

Ep #52: Every Piece of Running Gear You'll Ever Need



Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

Jill Angie

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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.

Hey rebels, you are listening to episode number 52 of *The Not Your Average Runner Podcast*. I'm your host, Jill Angie, and today we are talking all things running gear, specifically what are the essentials you need to get started and what additional pieces do you need to add as you progress to longer distances. So if you're a brand-new beginner, this is the episode for you, and if you're thinking, hey, I might want to do a half marathon or a marathon someday, this is also the episode for you.

So stay tuned because we're going to dive right in in just a moment. But first, today's episode is sponsored by Run Your Best Life. Run Your Best Life is a one of a kind running program where you don't just get better at running. You run your way to confidence, self-love, and a kickass life. I coach live in that group once a week and my members are getting some pretty awesome results.

And if you listened to the most recent podcast with Shawna Dancer, you know I'm speaking the truth. So if you've been enjoying the podcast and the tools I'm teaching you here, you are going to love Run Your Best Life because we take all of this stuff and apply it to the next level. It's like you have a running coach and a life coach on call. You can join at runyourbestlife.com today and see how \$98 can change your life.

Alright rebels, it is time for the warm up. Today's quote is one that you've heard a million times I'm sure, but it is so important for runners in particular that I really think we need to revisit it one more time and here it is: "If you fail to plan, you plan to fail."

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Now, we've actually been talking about this a lot in the Facebook group with regard to half marathon training because fitting in those long runs really requires you to do some long-range planning to make sure you don't accidentally find out you have a 10-miler the same day as your sister's wedding.

So one of the things I really love about running is how unplanned it can be. Like, you can just put your shoes on, walk out the front door, and run. There's no need to find a class at the gym that fits with your schedule or buy a bunch of bulky equipment that takes up space in your basement or bedroom. Running lends itself well to spur of the moment activity.

But overall, planning is critical to your running success, especially if you have a busy schedule or have any intention of ever training for a race. From checking the night before to make sure all your devices are charging and you have clean workout gear to figuring out where you need to park for your first 5K to tracking the mileage on your shoes so you know when to get new ones. Or looking at the weather to make sure you're properly dressed, or leaving the house early enough so you don't get stuck in traffic and end up late to meet your running buddy. It all requires planning.

And yes, sometimes it's a pain in the neck, but taking the time to do it sends a message to yourself and others that running is a priority for you. And even more importantly, that self-care is a priority and that you are a priority. So many women put everybody else first in their lives, and if you are listening to this and you hear some truth in my words, I'm talking to you.

So these women, they put everybody else first in their lives, and then they end up last on the list. So they're really good at planning out how to make things happen for other people, but they suck at making things happen for themselves, when honestly, taking a few minutes to figure out your equipment, look at your schedule, and write your runs in your calendar is really all it takes.

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Now, planning your running activities means you are claiming your own importance. Nobody else is going to do that for you, right? If you don't plan and prioritize for yourself, you're always going to be missing out, and then you're going to be that person who's wondering how she fell off the wagon yet again.

Good intentions don't get you out the door. Planning does. And remember that you're at your best when you're running regularly. Taking time for yourself is not selfish. It's really not. You're a better mom, wife, friend, girlfriend, human, employee, whatever it is, you're a better one when you're taking care of yourself. That means other people benefit too.

So do you really want to deny your loved ones the best version of you? No. I don't think you do. So that means planning is more than just a strategic exercise and it's more than just a pain in the ass. I want you to think of it as caring for yourself and those around you. It's the ultimate in self-care because it makes sure that your self-care happens.

Now, you wouldn't forget to plan your 10-year-old's birthday party to the tiniest detail, would you? So you can take 10 minutes a week, plan out how you're going to make yourself a priority too. You have time, I promise.

Before we get into the meat of our workout today, I do have a quick favor to ask you. While you're listening to this episode, if you're enjoying it, I would love you to pause it, take a screenshot, and then share it on Instagram and let everyone know what you love about it. Tag me too because I love to give shoutouts to my listeners on Insta and my handle is of course, @notyouraveragerunner.

