RUN FOR LIFE.COM
"I'M A RUNNER!"

GOAL SETTING

GOAL SETTING MADE SIMPLE

What's an endeavor without a goal? Competitive running by its very nature requires us to set goals and to try our very best to achieve them. For most of us, success or failure has few lasting consequences. Yet we strive and strive and strive. As you can read below, my goals are based on the age graded system. That's what I use. It's a simple system where by your times are adjusted for age and sex. It allows us to stay motivated as we age and also to compete with everyone in the field.

Actually, for most of us there will be many more failures than successes. But when those successes come, OH HOW SWEET THEY ARE!

GOAL SETTING MADE REALLY SIMPLE

For all but one singular person among the world's billions of people and who will not maintain that perch for very long: no matter how smart you are, there's always someone smarter; how good looking you are, there's always someone better looking; no matter how rich you are, there's always someone richer and in competitive running: no matter how fast you are, there's always someone faster.

What that means for goal setting is we can only run as fast as we were built to run. That's all we can do and it's all we should strive to do. Our goal is simply to learn what that level is and to achieve it as often as possible.

More on how to set goals

Eventually, most if not all runners will come to think about racing. It's a natural extension of running for fitness but certainly not necessary to achieve and maintain a fit body.

There are four general categories to be considered: I will race not at all; I will race "socially"; I will race quite frequently; and I will race less frequently, but for peak performance in target races.

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Throughout this website, we believe we have provided information for the entire body of runners. It should probably said however, the people providing input to the site could best be described by the "peak performance in target races" category.

1. For those of us who choose to race, perhaps the best way to set goals and measure results is using % Age Adjusted where 100% is an approximation of the world records adjusted for age and gender. This "handicap system" allows each of us to compete with every runner in the field even as we get slower and slower with age.

2. My physical limitations turn out to be about 80%. I can strive to approach and maybe even sneak into that level but not surpass it very much. The components behind this may be very complex but the results have been consistent. While my records from high school and college are certainly limited by a bad memory, as best I can recall, my times from those days would calculate to about 80%. Thus, for me the formulas have worked quite well covering ages over 60 years apart.

3. You can find these age standards in various sources but one that is very convenient is www.panix.com/~elflord/wava2.html. More and more races now include Age Adjusted results. It's a great addition.

4. Another piece of information all runners need is how to predict your expected pace from one distance to a different one….say from 1/2 marathon to 10k. The above website has 3 different options for Age Adjusted results; Predictions and Target Setting. You should find it very useful for Goal Setting.

Everybody needs a goal. I have a secret one:

I will become the oldest person to achieve 75% age graded in a Half Marathon. Please don't tell my competitors!