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TIPS TO RUN FOR YOUR FIRST 5K

RUNNING YOUR FIRST 5K RACE

If you train with friends it's almost a sure thing one day someone will suggest you join them in one of the local races. Of course, it's not necessary to race but racing is one way to measure just how fit you have become (and maybe how far to go). Participating in races is a great social event. You interact with great people of all ages. It is a very rewarding experience.

For a first race start at 5k or 3.1 miles. This is plenty to learn all the aspects of racing. Later you can work up the distance scale to 10k (6.2 miles) to the half marathon (21.1k or 13.1 miles) and ultimately to the marathon.

Racing at any distance is all about pacing. The goal is to run each mile as close to the same time in minutes per mile (or kilometer) as possible. It doesn't matter if you are a beginner or an elite runner, the goal is always to repeat each mile as close to the same time as possible.

There is no substitute for experience in proper pacing. Every runner who has raced much has made pacing mistakes. The most common by far is starting too fast. When in doubt start slower than you hope to run and build up to faster speeds as you go. This is called "negative spits". Until you know your limits we'd encourage all beginners to run negative splits.