

# WASHINGTON COUNTY ROAD RUNNERS CLUB

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## NEWS AND NOTES

We have more news about race cancellations. Here is a note from the Loos family about the Run for Alex that was to take place on June 6<sup>th</sup>.

It is with sad hearts, that we have decided to cancel the Run for Alex this year. We felt that given the current circumstances, it was in the best interest of our community.

Anyone who has registered this year has already been issued a full refund. All mailed registrations will be sent back.

We hope to be able to continue our annual tradition of running for Alex next year. Our family will still be running in her memory on June 6<sup>th</sup> and we encourage all of you to do the same. Please feel free to post times/pictures on our Facebook page. We would love to see how many people are still running in Alex's memory that day.

We hope to see everyone in 2021 for another great year. Stay safe and healthy.

-The Loos Family

Also a few other race notes that have popped up. The Canonsburg Hospital race that was scheduled for April 18 is now tentatively set for September.

Shane Brunazzi has been shifting most of his races around also. He is looking to reschedule his race from June 5<sup>th</sup> to possibly October 4<sup>th</sup>. He'll keep us informed.

The Yough River Trail race is once again on the move. The latest date is scheduled for July 4<sup>th</sup> for all the distances.

As of this printing the Whiskey Rebellion is still scheduled to be run. That could change if Canonsburg decided to cancel its July 4<sup>th</sup> parade.

The annual Rain Day festivities in Waynesburg has already been cancelled. There has been no word yet about the Rain Day 5K. We should know better by the next newsletter.

Check out the information enclosed on the running of the Big Run to celebrate Global Running Day. This year will be a virtual run but there will be some extra incentives for those who register to run.

There have been no updates yet for the August races. As of this printing everything is still scheduled to go off, along with some earlier races that were postponed from the spring. Stay tuned for more details.

The annual Father's Day 5K/10K that has been taking place in North Park has tentatively been moved to Labor Day. If everything holds true that could be a busy race weekend.

There is a very interesting article we found about running with a mask on, with some helpful hints from Tim Lyman, training director from Fleet Feet Pittsburgh, and a special quarantine article written by Joe Sarver that we included in this newsletter. Stay safe everyone and we hope to see you on the road sometime.

To report Grand Prix times, call Tom Trettel (724) 229-0201 or e-mail [trettelt@comcast.net](mailto:trettelt@comcast.net). Or Grace Goffi at [gracegoffi@verizon.net](mailto:gracegoffi@verizon.net). For newsletter information or to submit an article contact Bob Pikelis e-mail [r.pikelis@comcast.net](mailto:r.pikelis@comcast.net).



## Quarantined

Everyone now is tired of being locked in or locked out after months of this pandemic. We can't run the workouts that we normally run since the indoor and outdoor tracks are closed. Lifting or treadmills at the gym are no longer an option and even running with your normal friends and teammates are restricted. What's a runner to do under this situation?

Since I live next to Washington Park my social distancing is a normal thing. I don't see anyone at 6 am in the morning even when there isn't a pandemic. Skunks, racoons and opossums are the only creatures out roaming the park at predawn to dawn hours. My biggest worry is what obstacles are on the trails from the trees and muddy path from the previous night's storm. Most of you don't have a park next to your house. My ability to run every day is now dependent on trails, ball fields and soft surfaces. After 47 years of running my legs rebel when I run the concrete and asphalt roads. If you're like me, find soft surfaces like a ballfield, soccer field or trail to get out of the house and clear your mind. Walk, run, or cycle to keep some base of fitness. Your mental state is just as important as your physical state especially being home bound for months.

In your house keep your sanity and fitness by cross training if you have an indoor bike, elliptical, treadmill or stair stepping device. Since being locked down I've went back to cycling and using the elliptical for 20 minutes a day. I don't use this as a workout but as a method to work other sets of muscles. My primary muscles for running are strong my secondary muscles for other endeavors are weak. Injury prevention you need strong core, hip stability and balance for running. I also try to do pushups and sit ups for core exercises. If you don't have indoor equipment walk the steps for 15-20 minutes as a light workout indoors. I prefer outdoor fitness routines but in Western Pennsylvania we can go for weeks without sunshine and with rain. Keep your options open work your core, use the steps and work on weak hips with various exercise routines if stuck indoors.