Alright, let's talk all things gear, from what you need to do for your very first run to more advanced items that will take you through your first half marathon, marathon, and beyond, I have got you covered today. So first I want to talk about the very basics to get started, and this is like, the bare

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minimum that you need if, for example, you're doing my free six-week starter program, which is on my website at notyouraveragerunner.com.

And this is just getting started, brand new to running, here's what you need. It's basically four things. Shoes, running tights, any length, a lock and load bra, and a timer. If you have those four things, you really are good to go. So let's go through them one by one. Now shoes, eventually I want you to go to a running store and get fitted but honestly, if you're just starting out and you aren't even sure if you like running yet and you have a pair of running shoes in your closet, they're going to be just fine.

Honestly, even if you have a pair of walking shoes. And I don't mean like, earth shoes or the kind that you get at the walking store. I mean like, sneakers that are intended for walking. If you have a pair of those, they'll be fine too. You will need to upgrade if you're going to stick with it for more than a few weeks, but I don't want you to hold back from giving it a try just because you're like, I haven't had time to get a shoe fitting or I haven't had time to get running shoes. So what you've got in your closet is fine.

Sports bra. You need this. I promise, you need this. And you need a decent one too. You need one that keeps your boobs from bouncing all over the place when you're running. This is not Baywatch, my friends. If they're all over the place, running is going to suck and you're going to quit, and I don't want that for you. So if you are a C cup or higher, my recommendation is always Enell.

And honestly, investing in a good motion control bra is always going to serve you, even if you don't keep running. It's something that you can use for any activity that causes bounce. And that includes things like spin class or any kind of like, dance aerobics, like if you're doing Zumba. A good motion control bra is going to make those activities more fun.

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And it's also something you can use for yoga. So I found out the hard way that there's nothing worse than getting suffocated by your own chest in downward facing dog. But if you're not quite ready to invest in a running bra, at the very least - I can't believe I'm saying this - wear two when you go out for your first run. This is the only time I'm going to tell you to do this because it's really not the best solution. But if the option is wearing a totally unsupportive sports bra, having bounce all over the place and hating running or doubling up for some extra control, I vote double up. But after a couple weeks I want you to go out and get yourself a proper running bra.

And again, I recommend Enell. If you buy one, you can use my code to get free shipping. It's JILLSHIP, all one word, and don't worry, all the links are going to be in the show notes. Really make that investment though. You will not be sorry.

Next up is tights. Sometimes people call them leggings. I call them tights. Bottom line is they're really important, and you don't need fancy running tights for your first few runs. You actually can just wear some from LuLaRoe or I don't know, whatever else you have at home, right? Trust me, tights are going to cut way down on chafing. In a pinch, tight yoga pants will do. But shorts or loose yoga pants or sweatpants, they're going to drive you crazy. They're going to creep, they're going to give you extra - they're going to creep up into your crotch, to be more specific.

You're going to be like, tugging them down, they're going to give you a wedgie, they're just going to drive you crazy. And I know there's a few of you out there right now, I can feel you, you're saying, "Nobody needs to see my ass in tights," and here's the deal: nobody's looking and nobody cares. And if they do, that's really their problem. They can look away if they don't like what they see. That is what free will is all about. Nobody's forcing them to look at you. Your job is to make sure you're dressed for running. Runners wear tights, the end.

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Now, for your first few runs, just wear whatever shirt you want. T-shirt or sweatshirt, long sleeve, short sleeve, tank, it's all good. I like to avoid cotton because it tends to trap moisture, but if you're just trying things out, just wear whatever you're the most comfortable in.

And then finally, you need a timer. You need something to time your intervals, otherwise you're going to be looking at your watch constantly, you're going to trip and fall and you know, skin your knee or break your nose and then you won't run again and that's terrible. We don't want that. So get a timer.

Now, you have a lot of options here. Like, most of them are free too. You can download a free interval timer app right to your phone. There are tons of them. I'm going to put a couple examples in the show notes. You can get fancy and download something like Runkeeper, which not only times your intervals, but tells you how far and fast you've gone. And again, it's free. Or you can buy a clip-on timer like a Gymboss, they're about \$20 on Amazon. Again, I'll have the links in the shoe notes.

