

Mark's Running Rules

1. **Prior** to your run, practice *dynamic* **not** *static* stretching techniques like light skips, bounding, high knees, back pedals and butt kicks. Save the *static* stretching for **after** you've completed your run.
2. Dress properly...not too much and not too little. Your body will warm to 15 degrees above the air temperature. Embrace, not fight, whatever weather conditions you face!
3. Deliberately start with a very slow jog or fast walk for your **first half mile** and always make your first mile the *very slowest of your entire run*. Your last half mile should also be run at a slower pace as this helps with your post run recovery.
4. Keep your stride length **short** and follow the golden "30/20" rule (30 hits/foot/20 seconds). Start all of your runs with a three degree lean from your ankles as this will naturally place you up onto your mid-foot, which will keep you off your heels.
5. Always maintain a "conversational" pace (AHR- Aerobic Heart Rate). Taking one full breath every 4-5 steps should be your personal guide, like a poor man's heart rate monitor. If you can hear yourself breathing you're probably running too fast!
6. Follow your Perception of Effort (POE) by always maintaining the same *effort*, NOT the same *pace*, throughout the varying terrain of your entire run. This is particularly important to follow when running up hill.
7. Your *longest* run of the week should **never be greater** than the *sum* of your other runs.
8. Take it easy on the down hills...short stride lengths are the key!
9. Stay out of the "gutter" (side of the road) by always trying to maintain balanced leg lengths.
10. Try to get something nutritional into your system within 20 minutes of completing your run like a banana or cliff bar type product and a sports energy drink or chocolate milk.
11. Journal, so as to monitor how all facets of your training *are* and *are not* working.
12. Drink at least 60 ounces of hydrating fluids/day...soda does not count!
13. Make *sit-ups* and *push-ups*, which work on your core strength, a part of your daily routine and use running specific exercise like Pilates and Yoga as your "cross training".
14. Get adequate sleep (7-8+ hours). The more you exercise the more rest you will need!
15. Listen to your bodies communication signals. Feeling fatigued? Then back off! Have a new ache or pain (knee, shin, hip, ankle, Achilles)? Then consult with your coach ASAP!