

Ep #170: 9 Running Mistakes and How to Fix Them



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With Your Host

Jill Angie

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Strength training is important because a strong runner is an injury-free runner usually. So if you are skipping your strength training and you come to me and you're just like, I don't know, I keep having problems with my knee, I keep having problems with my hip, I'm going to say to you, how much strength training are you doing?

Welcome to *The Not Your Average Runner Podcast*. If you're a woman who has never felt athletic but you still dream about becoming a runner, you are in the right place. I'm Jill Angie, a certified running and life coach and I teach women how to start running, feel confident, and change their lives, and now I want to help you.

Hey rebels. How you doing this week? I thought it would be kind of fun today to talk about some of the common running mistakes that I see, both with my new clients and with people in the Facebook group or people that write in to me.

And then kind of talk to you about what you can do about them so you can stay motivated and injury-free. And this is a podcast for beginner runner and experienced runners alike. Because if you're brand new, there's a lot of mistakes you might make because there's a lot of misinformation out there.

But if you've been running for a while and not seeing progress, it might be because you're making one of these mistakes or even more. So running is not as complicated as people seem to think, and I bet you'd be surprised at what goes into a winning running program. And I want to just kind of cover that today so you can see how easy it is.

So I'm not going to present these in any particular order. I'm just going to go through them one at a time. This is - I made this list and full disclosure, normally I have a script when I do a podcast. And today I thought let's see what happens when I just have a list of things and just kind of riff on them.

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So that's what we're going to do today. So these are in no particular order, but I'm going to go through nine of them. There's actually nine training mistakes that I came up with and they're all going to be game-changers for you, especially if you're a newbie.

Alright, the first one is don't run every day. Seriously, don't run every day. Why? Because your body and your muscles need recovery time to absorb the training. A lot of muscle building and muscle repair happens when you're resting. And if you don't ever rest, your muscles don't get a chance to repair and get stronger.

And so you actually kind of stay stuck at the same level or maybe even lose ground because you're not giving your body time to improve. So don't run every day. I recommend three times a week if you're brand new. If you're a more experienced runner, then maybe four times a week and yeah, there are going to be some back to back days in there, just because there's only seven days in a week.

But running seven days a week or even five days a week, if you're running five days a week, I'm expecting that you are like, a professional runner. Or maybe training for an ultramarathon. But if you're training for your first 5K or you're brand new, or even if you're training for your first half marathon, I want you to stick with three to four days a week so that your body has enough time to rest, recover, and get stronger.

Mistake number two, don't forget to stretch after you run. It's really, really important. Actually, stretch after every single workout that you do. That's going to make a huge difference in how sore you feel afterwards, how stiff you feel afterwards, even in the days afterwards.

But in particular, after you go for a run, runners' muscles are notoriously tight. And then if you go for a run, you take a shower, you hop in the car, you sit in the car for a while and then you get to work, and then you're

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sitting at work all day long, everything is going to get really tight and really cranky, and that can lead to injury.

So make sure that you're stretching those muscles out after every run. I like to stretch multiple times throughout the day, just to keep my body feeling limber. And it's funny, I've had people tell me I'm unusually flexible, especially for a fat girl. And I think it's because I stretch so much.

So don't forget to stretch after you run. And a lot of people think that they should stretch before they run, and when you're talking about static stretches, where you kind of pull your ankle up to your butt to do a quad stretch or something like that, and then you hold the pose, so basically a static stretch is where you move into a pose and then you hold it without moving for 30 seconds, please don't do that before you run.

You don't want to stretch your cold muscles. You want to actually warm up. You can do some dynamic stretches, which are like, walking lunges and butt kicks and upper body swings. You can totally do that. But don't do static stretches before you run. Save it for after but make sure you don't miss it after you run.

Number three big mistake, and it's an easy one to fall into. Don't obsess about your numbers please. We put so much stock in all the individual pieces of data from each one of our runs and we're like, oh my gosh, I was a little slower today than I was two days ago, I wonder what's happening, I wonder what's going wrong.

And really, it's like, who knows? It could be that it was a super cloudy day and that interfered with the GPS. Or if you're a treadmill runner, you might have gone running on a different treadmill and treadmills are notoriously inaccurate.

And so when you obsess about your numbers, you can get wrapped up in judging yourself when there's really nothing to judge yourself about. So I

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like to go by feel. I like to go by how do I feel on my run today. And sometimes your runs are going to feel easier, and sometimes they're going to feel harder, and that's normal.

That's related to how much sleep you got, what types of things you've been eating, whether you've been hydrating with water or alcohol in the past few days. How much running you've done in the week or two or three leading up to. And a whole bunch of factors go into how your run feels.

But I like to look at how did I feel on this run, and then if I didn't feel the way I wanted to, I look at my training and all of the things that I've done over the past couple weeks. Again, I look at what I've been eating, I look at how much water I've been drinking, I look at how I've been sleeping, I look at how much other training I've been doing.

And usually I can see exactly why I may have felt tired or sluggish or uncomfortable on a particular run. And then I can just be like, oh okay, that makes perfect sense. I've been overtraining or haven't been sleeping enough, and then I can correct those things and my runs start feeling better.

So don't pay too much attention to your numbers, especially on a day to day basis. I'd say once a month maybe you check in and say look at that, I'm running a little farther now, or I'm running a little faster now, or I'm feeling a little better at the same pace.

Monthly is a great time to check in and see your progress, but don't worry about it on a day to day basis because just like your weight, just like everything in our bodies, we have daily fluctuations based on all the factors I talked about.