And that's kind of a super easy option if you have that clip-on timer because then you don't need to worry about how to operate the app. But it's \$20. So it's kind of up to you what kind of investment you want to make, but honestly, for your first run, I suggest just downloading one or more of the basic free interval timer apps and playing around to see which one you like the most.

If you choose Runkeeper, which does distance and pace and so forth, that's fine. If you need a tutorial on how to program it, check out episode nine because I have a PDF over there that you can download and it'll give you step-by-step instructions for both iPhone and Android. Oh, and one more thing, I almost forgot. You might want to get either a headband or a running cap to keep your hair off your face and soak up the sweat.

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Because one thing I can guarantee is that you are going to sweat as a runner. Get ready.

Alright, now let's fast forward a couple weeks. You've been running for a while, you're really starting to dig it, you're like, yeah, this is something I want to keep doing for a while. You might even be looking at signing up for a 5K. It is now time to upgrade your equipment. So this is when I want you to go out and get yourself fitted for running shoes. And go to an actual running store. You're not going to Dick's Sporting Goods or Modell's. They're great for buying stuff once you already know what you need, but those employees are not trained to really measure your feet and understand what your needs are.

So go to an actual running store. Usually they're in a strip mall. This is what I have found. I don't know why. Have an employee sit down with you, talk to you about how long you've been running, what are some of your goals, how often do you run, how many times a week, how far do you go, what types of surfaces, are you more of a treadmill, trail, or outdoor runner. Have them measure your feet, like, actually measure them properly. Not just eyeball it or trust you when you say I wear a size nine and a half.

They need to measure your feet. Talk to them about your feet and your injury history. Have you ever had plantar fasciitis, they're going to need to know that because that will make a difference in the type of shoe they might recommend. Tell them everything. The more the better. And then have them bring you a few different shoes to try. Different brands, different models, even different sizes because often when a shoe feels good when you're just standing in it, it becomes too small when you've run a couple miles, especially if you're like me and you've got these long skinny feet, I don't know where I got them from.

But you know, my feet, they start out skinny and then they swell when I run. And so I need to size up half a size. In running shoes - I wear nine to a nine

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and a half in regular shoes, in running shoes I usually wear a size 10 because your feet swell, your toes need space to spread out and wiggle when you're running, just like, part of your natural gate.

And if the front end of your shoe is too small, then your toes might hit the front of the shoe when you run, you'll end up with blisters, you might even lose a toenail after a while. And again, I don't want that for you. So make sure there's room in the forefoot for your toes, make sure it's not too narrow for you. If the heel - like me, again, I have really narrow heels, and so the heels of most running shoes are too - are actually too wide for me. So what happens is I have running shoe stores help me lace those shoes to counteract with that.

So always ask them about different lacing techniques if you have special needs for your feet. Make sure you try a few different pairs, make sure you run around the store in them, or if they'll allow it, run outside on the sidewalk because that's even better. And make sure they feel awesome both when you're standing in them and when you're running because you're going to be spending a lot more time running in those shoes than you are standing around.

And then here's the most important part: before you give them your credit card, check the return policy. A reputable running store will let you bring back the shoes for an exchange or even a refund, even after you've gone running in them outside. Because sometimes what feels great in the store is not so great once you take them out a few times. And you can't find that out until you've put a few miles on the shoes. So make sure you can get something different if your first pair does not work out.

Now, if you do not have a running store nearby, I recommend trying out roadrunnersports.com. They have quite literally every single brand and model. They have a huge range of sizes and they have a little shoe fitting widget on their site that will help you pick the right pair. Shipping is free

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both ways and they have a very generous return policy. And if you become a member on their site, you get some pretty sweet discounts. So I highly recommend them in general.

And even if you do have a local running store that you like, I would check out roadrunnersports.com as well just to see if they have more options, because sometimes a local running store doesn't have everything that's available and there might be things out there that would work better for you and they just don't carry them.

This is also the time to stop double-bagging your boobs and invest in a true motion control bra. Like I mentioned earlier, Enell is great if you're a C cup or higher. I'm an H cup and they work really well for me. I will not run in anything else. They last forever, I have some that are almost 10 years old and they're still going strong, so I highly recommend them. But I get that they don't always work for everyone, or if you're below a C cup, an Enell is not the right choice for you. So my second recommendation is Shefit. They don't go up quite as high in size but they do go down below a C cup, which might be the right choice for you.

