

EP #6: Running Clothes 101



Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

Jill Angie

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EP #6: Running Clothes 101

Welcome to the Not Your Average Runner podcast. If you're a woman who is midlife and plus sized and you want to start running but don't know how, or if it's even possible, you're in the right place. Using proven strategies and real-life experience, certified running and life coach Jill Angie shares how you can learn to run in the body you have right now.

You are listening to episode six of the Not Your Average Runner Podcast. I'm your host Jill Angie. And in this episode, we're going to talk about fitness trackers, what the best running clothes are for you to wear, and of course, my current obsession, my favorite running bra for big boobs and how you can try one out yourself. So whether you're a brand-new runner, an experienced pro or maybe even just contemplating it because all your friends are doing it, you are in the right place.

Okay, so this week's Ask the Curvy Coach Question is actually from my podcast producer, Pavel. And I just have to tell you guys that Pavel and his partner Angela are absolutely amazing, and they are responsible for making sure that everything happens just right for this podcast.

All I have to do is sit in my closet and record and they do the rest of the magic. So this is just a quick shout out to both of them for being so awesome. So, Pavel, of course, listens to every single episode that I record and he'd ask me if I'd do a quick segment on the best fitness tracker; so how could I possibly say no to that.

So fitness trackers are really a huge industry now. The boom started maybe 10, 15 years back with these little clip-on pedometers. Honestly, I think those have always been around, but they started to pick up a little bit of popularity maybe 10 years ago, and they told us how many steps we were taking in a day. And they were sort of rudimentary, but now they've evolved into so much more.

EP #6: Running Clothes 101

Some of them have GPS, they connect with your smart phone, they track your sleep. They seem to do everything, right. So there's now so many choices out there it's actually hard for me to pick one that is the best because they all have different features. So what I'm going to do today is give you some ideas on criteria that you can use to decide which one works the best for you.

So if you're looking for just something to count steps, you can get a simple pedometer for under \$20 that will clip on to your clothes, doesn't have to have a battery; it will be fine. But if you're looking for more than that, that's what we're going to talk about today.

So first, you're going to make a list of your must-haves. They all count steps; that's really the basis of an activity tracker. So really what we want to know is what do you want above and beyond that? And so here's a list of things that I think is worth considering.

Now the first is cost. Like I said, you can get a simple pedometer for under \$20. Usually they're probably more like \$10. Now, you can upgrade that a bit and get something like a Fitbit Zip, which is essentially a waterproof, much more rugged, pedometer that will transmit data to your phone. And that's around \$60.

But if you want to add additional functionality after that, something that's going to go on your wrist and maybe have GPS and smart watch capability and do a heart rate and lots of other stuff, that could easily be in the \$200 to \$300 range, or even higher. So that's your first thing to consider: what's your budget going to be for this?

Now, do you want to wear it on your wrist or do you want to clip it to your waistband of your pants, or do you want to wear it in your pocket? Like how do you want to display this? Some fitness trackers are like really big watches and they're pretty obvious, I guess. So if you want to wear this all

EP #6: Running Clothes 101

the time but you go to a lot of fancy parties, you might not want to wear a big clunky watch on your wrist. So you might be more interested in something that clips on to your bra or something like that.

But if you always want to have your data close by, getting one that fits on your wrist is probably a good idea. They come in all styles and shapes, so they're actually – in fact, I had one years ago that was a Tory Burch band and then you just kind of slipped the tracker inside it, so it looked like a bracelet. So you can go super high end and get something like that.

But I see people all the time wearing just the plain silicone rubber type trackers and wearing it with fancy clothes, and it's just sort of an accepted fashion accessory nowadays. So that's just something to consider: how do you want to wear it and how easily do you want to be able to reference the data?

Now, do you need it to be waterproof? That's another thing to think about. Partly because some of the clip-on products can easily get lost in the laundry – I've been there before – and by lost, I mean go through the washing machine. So if you're going to wear something that clips onto your clothes and you don't remember to take it off every night before you throw your clothes into the laundry, you might end up washing it. So that's something to think about. I would say if you think you're likely to wash it, you might want to get a less expensive product in case you have to replace it.

Okay, the next thing we're thinking about is how much information do you want on the display itself? So, some Fitbits or other types of trackers will just display a series of dots that shows your daily progress towards your goal. So if you set your goal as 10,000 steps, you might have five dots, and every 2000 steps, another dot appears.

