



Safety Tips for Running in Nature

KEEP IT SAFE .

When possible, run with other people. Tell someone where you are going and when you expect to be back. Take a cell phone with you for safety. Bring fuel and fluids. Keep track of where you are as you go.

KNOW THE RULES OF THE ROAD/TRAIL .

Yield to other road/trail users (pedestrians, bikers, dogs). Uphill runners should yield to downhill runners. Run facing traffic. Follow posted signs. Leave no trace, and don't litter.

KEEP YOUR EYES ON THE ROAD/TRAIL .

Focus on looking three to four feet ahead to create a line of travel, or where you're going to step for the next few strides. If you want to enjoy the scenery walk or stop. After a while this will become natural to do.

TUNE IN TO YOUR BODY .

Run by your effort level, by your heart rate, and by the tune of your body. Stop running if you are in pain.

CHANGE GEARS .

Adjust your pace according to the terrain. Maintain a consistent effort level going uphill, and when in doubt, walk. Slow down for technical courses to avoid tripping on roots, rocks, and obstacles.

WEAR RECOMMENDED FOOTWEAR .

Invest in a pair of running shoes that offer the right amount of support for you. They should fit snug in the heel but have room in the toe box. Replace your shoes every 300 miles.



WEATHER PROTECTION .

Wear sunscreen. Use sunglasses or a hat. On hot days wear light colored clothing. Dress for the temperature + 10 to 20 degrees.

CARRY FLUIDS .

Bringing hydration with you is a must as your mileage increases. Know how long it is going to take to complete a workout. Usually, a drink every 20-30 minutes is sufficient, but more may be needed if it's particularly hot.

GET STRONG AND BALANCED .

Include strength and balance exercises into your regimen 1-3 times per week. Lunges, squats, bridge pose, pushups and dips, deadlifts, calf raises, and using a wobble board are all good ways to build strength and balance to help avoid injury.

MODERATION AND RECOVERY .

It can be tempting to push yourself too fast and frequently at first, but it's wise to allow for adequate recovery and to build up your mileage gradually.

RUN WITHIN YOUR SKILL LEVEL .

TICKS .

To avoid ticks, use bug spray products with DEET. Wear light-colored clothes, and perform a full body check after runs. If you see a bull's eye rash on your skin or have flu like symptoms, please see a doctor.

RATTLE SNAKES .

Be aware. Rattlesnakes prefer hot, dry locations and can often be found lying in the sun from dawn to dusk. Take care where you land and do not depend on hearing the rattle. If you encounter a rattlesnake, back away slowly. If bitten, keep the wounded region low and still.



STINGS AND BITES .

Be aware of areas marked for bee or wasp travel. If you know you are allergic carry an epi pen. If stung, wash with soap and water. If the stinger is still present use a dull edge object to remove it. Keep the sting area cool with a first aid ice pack, ice cube, cold cloth, or even mud can do in a pinch. Apply Calamine lotion, a baking soda paste, or hydrocortisone cream. Seek medical attention right away if there are signs of anaphylaxis.

WILD ANIMALS .

Avoid running on trails at dusk or dawn, as this is the time that larger animals like mountain lions and bobcats are most active. Try to notice the animals present when you are running, and be sure to give them lots of space. It is a good idea to run with a partner or in a group. If you have an encounter do not turn and run. Make yourself appear larger, back away, make noise. Report this sighting to local park authorities. Good news, in the past 100 years there have been fewer than 100 mountain lion attacks. Incidents between humans and other predatory animals are also rare, so know the facts, be prepared, but don't let it stop you from enjoying the trails.

POISON OAK OR IVY .

Never touch plants and then touch other parts of your body. If you suspect that you have touched poison oak or ivy immediately wash your hands or the affected area with soap and water. If unavailable, Technu or similar neutralizing formulas can be used. You can reduce the chance of contact by staying on the trail, and wearing protective clothing.