

# Pounding the Pavement

As we look forward to the London Marathon, many of you will be hitting the tarmac in running shoes. Our expert Luke Taylor has some useful advice for those wanting to take up jogging as a fitness sport



Most importantly, you'll need a pair of decent shoes, suited to your style and running form. Cross trainers have a rounded toe, which means you can roll off your toe and onto your heels with as little pressure as possible. A flat shoe means you come down too hard, which can lead to shin splints or joint pains. A good cross trainer will also give you support in the ankle, especially if you are a 'supinator' or a 'pronator.' These are fancy terms which basically mean that you run with your foot either outwards, or inwards, (or neither). When you go into the shoe store, arm yourself with this information and buy accordingly. Some good names are Saucony, Addidas, Asics and Nike. The choice of whether you wear branded silky shorts and sweat bands is up to you, but in this traffic-packed city, it is really advisable to wear a fluorescent belt.

## Pronator/supinator/neutral test

- Look at the sole of your trainers. Are they evenly worn? Chances are you are a neutral runner. If the inside sole of your shoe is worn more, you're a pronator. If the outside of the sole, a supinator.
- Stand, feet shoulder width apart, wearing a pair of shorts and no shoes or socks. Ask a friend to stand behind you. Are your toes, ankles and knees almost aligned? This would make you neutral. If your ankles are rotated towards the inside of your body, you are a pronator. If they are rotated externally, then you are a supinator.

## Goal Setting

A good idea is to sign up for a fun run (5km/10km) and allow yourself just enough time to prepare. Too much time can make you despondent, and too little, you might chicken out. A good one to start with might be the Serpentine-Etonic Insport that is run in Hyde Park on the last Friday of every month. If you are a total beginner, a run like this will teach you the kind of thing to look for when you enter a race:

**Terrain:** Know the terrain, so that you know how to train. The Serpentine is flat, which means preparation doesn't have to include incline training.

**Where:** One lap around Hyde Park. There is nothing better than going for a training run on the actual course.

**Water stations:** None. A sports drink or bottle of water would be a good idea. You can purchase all sorts of hands free drinking accessories at running outlets.

**Distance markers:** Every km. Distance markers allow you to check if you are maintaining your desired run speed and time.

**Carbo-loading:** Many are under the impression that you need to guzzle pasta for days before a run. Although this can help, it doesn't always. Each gram of glycogen holds 2.6 grams of water, which can leave you feeling tired and heavy. (Glycogen is the principal storage form of glucose.) I wouldn't recommend carbo-loading for anything less than a 90min run. There are different methods, most entail packing the carbs from three days prior to the event.

## Where to now?

Depending on how deeply you want to get into jogging, the race hierarchy goes something like: a 10km, 10mile, half-marathon and then of course (if you are brave and fit enough) a Marathon (42km/26miles). Many people would be content with a lower plateau, but beware; this sport can become extremely addictive. Having said that though, there are very few addictions as healthy and enjoyable. Go run! For training advice, routes, races and clubs, check out [www.serpentine.org.uk](http://www.serpentine.org.uk)

## Exercises for jogging

### Narrow stance squats

These will strengthen the lateral (outer) thigh muscles and help prevent lateral rotation of the foot (supinating).

**Technique:** Feet about 5cm apart, abs pulled in, back flat. Visualize you are sitting on a chair that is about 10cm behind you, push your hips back and allow your chest to move towards your knees for balance as you lower yourself down.

**Tip:** Keep your knees aligned with your toes.

### Sumo squats

Sumo squats and stepping onto a bench sideways will strengthen the medial (inner) thigh muscles and reduce pronating.

**Technique:** Feet wide apart, toes pointed out like a sumo, squat down, making sure that your knees follow the direction of your toes. A barbell, dumbbell or dynaband can be used to add resistance. Do 15 step ups each leg, followed by 15 squats for 3-4 sets. **IL**



Luke Taylor trains his clients at the Imperial Rowing College in Putney, in parks, homes and even in their offices. For more info contact Luke at:

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