EP #6: Running Clothes 101

Or you might want a more detailed interface that's going to give you the time of day, it's going to scroll through all of the data it's collecting. It might even tell you what's going on on your phone; like if you get text messages sent to your fitness tracker then you are going to have a display that actually shows you what the text message is. So there's a whole brand-new level of complexity that comes the more information you want. And neither of those answers is wrong. Like if you just want dots on your display, that's totally fine.

Maybe you want one that doesn't have a display at all and you just look at the app on your phone to see how you're doing and configure the app to send you alerts on your phone. So there's a whole bunch of options, so you need to decide ahead of time, how much information do you want to wear on your wrist or on your tracker, and how important is it to you to have that at your fingertips?

Some other features that come on some of the more complex, more expensive, trackers is GPS tracking. So I assume you're going to be using this while you're running, so having a GPS tracker in your fitness device is also super helpful because it can actually collect data about pace, elevation and distance, and you can see that over time. So that's an option. Those are going to be a little bit more expensive, but if that's information that you're interested in, it might be worth looking into them.

Sometimes they'll collect heart rate, and most of the time the heart rate is taken on the back of your wrist where the watch touches your skin, but some of them actually connect with a chest-based heart rate monitor as well. So you can go all kinds of complex with that.

Phone alerts, like I said, some fitness trackers actually function like a smart phone, and so you can get text messages, Facebook messages – you can have your calendar send reminders for upcoming appointments. You can have that all sent to your fitness tracker. If you have an Apple Watch, you

EP #6: Running Clothes 101

can actually take phone calls on it, which is super fun when you're out running. I've done that before, like answered a call that was really important while I was in the middle of a run and then had to talk through it while I'm breathing heavily. So I don't actually recommend that, but if you're not running you can sometimes take phone calls and not sound like a porn star... Boy, this conversation devolved quickly, didn't it?

But basically, you want to understand like how much functionality you want to have as far as interaction with your phone if you are getting a tracker that's going to have that kind of connection.

And then finally, if you're getting anything more than just a super basic pedometer, they're almost all going to interact with an app on your phone. Fitbit and Garmin have amazing apps on the phone that over time will track your steps and how many flights of stairs you climbed, and sometimes they'll track your sleep and just a whole host of other information. So if the app is easy to use, it's going to make your experience a lot better. So that's something that you might want to think about as well.

So like I said, both Fitbit and Garmin have pretty much cornered the market on trackers and app functionality, at least in my opinion. And they both have an excellent range of options. So Fitbit is more, I think, for the general public, and they have more entry level trackers. Like I said, the Fitbit Zip, which is basically just a super rugged pedometer. And then they have everything up to a smart watch type, that will have GPS and track your running data and all of that good stuff.

It's still, in my opinion, a little bit more rudimentary than what Garmin has available. So Garmin doesn't have a lot of entry level stuff, but they do have fitness trackers that will give you so much data about your running and your workouts that it's almost overwhelming. The price comes along with that.

EP #6: Running Clothes 101

So like I said, the entry level Fitbit is about \$60 and then they go up to \$300 or \$350. Whereas the entry level Garmin is probably \$100 to \$150, and then I think they go up to about \$700. So it all depends on what you're looking for. If you just want something that's going to track your steps and give you some sort of idea on how much activity you're getting over time, I think Fitbit's a great way to go. Grab a Zip or grab an Alta. They're both \$100 or less and you should be good to go.

If you want a little bit more data for your runs, to track your performance over time, then you might want to head toward a Garmin. Nike and TomTom actually have nice products as well. I've never used them personally, so I can't speak to them, but I've heard really, really good things. It's just that Fitbit and Garmin are the ones that I've used personally.

I'm also super partial to my Apple Watch, because of how well it integrates with my phone, and it does a whole bunch of other things that I need it to do. So that's my personal preference, but you don't need to have an Apple Watch to do any of those things. And you can get a lot of functionality for a lot less expense and a lot better battery life, to be frank.

So, Pavel, I hope that's helpful to you, and of course I'm going to be sending you a Not Your Average Runner magnet in the mail. And if you want to get your question answered on the podcast, all you need to do is email me at Podcast@NotYourAverageRunner.com.

I'm going to pick a different question each week to read and answer, and you can actually ask me anything you want. So if I pick your question to answer on the show, I will also send you a Not Your Average Runner car magnet to proudly display on your car or on your fridge or on your whiteboard at work or your filing cabinet – wherever you want to put it.