Next, I want to talk about keeping more detailed track of your runs because if you're ready to start training for a 5K or you just want to improve, this is the time where you need to start thinking about how am I going to keep track of my progress. So if you're already using Runkeeper, you're in great shape. You can upgrade to maybe a running watch like a Garmin. Apple watch is awesome but, in my opinion, in my experience, and I haven't tried the brand new one that just came out in September, but the Apple watch one, two, and three, they're not the greatest running watches. So I don't recommend them as your only device for tracking running. If you're going to have an Apple watch, I would say you might want to use Runkeeper to go along with it.

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But if you're going to get a Garmin, that's sort of an all in one because the reason you need to start tracking this is that 5K training plans are going to tell you the distance you should be running, and you really can't do that easily without having some sort of GPS with you. Runkeeper, free and easy, highly recommended. A running watch with embedded GPS will be much more - not much more. It will be a little more accurate, but of course, it's not free because we're talking minimum \$100 and then of course they run up to maybe \$400, \$500 if you want to get something super fancy.

So it all depends on what level of investment you want to make, how much data you want to keep, but there are options. Everything from free up to hundreds of dollars, so that's up to you. I do recommend, if you're thinking about getting a running watch and you belong to the Not Your Average Runner Facebook group, I would just ask the question in there and say, hey you guys, I'm thinking of getting this watch, what do you think? What do you recommend? What does everybody else use? And you'll probably get a lot of different suggestions.

And also, every single Friday in that group, we do a gear exchange thread where people can post the gear that they're not using anymore and sell it to somebody else who might want it. And almost every single week there's some sort of running watch for sale. So I would keep an eye on that too.

And I should make it clear too, for your first 5K, I don't think a running watch is absolutely necessary. They are fun, they're very fun, and if you're going to stick with it for a while it might be worth making the investment now but it's not necessary. As long as you have Runkeeper, you're going to be fine. It's totally up to you. But one way or another you do need to start tracking your distance.

The other gear - well, not the only other gear, but more other gear that you need to incorporate now are proper running tights and tops. In other words, things that are synthetic or if you've heard the term tech fabric that have a

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little Lycra in them, for tights you might want a little bit of compression. If it's hot out, you're going to want to run in short sleeved or preferably tank tops to help you stay cool.

And if you've been listening to my podcast for any length of time, you know my thoughts on tank tops. And if you're that person that's sitting there saying nobody needs to see my arms, just like the person that says nobody needs to see my ass in tights, I'm going to remind you again that nobody's looking and nobody fucking cares. And if they do, it's their problem. Not yours. Your job as a runner is to wear the gear that's going to help you perform. The end.

Now, my preference for running tights is actually the kind that have nice big side pockets so you don't need to wear an armband or a waist pack for your phone. And my favorites in that area is - in order of my preference, Superfit, Skirt Sports, and Athleta. Now, those are all - all of those tights are an investment. You can get less expensive options at like, Old Navy and Target and Coles and JC Penny.

I have just found that between Skirt Sports, Superfit, and Athleta, that the quality and the amount of time that they last when they get washed, you know, often my tights get washed like twice a week because I have like, my favorites and I just keep wearing them and washing them and wearing them and washing them. They last a long time, those three brands I find are amazing. Target and Old Navy, you know, you can get a pair for \$20, \$15, \$20, but chances are good that they're only going to last you a season and then you're going to have to buy a new pair. So it's all up to you.

Now, I also recommend investing in some very decent running socks with padding and blister prevention features. And also, not 100% cotton socks either because cotton tends to trap moisture, and the last thing you want is sweaty feet when you're running. So my favorites of all time are the Balega blister resist and Wrightsock Double Layer. So - I think they're called

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Coolmax II. So there's going to be links on the shoes notes for this, for sure. But I want you to know, running socks are going to cost you around \$10 to \$15 a pair. They're just not cheap.