I try to keep myself and the athletes that I coach focused during this unusual time. I will run cut downs from time to time or fartlek or pickups to stay focused on training. As a runner efficiency is everything. Running faster workouts, hills or hill repeats will keep you efficient. Have goals for after the pandemic. If you're not ready to race due to feeling uncomfortable in large groups plan a day to run a faster workout on a trail, track or around a soccer field. This gives you a goal and something to stay focused on until life goes back to some sense of stability. My athletes are staying focused with base training and some sharpening workouts until the road races become available.

During this unusual time of being quarantined there are a few things that you can do to keep your mental and physical state sharp. Outdoor activities such as running, walking and cycling are your best options to get out of the house and keep social distancing. I prefer soft surfaces such as trails, ballfields or soccer fields. Even a walk around the neighborhood walking the dog clears your head and gets the body moving. Indoor training using treadmills, elliptical trainers, cycling are an option if you have the equipment. If you don't have this equipment work your core, work on balance and hip exercises to keep you at a level of fitness until you're able to go outside and train normally again. Set a few goals to focus on to give you something to shoot for short term and long term. Always remember that life isn't always the good times. It's making the best of the not so good times. We are currently in the not so good times. Stay active my friends.

Joe Sarver



## **How Does Running With a Mask Impact Your Performance?**

Does it count as hypoxic training and how can you make it feel easier?

By Emma Dibdin  
May 5, 2020

Just a few months ago, the idea of heading out to run with your nose and mouth completely covered wouldn't have even crossed our minds. It would have actually seemed silly. But since the [Centers for Disease Control](#) issued [formal guidance](#) advising that [people wear cloth face coverings](#) in public to help slow the spread of COVID-19, strapping on a mask after lacing up has become a reality—even a necessity—for most, if not all, of us.

Like so many aspects of life amidst the pandemic, masked running takes some getting used to. You may notice that your pace is slightly slower than usual, or you feel fatigued faster, and you'll certainly notice the less-than-pleasant sensation of your mask becoming increasingly damp as you run.

That struggle isn't just in your head. "Running with a mask, or any other type of face covering, is inherently more difficult because you have to work harder to get the same amount of air into your lungs," confirms Timothy Lyman, certified personal trainer and director of training programs at [Fleet Feet Pittsburgh](#). But running with a mask is also not an entirely new concept—elevation training masks have long claimed to improve lung capacity and oxygen efficiency by simulating high-altitude conditions. And though research is mixed on the actual benefits of ETMs, you may find yourself wondering if the same could apply to cloth masks.

Below, experts weigh in on how wearing a face covering impacts your running performance, ways to adapt your routine to compensate, and whether there could be any upsides.

### **Do I need to wear a mask when I run?**

This depends on a few factors, most importantly: where you live and where you run. The [CDC guidelines](#) recommend the use of cloth face coverings "in public settings where other social distancing measures are difficult to maintain, e.g., grocery stores and pharmacies," but many states and cities have issued their own specific requirements regarding the use of masks, so be sure to familiarize yourself with local guideline.

As a general rule, a [mask](#) is necessary if you're running in a populated area [where you're likely to encounter other people](#). If you're running alone in an area where you won't encounter others or come

within 6 feet (at a minimum) of others, it's likely not necessary. But keep in mind that wearing a face covering is not a substitute for physical distancing—make sure to still keep at least six feet of distance between yourself and others while running.

### **Does wearing a mask or face covering count as hypoxic training?**

Unfortunately, no. Elevation training masks that claim to create a hypoxic training environment are designed to intentionally restrict the amount of oxygen in the air that the user inhales. Many come with an adjustable valve which allows the user to increase and decrease the oxygen level. Over time, users can train themselves to perform with lower oxygen saturation levels, and thus increase their oxygen efficiency.

This is not the case with the kinds of face coverings that are being worn now to combat the spread of the coronavirus. "When wearing a cloth mask, Buff, or bandana, a runner is not changing the oxygen saturation of the air they are breathing in, but simply breathing in less of that air," Lyman explains. "The amount of air that gets into the lungs is still comprised of the same oxygen ratio, there is simply not as much of it as the athlete is used to."