Okay, so this week's topic is how to dress for running. We're actually going to cover two aspects of your running wardrobe this week. The first is

[The Not Your Average Runner Podcast](#) with Jill Angie

EP #6: Running Clothes 101

exactly what you should wear, in my opinion and in my experience of working with hundreds of clients. And interwoven throughout that discussion, we're also going to talk about going out in public wearing Lycra and spandex, and how you can get over any fears that you might have about maybe exposing more of your body than you are used to.

Now, if you've read my book, *Not Your Average Runner*, which you can get on Amazon, you know how I feel about going out in public wearing Lycra. But for those of you that haven't, I'm going to review it right here on the podcast. And so I hope that this is helpful to you. And of course, if it is, I'd love to hear about it.

Okay, so let's start with running clothes. So start with, your running gear needs to be made of synthetic material. And by that, I mean everything from your socks right on up to your shorts and your bras, your tights, your underwear; everything. Like, even your headgear – like if you wear a hat or something – I would suggest having at that least be partially synthetic.

And the reason is because synthetic materials breathe and they really allow moisture to escape. They don't trap moisture and heat; they actually are designed to allow it to sort of evaporate more quickly. Cotton is sort of a terrible fabric for running gear; just stay away from it. It traps the heat, it gets soggy, and if it's a hot day, it's uncomfortable and it's going to make you chafe. So always run in synthetic material running gear.

Now, the question about whether you should run in tights versus shorts or sweatpants, I am always 100% going to say you're going to be more comfortable in running tights. This is because they cling to your body, and this means you have a much lower chance of chafing.

So sweatpants, yoga pants or loose shorts that have a seam between the legs will rub on your thighs as you run, right. They also, if they're shorts, they tend to ride up in the crotch, and this is – I probably should have done

[The Not Your Average Runner Podcast](#) with Jill Angie

EP #6: Running Clothes 101

a TMI warning on this episode, we're going to get pretty real – that's like the worst feeling ever. When you're running and you have to keep tugging your shorts down over and over again, it's going to throw you off. It's frustrating, it distracts you from the joy of running, it makes you super self-conscious because you're thinking, "Everybody can see that my thighs are eating my shorts..." So just don't go there.

Yoga pants are marginally better because they're heavy enough to not get eaten by your thighs, but yoga pants and sweatpants are loose enough that you're going to have seams chafing your inner thighs, and again, that hurts. It hurts, especially on a hot day. So, stick with tights; or some part of the country call them leggings, and you'll be fine.

So, tights actually come in all different lengths, from ankles right up to mid-thigh, even. So just pick the length that suits the weather and your comfort level. Now, I usually run in Capris during the spring and fall, and then in the summer, it'll run in tights that are a little bit above the knee, or even like a running skirt, which is basically running tights that have sort of a skirt over them. They're actually super fun and you can really express your personality because they come in lots of fun patterns. I'll have some links to some in the show notes that I like from Skirt Sports is one, SparkleSkirts is another. They're super fun.

So that's what I'll run in in the summer, and then in the winter, I usually go with full length tights if it's 40 degrees or below. Unless it's below 20 – I actually have some ankle length fleece lined tights from Athleta that I love, and if they ever wear out, I will be broken hearted because I'm not sure if they have that same model anymore. But I'll have to go check on that.

Okay, I'm digressing again. I love _ by the way, I just love talking about running clothes, so just bear with me as I get distracted. So anyway, the thing that all of the running tights have in common is they all have a lot of Lycra and spandex, which means that they stretch and they move with your

EP #6: Running Clothes 101

body, and they hold their shape really well. They're not going to get baggy and saggy and kind of look like they don't fit properly. Most tights, nowadays, even have a little bit of compression, which means they're super supportive in all the jiggy areas, and this makes running feel a lot better. Because if you're out running and you have a nice big booty like I do, I do, it can jump around with every step, right. So that may be fun to look at for passersby, but it's not super comfortable. So tights with a little bit of compression can actually help keep any jigging down to a minimum.

Now, the same goes for your running tops. You want something with stretch that hugs your body. You can actually go a little bit looser with running tops, if you want, because there's less rubbing. Like you don't have thighs chaffing together, although you may end up, if you're wearing like a loose t-shirt with seams in the arm holes, you may end up getting a little bit of chafing on the inside of your arms. So I do recommend just going with Lycra, spandex, for your running tops as well.

So here's a little bit of tough love: during the summer, I want you to make sure you use sleeveless running tops when it's hot outside, because the more skin you expose, the cooler you'll be and the more comfortable you'll be when you're running, okay. So then you're not going to be constantly thinking, "Oh my god, it's so hot, I wish I was done." If you're able to expose some skin, your sweat is going to evaporate faster and your run is going to be a lot more comfortable.