But if you wear them only for running, they will definitely last a while. If you take good care of them, don't throw them in the dryer, like, let them air dry, they'll last a while and that money is worth it to avoid getting blisters. Trust me. So make sure you pay attention to your socks. You don't want to be wearing just like, the cheap-y cotton socks that you get at the end cap at DSW. I promise. They're going to give you blisters, they're going to creep down into your shoes, they're just awful. Just don't go there.

Now, you're also at this point going to want to start to grab some sort of chafing balm like Body Glide. The more you run and the sweatier you get, the more likely it is you're going to find spots on your body that tend to run and chafe, and Body Glide can really, really help. It goes on in stick form. It looks like a stick of deodorant, except it's clear, and then it's water resistant so it won't disappear when you start to sweat and it basically just creates a barrier between your skin and whatever is chafing against it.

And finally, if you do not have tights with pockets like I recommended, you need something to carry your phone because I really recommend you always run with your phone. Or if you have one of those Apple watches that has cellular service without the phone, that's fine. But if you don't, you need to bring your phone with you.

So there's a ton of options. Armbands are super convenient but sometimes they don't come in sizes that fit plus size arms, which frustrated me to a new level, but we're going to let that go. They also increase the likelihood of chafing, which is another reason why I don't love armbands, but they're an option for sure.

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My personal preference if I have tights that don't have pockets in them that day is to wear something called a Roo Sport Pocket, which it's basically a pocket that you magnetically attach to the waistband of your tights instead of being something that goes all the way around your waist. So it just like, clips onto your tights and it's big enough for your phone and maybe like a credit card or driver's license or whatever. So those are cool. Links will be in the show notes.

You could also try a FlipBelt. They're low profile, they're basically a stretchy belt that you can stuff your phone into. They're not super bulky, but then again, you're wearing something around your waist, which is not my favorite when I run. Now, I want you to note that none of the above options I mentioned carry water. And for the 5K level, you really don't need to run with water at this point. Just make sure you've got some ready to drink when you're done with your run.

Alright, moving right along, we're going to talk longer distances. Now, I'm talking 10K, half marathon, full marathon, and at that level - ultra marathons I'm not really going to address here because that's just like, a whole different thing and there's a bunch of podcasts out there for ultra-marathoners and you should probably - if that's where you're at in your running, I would check out those podcasts on the gear you need.

So we're just going to talk 10K, we're going to talk 6.2 miles through 26.2 miles. Now, at this point, you probably have most of your basic gear figured out, and we need to explore options for things like bringing water when you're running or replacing electrolytes and fuel and we do need to talk about shoes again.

So actually, let's just go there first. At the half marathon distance and above, you are going to be racking up the miles. You should be changing out your shoes every 250 to 300 miles or so and you don't want to break in a new pair too close to race day. So I strongly recommend getting a second

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pair of shoes and then alternating them during your training. Wear one on day one and then at your next run wear the other pair. Let them air out, let them recover in between.

This keeps the mileage on each pair lower, first of all, and then you always have a relatively fresh pair to go running and when it comes time to race day, you'll have a pair that's broken in but is lower in mileage. Alternatively, if you don't want to have two pairs for training or maybe right now you're like, I just can't afford to get a second pair, I want you to make sure you break in a new pair of shoes about a month before your race.

So you can train with one pair but about a month before your race, go get another pair of the exact same shoe, same model, same year, and then start breaking it in. We don't want to race on brand new shoes and you also don't want to race on shoes that already have like a couple hundred miles on them. So you want to be in that sweet spot of maybe they've got 50 miles to 150 miles or 175 miles. Somewhere in that sweet spot.

Now, I'm going to save the deep dive into race fuel for another episode but for now, I just want you to know that you need to address this once your runs get longer than 90 minutes or so. This is something you will have to figure out and like I said, I'm just going to do another podcast to talk about it in detail. But there are a lot of commercial options out there. You can start experimenting. Personally though, I prefer to make my own.

I love the book Feed Zone Portables. They have lots of recipes and options and guidance on how to fuel yourself on long endurance runs. Now, once your runs get longer than an hour or so, you also need to start bringing water and electrolyte replacement. Now, I do not recommend Gatorade or Powerade or any of those types of drinks because they're really, really high in sugar and if it's something that you would drink like, if you would go to your local convenience store and grab a Gatorade and just drink it in the

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car, that's not something that's really appropriate for you for your training runs.

