



**TRI-HARDER**  
TRIATHLON COACHING

## Running beginners' guide



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## Welcome

Congratulations on making the first step to become a runner! Whatever your motivation is, like being healthy and strong or if you want to belong to a super community or anything else, your journey starts with a decision and by downloading this ebook you made that decision!

If you are new to running, this world can seem complicated and overwhelming. Simple questions like where do I start, what should I focus on and what is the right equipment can already consume so much energy that it's difficult to get going.

Therefore I wrote this simple guide in which I will go through many of your questions how to start your running journey.

Are you ready to start the journey which will change your life?



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## Where to start? Trainings and preparation

Maybe your goal is to run your first mile or your first 10K, maybe you are planning a running event e.g a half marathon in 6 months time. Like many new and challenging things in life a good preparation for a running event is all about consistency and never giving up. It takes a lot of time, energy and focused effort to be able to train your body to be able to endure long periods of intense performance. Therefore it is very important that you make the right steps one for one and let your body adapt (respiratory system, joints, muscles etc).

Starting a new sport is always coming with slight risks next to the many benefits. Make sure that your body can actually handle the so called "training load" you are going to expect from it (regular trainings), so perhaps it is good to check with your local doctor (as a first step) whether your plans are realistic, you are healthy and you have no medical contraindication to start running.

If all that turns out to be good, you can actually start to train. Some people prefer to do it all by themselves and read about it a lot. Others prefer to train with fellow athletes. Below I have described some of the methods you could consider.



## Local team

The easiest things you can do is to check if there is a local running club in your neighbourhood and join their training sessions which are led by a coach. This option is great if you prefer training with mates and/or need that additional push to leave the house also on a rainy day.

On the other hand the trainings are at given time slots so you might lose flexibility. Are those trainings personalized to your goals and fitness? Usually not. Most of the times they are general training plans which takes no personal needs and specifications into consideration.

But e.g. the coach can help you to improve your technique if you just start your journey.

## Online personal coach

Working together with a coach online is a growing popular option. This works the best if you have the technical basis already for running because an online coach cannot stand next to you during your trainings.

How that works is that you will receive a plan for a week or a month, depends on the coach and the package you choose, complete the trainings and the coach will give you feedback based on your logged trainings (sport watch, heart rate, power).

It's also possible that you make a video e.g. about your running from time to time and your coach will see that and be able to correct a few technical details based on that.

This option is providing you the flexibility of training time during the day and the coach will also take into your work/family schedule for the certain week.

## Training plan

If an online coach is a bit too much for you yet, or too expensive, what about considering purchasing a training plan for the specific distance and beginner level? Most of these plans will give you a solid training basis and they are most of times very affordable. You do not even need to have a special training application to follow these plans, you can purchase them e.g. in PDF format, print out and follow.

If you prefer to start with using a prepared training plan you can check out [Triathlon training plans \(trifharder.com\)](https://www.trifharder.com). You will find here plans that will help you to finish your first 5K run and even to improve on your best 10K time.

You can see that there are many options to choose from to reach your goals! Whatever method you choose, starting to run will be a great journey.

You will need quite some time and effort to get to that race start line, you will face difficult days but seeing your body and mind getting stronger every day and finishing the race is definitely worth it!

## Choose a race!

As mentioned previously, your goal does not have to be by definition to complete a race, it can also be to become fit, healthy, belong to a community or anything else.

But let's be honest, 90% of runners love to be at a start line of a race, all the chills, have a "dream race" to complete! Does it mean you have to beat someone else? No, of course not. But if you participate at an event, most likely you will be hooked forever



Choosing a race can be an overwhelming and difficult task for many people, for some it will be just obvious...

Be honest with yourself when you choose a race and think about the below as well before pushing that magical "Register" button:

- Choose a distance where you can prepare for, what is realistic! In your first year in running if you have no serious background in endurance sports, a marathon is ambitious. I'd not recommend myself, as your joints e.g. need to adapt. If you are not sure, reach out to your coach (preferably) or your club who have already experience and can help you.

- Be aware of the risks you are taking! Are you living in a super flat country like The Netherlands and would like to choose your first race in France at a trail run e.g. where the course full of mountains?

Everything is possible and maybe you love challenges but be sure that you have the chance to get prepared to the specifications of your race. In this case as well, hire a coach who can make sure that you get the special trainings your race requires and that you can handle the technical challenges as well that your course needs from you (e.g. hill training in this case). Maybe you need to travel there to a training camp, to check out the course, and get familiar with the circumstances.

- Another case, maybe you love racing in cold(er) weather and cannot stand heat. Then racing e.g. in Barcelona Spain is not a handy option.

Once you have this goal decided, sit down with your coach and discuss what are the key steps to reach your goal and the work will begin! You will be able to create a plan from that dream.