So I know exactly what you're thinking right now; you're thinking, "Jill Angie, there is no way I'm going outside in public and showing off my arms." This is the deal, and this applies to running tights too: wearing baggy clothes or just covering up your skin is not fooling anyone. So, if you are plus sized – or even if you're not plus sized, but you don't feel great about the size or shape of your body – it might feel emotionally uncomfortable to think about exposing it. And when I say exposing it, I mean either letting some skin show, or just wearing clothes that are form fitting so that people can see

EP #6: Running Clothes 101

the outline of your body, I totally get it. For real, I used to have those same thoughts and feelings, but I mean this from the very bottom of my heart, there is no magic running outfit that will camouflage the size of your body. I mean, in general, running tights do make you look a bit sleeker than sweatpants, because they compress you a bit and the material is thinner. So yes, the outline of your thighs and butts are visible, but you do look a little bit smaller in form fitting tights than you do in baggy sweatpants.

So to a certain degree, tights are something that's going to make you look a bit sleeker, but then there's the tradeoff of the full outline of your body being visible, which can make people feel uncomfortable. The same goes for your arms, right. Sleeves don't make your arms look any thinner. Nobody is under the impression that you have skinny arms just because they can't see the actual skin.

So I want you to do yourself a favor and just allow yourself to be comfortable, because the only thing that wearing baggy clothes or covering up all your skin does is, A, it's going to make you hot on a warm run day, it's going to expose you to chafing, right, so again, I don't think anybody wants chafing; it sucks. And then B, it's going to give you the illusion that you're hiding, right. So baggy clothes give us this feeling that, "Oh you can't see me if I'm wearing baggy clothes." But first of all, that really is just an illusion.

Everyone else can see what you look like. You're not fooling anybody. But here's the real truth bomb about that: nobody cares. Nobody is looking at you; I promise you this. Everyone is so concerned with themselves. How many people do you see taking selfies? They're not looking at you, they're looking at themselves in their phone, right, especially at the gym; it drives me nuts.

People are so concerned with themselves and how they look and what you're thinking about them that they don't have time to worry about how

EP #6: Running Clothes 101

you look. They don't have more than a moment to spare to assess how you look. So worrying about what you look like to other people while you're running is literally giving strangers all this power over your thoughts and feelings about yourself; complete strangers who probably aren't even looking at you.

Seriously, like think this through. When you're thinking, "I can't expose my arms because I don't want other people to see them." Why do you care what other people think of your body? It's not their body, it's your body. They may or may not be judging your size, but for real, 95% of them aren't even looking at you. But I want you to hear this loud and clear: your body is nobody else's business. It is beautiful, it is gorgeous exactly the way it is right now. You are a runner, you are strong, you are badass and you are powerful. You are working on your fitness, you are constantly improving. The size of your butt, the shape of your arms, all of it, is irrelevant.

It means nothing about your character, nothing about who you are or anything else. It's just a number; it's just data. Runners come in all shapes and sizes, plus sized is just one variety; that's it. So I really want you to do this for yourself and for me and for every other not so average runner that's out there. I want you to dress like you mean it. Dress like a runner. If you've heard that fake it 'til you make it – if you dress like a runner, if you wear the gear, you're going to feel more like a runner.

So get the gear that's going to help you perform, not the gear that keeps you hiding your light from the world. So that is my tough love for today, and my wish for you is to just relax, choose clothes that you feel comfortable physically. And yes, it might feel a little awkward the first time you go out running in a sleeveless tank top, but when you get to the end of that sweaty run and you're not miserable because you're like super hot and you're like, "Hey, I actually feel pretty good. Nobody laughed at me, nobody pointed at me, nobody said hey lady you shouldn't be wearing a sleeveless tank top or a sleeveless running top."

EP #6: Running Clothes 101

Nobody's going to say those things to you. You're going to get through that first run and you're going to be like, "Oh, what was I worried about?" Okay, so relax, choose the clothes that feel comfortable on you, that fit you well, that make you a better runner.

And your challenge for this week is I actually want you to wear something on one of your runs that's going to make you feel a little uncomfortable, right. Like that sleeveless tank top that's been sitting in the back of your closet, pull it out, go for a run – or the running skirt that maybe you bought because you thought it's cute, but then you tried it on and you're like, "People are going to see cellulite on my legs. I can't expose them to that."

