

Run Preparation

You have the training plans; you have pencilled in three or four times per week to train in your busy schedule and you are determined to kick summer off in style with a comfortable run on Sunday 13th June at the Belfast Telegraph Runher 5k and 10k event. However, before you go too far, be sure to look at our 'Shoes/Gear MOT check-list' to make sure that you are properly prepared for the big day!

The team at Up and Running NI – all experienced runners- are used to helping and motivating beginners and those looking to improve their general fitness. Our Talkback forum: www.belfast.upandrunning.co.uk is the biggest running-fitness online forum in NI and Ireland and is a great first point of contact about learning more on running – and choosing the correct shoes and gear.

Shoes/Gear MOT Checklist:

1. Are you running in proper running shoes or fashion trainers? With about three times your bodyweight striking the ground when you run, good cushioning is essential. Seek out the best running brands such as Brooks, Saucony, Mizuno, New Balance and Asics. for maximum comfort.
2. Fit of shoe: Over half the first time customers at Up and Running are wearing running shoes which are too small. You need at roughly a thumbs width in front of your big toe for a road running shoe. Running shoe sizes are not similar to your Saturday night high heels!!
3. Digital Gait Analysis: Runners, joggers, walkers all are welcomed by ourselves and we stress the absolute necessity of checking your 'running gait' or the way your foot strikes the ground BEFORE you buy running shoes. More than half the runners we look at would 'Over-Pronate' where there is a roll in the ankle. This can cause all sorts of achilles, calf, knee and back injuries and the correct shoe for you ensures that the foot-strike is neutral. All customers at Up and Running do a simple one minute run on a treadmill to assess their running gait. Don't waste your money on the wrong shoes or your well-being on choosing style over the correct shoe for you. The majority of niggles and minor injuries which we see every day in-store are easily addressed by matching the correct shoe to one's running gait.
4. Running technical tee-shirts and shorts- Good running gear is breathable and highly wicking. This makes for a comfortable run as wicking fabrics allow the body to breathe through the clothing and not trap the sweat and heat underneath the garment. Cotton tees tend to keep the sweat in and are not ideal for working out.
5. Socks- Who would have thought it but the good old sock is an important add-on when looking to run in comfort. Again, technical running socks are wicking and

work to eliminate the sweat on the foot. Sweaty feet and an uncomfortable shoe can lead to blisters which are easily avoided with some simple choices on socks before you start training.

6. Heart Rate monitors and stop-watches. While many of us are not too concerned with time taken for a run or indeed heart rate during exercise, a simple watch can be a great 'companion' on a training run to tell you how long your local run took or how your heart is 'performing' when running. There are simple books available that will teach you how to train with a heart rate monitor. This is for the dedicated few!
7. Distance monitors- Yes, there are now devices that link up with GPS satellite and tell you how far you have run. They also tell you how fast (or slow) you are running at a given time and the total distance you have run. It beats driving around in the car after to check mileage!
8. A Diary- whether you purchase a running diary or use one of your own, one of the best ways to motivate yourself to get fit for an event is to log your miles each time. This helps you keep a tally on how you are progressing. It is a simple yet very effective training tool
9. Old running shoes- shoes lose circa 30% of their shock absorbency after 400-450 miles. It all depends on an individual's weight and running style as to when your shoes are finished. Tell tale signs are sore shins, legs and/or feet. Keeping a log in a diary can help prevent running in old shoes.

Digital Gait Analysis is available for all Belfast Telegraph Runher 5k or 10k Participants at race partners, Up and Running NI. It is Free with all shoe purchases. See www.belfast.upandrunning.co.uk for further details or call in and talk to one of our team.