But that doesn't mean there are no benefits. Wearing a mask or face covering restricts the flow of air into your lungs, Lyman says, which means your lungs have to work harder to get the same amount of air that they're used to. Over time, this could strengthen the lungs and diaphragm. "You're going to give your respiratory system a boost," agrees Hannah Daugherty, CPT-NASM and fitness expert. "Wearing a mask will make you breathe harder and increase your heart rate, while improving the strength of your diaphragm."

### **How can I make running in a mask easier?**

One major drawback to running in a mask is that the material covering your nose and mouth will gradually become damp, partially from sweat but mainly from the water vapor in your exhalations. This is not only uncomfortable, but [can actually make the mask less effective](#)

One way to counteract this is to try nasal breathing. Exhaling through your nose produces less water droplets than mouth breathing, which could help keep your mask drier. Another benefit to nasal breathing is that it allows you to take advantage of your body's nasal passageways that are designed to filter allergens and foreign bodies out of the air before they enter the lungs.

"The body has this built-in filtration system that we just don't typically use a lot, because we're used to getting as much air in as possible through the mouth," says Steve Stonehouse, USATF-certified



coach and director of education for [STRIDE](#). Inhaling through your nose means that even if you're using a cloth mask which doesn't have a filter, you'll be a little more protected in the unlikely event that viral particles are present in the air you're breathing. Nasal breathing also gives your lungs more time to extract oxygen from the air you've taken in, Stonehouse says, because you exhale slower through the nose than through the mouth.

But nasal breathing can be challenging if you're not used to it, and you should introduce it into your regime gradually. "It takes some training," Stonehouse acknowledges, "because you just can't get as much air in at once; your nostrils are smaller. A lot of runners find they can keep up nasal breathing for a while, but once the intensity level gets over a certain amount, if you're not trained, you'll just feel like you have to get air in as fast as possible, and you'll go back to breathing through your mouth."

Lyman suggests that pace is the first thing a runner should look to control if they're transitioning into running with a mask on. "Initially, the same amount of effort that a runner is used to is simply going to result in less output, so my recommendation is to keep your pace slow and manageable while you get used to the mask," he says. Lyman also suggests either nasal breathing or diaphragmatic breathing, but recommends practicing this throughout the day rather than just during runs, in order to get into the habit and "condition the lungs for what they will experience during exercise".

### How should I pick a mask to run in?

Whether you choose a homemade or store-bought cloth mask, a Buff, or a bandana, your primary concerns should be comfort and cleanliness, Lyman says. "The mask should not cause irritation, should fit snugly on the person's face, and should be kept clean." Ideally, you should keep several masks on hand so that you can rotate through different options, washing each mask after every run. You'll also want to choose a porous material that allows you to breathe freely. If your mask makes breathing at rest noticeably more difficult, it's not a suitable choice for a run.

### Will I see an improvement in my performance when I go back to running without a mask?

In all likelihood, yes. Even though the mask may diminish your performance for the first few times you wear it, your body will ultimately adapt. "If a runner were to wear the mask or face covering for several weeks or months, the lungs could continue to build strength," Lyman confirms.

"Once the mask is removed, the lungs will have the ability to intake and absorb more oxygen, which would most likely result in a performance increase."

Think of this as similar to the effect of running a flat route after several weeks of hill training: Your body adapts to the tougher condition and will likely perform better once it returns to the easier condition.

So if you're feeling demoralized by a tough masked run, take heart in the thought that it'll probably pay off down the line. Besides, with races canceled and postponed, now isn't the time to try and smash your PR. Instead, focus on [maintaining a running routine that feels manageable](#), supports your mental health, and allows you to adhere to social distancing rules. Cumbersome as a mask might be, it's a small price to pay for getting those treasured miles in.

FLEET FEET X BROOKS

GLOBAL RUNNING DAY

JUNE 3, 2020

On Global Running Day, let's inspire the runner in everyone.

We're going virtual this year with new race distances. We may be running alone, but we're still in this together.



### \$10 Registration

You'll receive a \$15 voucher to your local Fleet Feet and a virtual race kit.\* You can also purchase a limited edition My Big Run branded face cover!

Sign up online today.



# Essential Gear You Need to Start Running

## [GEAR, PRO TIPS](#)

March 25, 2020

You don't want your gear to be a distraction when you're running.

If your socks are rubbing your heel raw and your sweat-soaked cotton T-shirt is plastered to your chest, you're probably not going to enjoy your run. But slip into lightweight, moisture-wicking wool socks and a technical running shirt, and you can focus on what really matters: running.