So I'm going to suggest you start out with just plain water, and then as your runs start to get longer you can use an additive like Nuun or Scratch or Tailwind. These are tablets and powders that you add to your water that basically replace the electrolytes that you're losing when you sweat. And so if you sweat a lot when you run and you notice that you have like this residue, this like, crusty white residue on your face or on your arms or on your neck, those are the electrolytes that were in your sweat that they've just like, dried on your skin when the liquid evaporated.

And you need to replace those because they're necessary for your metabolism, they're necessary for your brain to function, they're necessary for your heart to beat properly. Like, they're pretty much one of the most important things in your body. We need to replace them. So there are different options. Nuun, Scratch, and Tailwind are the three that I recommend and I don't really recommend one over the others. It just sort of depends on which ones work best for you because some have artificial sweeteners, some have very small amounts of dextrose, both of them - all of them are sweetened a tiny little bit just to make them a little bit more palatable because if it was just the straight electrolyte replacement it might taste kind of weird. But they taste fine, they're delicious.

But I would try - I wouldn't just go to Amazon and buy like, a whole pack of Scratch and then find out that you don't tolerate it very well. I would get samples from maybe REI or Target or something like that and give them a try or have a friend and like, split a box or something like that. And try all three of them and decide which one works best for you because everybody's stomach tolerates things differently and so you don't want to invest \$20, \$30 in all these electrolyte replacements only to find out that like, your body rejects them. I don't mean to scare you. Most of you are

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going to have no problem with it, but I would give more than one a try just to see which works best for you.

Now, next question is how are you going to carry all this water. The most common options for long distance training are either a FuelBelt or a hydration backpack, and both have pros and cons. A FuelBelt allows you to clip multiple bottles of water to your waist. It's pretty easy to get in and out of. The bottles can be washed in the dishwasher, the belt usually has a little bit of room for you to tuck a few extra things, maybe a few bites of running fuel or whatever.

But you have to have something around your waist. But the other thing is having it around your waist means it's close to your center of gravity and it's less likely to throw off your running game. But I just hate having anything around my waist when I run so I find that annoying. Other people aren't bothered by it. But that's the FuelBelt piece. They're usually not super expensive and you can add more clips to carry more water so they are a pretty convenient option.

A hydration backpack is super easy to carry. It's basically a little backpack with a pouch in it that can carry up to about two liters of water, depending on the size you get. And then there's a little tube coming out of that that sits on your shoulder and you can just sort of suck on the water, sip on the water whenever you want. Plus, you can usually - there's more space in the backpack so you can actually carry more than you might be able to with a FuelBelt.

Now, the downside is that you're carrying two liters of water on your back and that can feel a little bit heavy. And oh god, they are such a pain in the ass to clean. I definitely do not recommend using any kind of electrolyte powder in that hydration pack because if you don't clean it really well it can get kind of sticky and gross over time. But as far as being able to carry lots of fluid, keeping your hands free, not having anything around your waist,

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the packs are pretty awesome. It's just sort of a matter of how much maintenance you're willing to do.

And I'm going to put - my favorite is a Nathan backpack and the reason it's my favorite is because it works well for women with big boobs. So I'm going to put a link to that in the show notes so you know if you're in the same situation that I'm in, you'll know which one to get.

Now, let's talk blisters because with the added distance, you're adding additional friction and you might be noticing a tendency to get more blisters. And I do recommend, first of all, you got to get the right socks. I actually recommend carrying an extra pair because if your feet sweat a lot, this can really enhance the tendency to get blisters and so if you can switch your socks out and put a dry pair on halfway through your run, that will definitely help. I also recommend a product called Trail Toes that helps provide a little bit more of a barrier than maybe Body Glide. And that again, link to that in the show notes.

So finally, these long runs are going to require additional recovery time and effort. And if you don't already have a foam roller, you got to get one of those and use it after every single run. So that's the gear that you need from beginning all the way through full marathon.

