stretching, instead of running for the full hour.

5

Rest

Rest and recovery are very important, yet overlooked aspects of training. Over-training is one of the most common causes of injury. The best way of enforcing rest within your week is to get organised. You should plan your week ahead so you know when you are running, strength training, foam rolling, and resting.



Also ensure you are getting at least 8 hours of good sleep per night.

If you are training for a specific event and increasing mileage weekly, then don't forget to have a recovery week every 3-4 weeks. Allow your body to recover and repair. A recovery week consists of a reducing the intensity and duration of your training. The amount reduced is dependent on you and what phase of training you are in.