Like a sharp chef's knife and quality skillet will make your cooking better, the right gear will make your running better.

This is your guide to the essential apparel and gear you need to start running.

## 1. How to Find Properly Fitting Running Shoes

Your [running shoes](#) are your most important gear. But choosing your running shoes can be tricky.

With countless brands and styles to choose from, there's no single best running shoe for all people. The [Brooks running shoes](#) that fit your friend might not work for your sister who is more comfortable in [Nike running shoes](#). So, finding the right ones comes down to doing a little research. And, since trying them on isn't an option right now, we're here to help.

The running shoes you buy should feel comfortable right out of the box. Don't buy shoes that are too tight and run in pain until they break in—if they break in at all.

To [find running shoes that fit correctly](#), check to make sure the length is right: Your running shoes should have about a thumb's width of space between the end of your longest toe and the tip of the shoe.

Next, get a feel for the shoe's width. Running shoes should be snug in the heel and midfoot, but they should have enough space in the forefoot to wiggle your toes.

Most people wear a larger size in running shoes than in street or dress shoes. The extra space

gives your foot more room to expand and lengthen each time you put your weight on it during a run.

Start with a shoe that's a half size larger than your street shoes and figure out the fit from there.

Finally, take the shoes for a quick jog around your house, or up and down your driveway to get a sense for how they'll work on a real run. If your foot or heel is slipping around in the shoe or it's uncomfortable in any way on a short lap, think about how it will feel after a couple miles. Also, heel slippage isn't the end of the world. Some runners just have narrow heels, and therefore have to employ an alternate lacing system. If that's the only drawback to your kicks, [here are some hacks to help you customize the fit even further](#).

Even the best running shoes will wear out eventually, though, so learn [when to replace your running shoes](#) to keep you injury free.

## 2. How to Dress to Start Running

Comfortable running clothes are essential to having a good run. Sometimes even a small seam or little bit of fabric in the wrong place can cause painful chafing that will tank your workout.

So avoid the rub with good running clothes.

Clothes that are good for running are typically made from synthetic materials, like polyester and nylon. Unlike cotton, synthetic fibers wick moisture away from your skin and help speed up evaporation, so you stay cool and dry.

You should also look for running apparel that stretches. Clothes that stretch will move with you instead of restricting you, and they'll make you more comfortable over the long run.

Then you should think about reflectivity and visibility. If you usually run early in the morning or at night, you need [running clothes with reflective elements](#) built in. Those elements are designed to reflect street lights and headlights so drivers, cyclists and other runners can see you when it's dark outside.

For women, there's one piece of running gear that's as indispensable as good running shoes: a sports bra. And [choosing a sports bra that fits properly](#) can make a big difference in how comfortable you are during your run.



Here are our quick tips for picking out and caring for sports bras for running:

- **Measure yourself.** Use a tape measure to find your band size and bust size, then subtract bust from band to get your cup size.
- **Find the right support level.** [High-impact sports bras](#) provide more support than low-impact ones, and they're best for activities like running, mountain biking and other intense cardio workouts.
- **Rotate (at least) three bras.** Runners should rotate at least three sports bras—one to use, one to wash and one that's ready to go. Rotating bras will make them all last longer.
- **Learn to wash your sports bras.** If you know [how to wash your sports bras](#), you can make them last longer. A big tip? Keep them out of the dryer.
- **Know when to replace a sports bra.** If your sports bra is worn out, you'll feel it in your chest. So you should know the signs of [when to replace a sports bra](#).

### 3. Get Good Running Socks

A bad pair of socks will make themselves known on your run. But good running socks are hardly noticed at all. They fit snugly, stay put and wick sweat from your feet to keep you comfortable.

Here's what to look for in the best socks for running:

- **Stick with full synthetic or wool.** Cotton socks aren't good for running; they're slow to dry and can lead to nasty blisters. Wool is naturally breathable, soft and stink-free, while synthetic fibers are designed to be that way.
- **Find your fit.** Running socks match up with a range of shoe sizes, so you can get socks that fit well. If they're too big, they'll feel sloppy inside your shoe, and if they're too small, they'll be uncomfortable over long distances.
- **High needle count.** Running socks with higher needle counts are better at wicking moisture away from your skin, saving you from irritation and dreaded blisters.
- **Try run-specific socks.** Running sock companies, like [Balega](#) and [Feetures](#), make socks specifically for the sport. Thoughtful features, like high heel tabs and targeted compression, are added with one goal in mind: to make your run better.