I want you to put on that running skirt and go for a run in it. And then, whatever it is, see how you feel about yourself when you dress like a runner instead of Rocky Balboa in grey sweatpants, okay. I want you to be the peacock, be the Beyoncé; wear those bright colors, wear those pretty clothes and show your personality. And then obviously, I'm going to want you to post the pictures in the Not Your Average Runner Facebook group.

And if you're not a member of the group – I know I say it on every podcast, but if you're not a member of the group, you can join at www.NotYourAverageRunner.com/jointhecommunity. I hope to see you there.

Alright, so here's my current obsession. I actually have to be honest, it's a constant obsession. I'm always obsessed with this. It is Enell bras. Okay this is by far the best running bra I've found for women who are a D-cup or above, okay. I'm an H cup. A proper running bra is not just a nice to have for me, it's an absolute necessity, right. I could knock myself unconscious if I don't wear a proper running bra.

The Enell bra, the Enell sport bra locks down my boobs so there is virtually no movement whatsoever. And believe me, if you've ever felt

[The Not Your Average Runner Podcast](#) with Jill Angie

EP #6: Running Clothes 101

uncomfortable – like if you're somebody who's out there wearing two sports bras so you can keep everything locked down, you know what it feels like to have everything shaking and moving around; it's very distracting. So these bras lock it down – sometimes it feels like I have no chest at all.

One of the things I love about them is that they're front close, which means there's no more getting trapped in a sweaty sports bra and having to call for help; and you've all been there. You know what it's like, you try to get it off over your head or you try to reach around and undo it and now you're all sweaty, and next thing you know, you're like tied up, laying on the ground in your bedroom yelling for help.

So the front close Enell, you will never have that problem again. They're thick enough – they're actually double layered, so there's no nipple show-through when you're running, right. And so that's – I apologize if there's some guys listening to this; this is a thing that women think about. And so, the Enell bra will prevent that.

They're super soft, so chafing is usually at a minimum. Occasionally you might get some chafing, but it's nothing you can't deal with using some Body Glide or some Moleskin. They have almost no stretch to them, even though they're synthetic, they breathe well, they have almost no stretch, which again means no bouncing.

And the best, the bestest, bestest part is they just put out a racer back version. And I tried it out last week; it's amazing. So now, of course, I'm obsessed with that. The racer back is awesome because it has a nice little cutout and I wear it with some of my favorite Katie K Active tank tops, and it just works perfectly with them.

So if you're thinking of trying out any now, the sizing is different than on regular bras. So what you're going to want to do is go to their website, watch the tutorial on how to take your measurements around your ribcage

[The Not Your Average Runner Podcast](#) with Jill Angie

EP #6: Running Clothes 101

and around your bust line to make sure you get the right size, because they go from a 0-0 to an 8, which – like I said, I'm an H cup. They fit me really well. They actually – you know, the size range is huge on these bras, so I never met anybody that couldn't find one that fit them.

Now these bras changed everything for me. I discovered them in, probably, 2009, and I was reading an issue of the Oprah magazine and she talked about how she wore them for her marathon, and I thought if it is good enough for Oprah, it is good enough for me. And I ordered one immediately and I just never looked back.

So, seriously, if you're a D cup or bigger I urge you to check them out. You can find a link to those bras in the show notes, and of course, you can find the show notes at NotYourAverageRunner.com/6.

I can't believe we're at episode six already. It's like half a dozen. That's a serious number. Anyway, the show notes, NotYourAverageRunner.com/6, and our time is up again. These podcasts go so super fast and I just love talking to you, but obviously we have to get on with our lives.

Well our time is up again. So this went super fast and I'm so glad that you are here with me each week listening to me rant and rave about running. Your presence means so much to me. Now, if you're anxious to get started with running, if you haven't quite started yet, I do have a free one-week jumpstart plan to help you do exactly that. You'll get your first week or workouts along with a bunch of tips to help you get started. And I promise, they're super easy and anyone can do them.

So what you want to do, just trot on over to www.NotYourAverageRunner.com/start and download the jumpstart plan. After you've done that, make sure to check your email for the plan, and then after that I'll be dropping in on you via email to give you some additional guidance. So again, that's NotYourAverageRunner.com/start.

[The Not Your Average Runner Podcast](#) with Jill Angie

EP #6: Running Clothes 101

And of course, the link will be in the show notes for this episode. And I promise, it will be super fun and you won't regret it.

I'm so glad we're on this journey together my friend. I wish you the best of running this week; bye.

Thanks for listening to this episode of the Not Your Average Runner podcast. If you liked what you heard and want more, head over to www.notyouraveragerunner.com to download your free one-week jumpstart plan and get started running today.