And now, this last category I want to talk about is safety gear, and this applies to everyone whether it's your first run or whether it's your first marathon, especially if you are running at night or running alone. Now, after dark or at dusk or dawn, which are probably even worse than dark honestly, because we're in this weird twilight where we think we could be seen but in reality, we can't, you need to make yourself visible.

And the easiest way to do this is with a blinking light. Get a clip-on blinking light, put it on the back of your shirt or your hat so it can be seen by cars approaching from behind you, and I really hope that if it's that time of night,

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you are not listening to headphones are you are running opposing traffic so that you can see everything coming your way. So clip that blinker on the back of your shirt or your hat, turn it on, get a roll of reflective tape and then do a crisscross on the back of your shirt or your jacket or wrap it around your ankles and your arms. Just make sure that as much as possible you are reflecting and blinking at everybody coming across your path.

And one of my favorite things lately is a slap band, if you remember those from the 90s that is both reflective and has blinkers. And they're like, \$8 on Amazon, you can put them around your leg or your arm. They're very easy to use and very highly visible. A head lamp, this is also a must if you're running after dark so that you can see where you are going.

They're inexpensive, they're easy to use, I don't have a specific brand recommendation. Any of them are fine. You don't need to invest in a \$50 special edition camping deep dark jungle edition from REI just to be safe. You can pick one up for like, \$10 at Walmart and be fine. But get one.

And if you run alone on trails or in parks or in places where there aren't a lot of people, I recommend running with some sort of loud alarm that you can sound if something happens, and that includes someone attacking you or even if you fall and get hurt or you know, you get bitten by a dog or something and you need someone - to help somebody find your location.

So run with some kind of personal alarm. Some people I know run with weapons and I honestly - I can't speak to that. It's not something that I personally do mainly because I'm more concerned that I would accidentally stab myself or shoot my foot off or spray mace in my own eyes before I would be able to deter an attacker. But I do think the alarm is a good deterrent for sure. It'll get people's attention so that's my main recommendation.

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I also recommend always, always, always running with your phone. If you get lost or hurt, you are going to need it to call for help. Especially if you're out in the woods. It's just good sense. Always tell someone where you're going, tell them when you're going to be back, set your phone up to track your location so that that person can see where you are, and if you don't come home or check in afterwards, that they can find you. And honestly, there's a 99.99% chance you're always going to be fine, but just in case, make sure you can be located and make sure you have some sort of alarm with you.

And finally, get yourself a road ID. This is a little piece of metal. It's engraved with your name and your emergency contact information. You wear that either as a bracelet or you wear it - you can lace it into your shoes. And this is basically in case you're unconscious and can't speak for yourself, the road ID will tell people who to talk to. And also, you can get things on it like, hey, I am diabetic or hey, I have epilepsy. If you have a condition that emergency care workers need to know about, you can put that on the road ID.

And they know. Emergency workers know if a jogger or a runner has been hurt, they know to look for that road ID. You can get them - I think it's at roadid.com, they're maybe \$15. It might save your life and it definitely will be a good investment for you. So my hope of course is that you never ever need it, but if something happens and you're incapacitated, it will not only help you. It will help everyone around you do their job. That is it.

Okay, rebels, we are heading into the cool down, which means it is time for my latest obsession, except this whole episode has been chocked full of links to equipment and gear that I recommend. So instead of talking about a product that I'm loving right now, what I'm going to do is tell you about what I've been obsessed with doing for the past few weeks, and that is planning out the kickass retreat that's taking place for my rebel runners in training for the New Orleans half marathon in February.

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The house, and by house I mean mansion, practically, the house is booked, Megan and I are in the throes of planning out some really fun activities for the group. Jen is creating an amazing menu for everybody and we have even booked the party bus that's going to take everybody to and from the race.

Now, there are still two spots open so if you want in on the fun, you have to sign up for a 10-minute call with me to see if it's a fit. You can do that at talktojill.com and again, there's only two spots left to do this race with this group. It's going to be off the hook. So go over to talktojill.com, sign up for the 10-minute call and then we'll figure it out from there.

Alright rebels, that is it for this week. Everything I mentioned in this episode can be found in the show notes at notyouraveragerunner.com/52 and I will talk to you soon.

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.