### 4. How to Track Your Miles

Keeping a log of your running is a good way to track your progress and chase down your goals,

and there are many ways to keep up with your workouts.

Using a GPS device, like a [Garmin running watch](#), is an easy, digital way to record each of your runs. Basic GPS running watches track your distance, time and pace, but more advanced models deliver a slew of other data, like VO2 max, heart rate, cadence and more.

When you finish a run, you can set the watch to automatically upload your route and data to an accompanying app. The log lets you look back at your previous training to set future goals.

If downloading apps, pairing phones and uploading data aren't your thing, you can also keep track of your runs the old-fashioned way: pen and paper. You can start simple by writing down what day you ran, your distance and your time, or you can take more advanced notes that include what you ate before your run, how you warmed up and how you felt.

What you write in your running log is a personal decision.

### 5. What to Carry on a Run

You don't need to carry a lot of gear during your run, but some items will improve the quality of your workout and help keep you safe.

If you leave most of your stuff behind in your car or home, all you need to carry is a key to get back in. Most running clothes have a pocket that can fit a key, or you can wear a [running belt](#) if you need a little more space for a phone or some [running nutrition](#).

You should also carry some form of identification, like a driver's license, so you can be identified if something should happen.

If you're going out for longer runs, you should also carry water. A [handheld running water bottle](#) or [hydration pack for running](#) is a portable way to bring some H2O, especially since you can't count on public water fountains or open parks during this time.



## WCRRRC AT THE RACES

### PITTSBURGH VIRTUAL 5K

Joe Lebert 36:45

### HALL OF FAME VIRTUAL 5K

Joe Lebert 36:15

### PITT MARATHON VIRTUAL 5K

Alexandra Brooks 40:22

## RUNNING SHORTS

- Never seen so many people in my neighborhood out running. All it took was a pandemic. Interesting to see if this activity level continues after the all clear is given.
- Some really interesting science about safety while running with social distance. Most suggest more side-by-side than front-back running.
- The Pittsburgh Marathon reports that over 13,000 runners completed the "Virtual Marathon" as of May 4. That's a really impressive total for the multiple events.
- No word if the "virtual wall" is as bad as the real wall.
- That group of finishers includes the Saturday training group who had 10 finishers. They ran the half course on May 2. For at least half, it was their first half. Thanks to Tom Carter for organizing the weekly runs.
- Anyone wanting to join the group can still do so by calling Tom at 724-554-2393 or Tom Trettel at 724-229-0201. The group plans on continuing the runs in the summer with a half or full marathon in the fall as a goal. Leisurely pace with no runner left behind.
- Saw the video of Bob Pikelis doing Karaoke. Pretty impressive. Next year's banquet entertainment?
- Are Carl Kondrach and Rich Sandala going through race entry withdrawal. The only winner here is their bank accounts.
- Without any real races, no one has seen Blake Headen for two months. No complaining...silver linings and all that.
- Tom Trettel has suffered a knee setback and is again mostly a walker. No word if he's got the butt wiggle down yet.
- Really interesting to see how this pandemic ravages local races going forward. While the big events buy insurance, the little local races do not. For any spring races with shirts, trophies, and supplies already bought, can they recover from the loss?
- Drove through Mingo Park on the first warm Sunday. I've never seen so many people in the park, including runners. Think it will continue when the lockdown is over.?
- In my neighborhood, a whole bunch of new runners. Again, will it continue after this is over?
- Nothing's worse than being injured when you having nothing but all the time in the world to run.
- Saw multiple people on Facebook were looking for dumbbells. I posted they should go to the WCRRRC banquet.

WCRRC "One of the areas oldest and largest running clubs"  
Established 1974

(Please check one)

New Member \_\_\_\_\_ Renewal \_\_\_\_\_

(Please print)

Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_ Sex \_\_\_\_

Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

Additional family members \_\_\_\_\_

Years Running or Walking? \_\_\_\_\_ Willing to help at club events? \_\_\_\_\_

Yearly Dues: \$15.00

Mail application and payment to: WCRRC  
1427 Willowbrook Drive  
Washington, PA 15301

All information given is for the club's records and will be kept confidential.