## Gear

Running is known to be the best sport from a “return on investment” perspective as you only need to buy a good pair of running shoes and then you can start running. Well, being a woman, I’d also add a good sports bra...but anyway most important is that you do not have to have a fortune to start running, it is easily accessible for most people.

You know as everything in life, you can go unlimited, purchase the best or most shiny products (and yes sometimes those shiny products are also super handy/great quality but it does not mean that those are the only options) but as a beginner I’d recommend you to make the below basic investments and upgrade your gear the months/years afterwards when you have your specific preferences based on your experience. Because I am pretty sure you will make those next steps 😊

If you want to purchase new gear, you have basically two options: local stores and online stores.

These are the most important items you will need when training for a running event:

- Running shoes. As mentioned already, this is a key item as you need to protect your legs, your knees. Go for a scan if you are not sure which type of running shoe you need as there are hundreds of different products out there. You can go with one pair as a start. If you start with different types of specific trainings and/or train 4-5+ days a week you might feel it's worth to invest in a 2<sup>nd</sup> pair of shoes as well.
- Weather specific clothes. Depends of course on the climate you live, might be only some shorts and T-shirts, other people will need extra gloves, running tights, shirts and windproof jackets as well. How many of these items you need of course also depends on how many trainings you plan per week. You can count on that these items need to go to the laundry after every use.
- Good pair of socks. It is relatively a small investment, but it can spare you much pain and struggle. Have a few tested and buy 2-3 pairs at least from your favourite.

## Extra

- Nutrition. If your aim is complete your first 5k then you do not need to take much attention for nutrition during the trainings (unless water in case you live at warm/humid areas). But if your goal is a half or full marathon you will need special food and drinking during the trainings and the possible race as well.
- A GPS watch is not a must by any means but one of the best investments to track your trainings and progress for the long term as well. You can also use a mobile application and even connect a heart rate monitor to that app, but the watch is much more handy and easier to take with you.

Does it sound a lot? It might. But as mentioned you do not have to invest in all the stuff from day 1, you can build up and start with 1 or 2 sets of clothes for your current season.



## Race day

If you chose a race as a goal and your “big day” is approaching!

**Be proud of yourself!**, you worked hard to get here!

Are you excited? I can imagine. Do not panic, it's normal, I'd rather say it is necessary, why would you do this sport otherwise if it does not have any emotional impact on you? 😊

As the race is approaching, you can do a set of actions a few days before the race to stay calm and prepared on the start line (besides the preparation of course which you have already mastered at this point and you are in a great form):

- Know what gear you will wear at the race, do not make last minute decisions.
- Know the race day schedule, when you need to get up when do you want to eat, how will you go to the race

venue, how much time you will need at the venue before the race.

- Be prepared how will you get home; you will be sure high on adrenaline after the race but later on also tiredness will kick in, you do not want to start thinking how to get home...

You know that you are best prepared physically and mentally as well, enjoy day!

**It's your day**, celebrate the hard work you put in the preparation!



## Race finished - what's next?!

You crossed that finish line, great achievement, WELL DONE!!!  
Celebrate the moment, the hours, the days.

**IT IS EARNED, NOT GIVEN!** You worked hard for it.

Do not be surprised if you will be filled with adrenaline for a few more days 😊

But at a certain point you will start thinking, what's next?

Maybe you said at the finish line 'never again' but these claims usually do not last long. Once your body is recovered most likely your mind will already look for a new goal, a new challenge, a new accomplishment.

What are your options if you would like to participate at another running event?

One of the options is to “go big” and increase the distance 😊

You could race a new distance, e.g. if you finished a 10k, you can prepare for a half marathon next year.

Another option is the following.

You can also say, OK, I know that I can do this distance, I learned a lot during my preparation and the race, I'd like to repeat it and improve my race result.

If you would like to improve your time, enthusiast and all in your next preparation,

I can recommend you the [10K PR training plan](#).

The decision is up to you, remember, “hard work always pays off”!

## About the author

### Dora Kemecesei – IRONMAN certified coach



Dora is a 39 year old triathlete, born in Hungary, living in The Netherlands, Europe. As a child she tried several sports as everyone, swimming, handball, table tennis but ended up at triathlon as an adult.

She ran her first marathon in 2003 and she has been competing in triathlon since 2005.

Her biggest success so far as an athlete is a 2nd place at the Double Ironman World Cup (2010). At the time she was the youngest ever female ultra triathlete. Her personal best on "IRONMAN" full distance is 11hrs 21min.

She gained much experience during the past 20 years as a triathlete but keeps improving her knowledge every day; in triathlon one keeps learning about the sport and human body - that's why she finds triathlon the sport of the 21st century.

Dora is an IRONMAN certified triathlon coach since 2019. She has established Trifharder triathlon team in 2020 which is a global community of sport enthusiasts.

She holds fitness and nutrition coach certification besides her university degree as Economist and Sport manager. She works as IT manager in The Netherlands.