And of course, when you're female, you know that you have a monthly cycle and that impacts your ability to run as well. You might go running one day and just have really bad cramps. And it doesn't feel great. Or you might

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feel bloated or just extra cranky or something like that because of what your hormones are doing.

And that's normal. So just let the numbers go and concentrate on how you feel and if you're not feeling the way you want to, take a look at what's been going on in your life so that you can make adjustments if you need to. And you know what else? Some days you're just going to have a shitty run and that's just running.

Okay, number four. Don't add mileage every week. And this is something that my more advanced runners often fall into this trap because they think okay, I'm going to train for a half marathon, then week one, I'm going to do a three-mile run, week two, I'm going to do four miles, week three, I'm going to do five miles, week four, I'm going to do six miles, and every week they're adding a mile, maybe two, thinking they want to get as fast as they can to be able to run 13 miles.

And then this is kind of like, part 4A of that mistake, if you're going to be training for a distance race, don't run the mileage of that distance every week in your training. You want to build up. But you want to build up slowly to give your body a chance to adjust.

Just like we talked about with not running every day, adding mileage every week can lead to overloading your body's ability and not giving it a chance to relax and recover and absorb the training. So I suggest adding mileage every other week.

So if it's your long run, we're talking about adding miles to your long run of course, every other weekend, say maybe that first weekend you run four miles, and then the next weekend you run three, and then the next weekend you run five miles, and then the next weekend you go back to three.

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And then maybe you go up to six miles, and then again, come back to three miles. So you want to vary those long runs every week to give your body a chance to adapt. Otherwise, you're going to push yourself way too far too fast and you're going to get hurt.

And when you get hurt, then you don't get to run your race, and we don't want that to happen. So this applies to basically all of my distance runners. But even when you're brand new and you're like, I just want to get to that 5K mark, take it easy.

Maybe it's a half a mile every other week when you're down in those lower mileage numbers, but be deliberate and be careful when you are ramping up your mileage because if you go too far too fast, you're going to get hurt, and again, you're going to have to take time off from running.

Alright, number five. This is one that I had to learn the hard way myself multiple times, but don't chug water before you go out for a run. Just don't do it. It's much, much better to kind of make sure you're hydrating yourself regularly throughout the day every day.

But before you go for a run, you don't want to put a lot of water in your stomach because what's going to happen? First of all, it takes a while for that water to get absorbed into your bloodstream and get delivered and absorbed into your lymphatic system and get delivered to your muscles.

So the water you chug right before you go running is not going to help you while you're running. What it will do though is slosh around in your stomach and your stomach sits on top of your diaphragm and then it's going to bounce up and down on your diaphragm like a trampoline, and that's what leads to side stitches.

So if you're somebody who struggles with side stitches, notice how much water are you drinking before you go run. I would say you can take a couple sips before you head out the door. But if you're going to drink eight

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ounces of water, make sure you give yourself at least 30 minutes before you go for your run, or you might end up getting side stitches.

Okie dokie, number six. This one. This is like, probably my number one mistake that I see is not warming up. Not warming up. It's so easy you guys. Just walk for like, three to five minutes. Five is better but three is the minimum. Go for a three to five-minute brisk walk before you start running.

And what that does is it gets your body warmed up. It gets your muscles ready to go, it gets your heart rate up. So when you start running, when you start that first run interval, you're not going from zero to 100 instantaneously. You're already at partway of the way there in your muscles.

It's not like such a big jump. Because for most of my clients when they say oh my god, that first mile feels like ass, I'm like, how long was your warmup? They're like, oh, I didn't warmup. I just started running. That's why the first mile sucks.

Get part of that first mile out of the way by warming up with a brisk walk. It's not leisurely stroll. It's a brisk walk. Imagine that you're at the mall, there's a sale at Old Navy and they're closing in 10 minutes and you got to get those super cute skinny jeans, so you're hustling. You're not running, but you're hustling because you want to get to the store before it closes.

That's your warmup walk pace. And then when you start that first interval, it's going to be a much easier transition. Your body is going to be ready to start running. Now, the first mile might still feel a little ass-y because it still takes a while for your body to get fully up into the heart rate and respiration necessary to support running.

But if you warm up, you're going to be a lot closer. And here's what I know for sure. When my clients warmup, their overall run is faster. It feels better, it's faster, and they get done faster. Because if they're going out for a two-

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or three-mile run, they do a little warmup ahead of time, then then two or three miles that they're running is done faster because their body is not trying to come up to speed for the first five minutes because they already did that during the warmup.

So seriously, warmup is important. Cool down is important as well. I think people are more likely to do a cool down than they are to do a warmup because they're just so excited or anxious to get to the run so they can get it done. But make sure you're doing a cool down as well, and then of course, as we mentioned, don't forget to stretch.

Alright, number seven. Number seven mistake is not strength training, is not strength training at all. And you guys, strength training is important because a strong runner is an injury-free runner usually.

So if you are skipping your strength training and you come to me and you're just like, I don't know, I keep having problems with my knee, I keep having problems with my hip, I'm going to say to you, how much strength training are you doing?

It's the first thing I'm going to ask because most of the time, knee problems, hip problems, basically any joint problems are almost always related to weak supporting muscles. And while your muscles might be strong enough to get you walking around just fine without any problems, running is a high impact activity.

And so if you're running, you need sort of a new level of strength. And if you're brand new, you can go out and you can start running without the strength training, but within a few weeks, I want you to start adding that in because it's going to help you stay injury-free, it's going to help you stay pain-free. It's going to make you faster.

Strength training makes you faster because stronger muscles have more power and more power means you're able to push off faster and last

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longer. There is no downside to strength training. But there are a lot of downsides to not strength training.

We just had a conversation about this in Run Your Best Life the other day, and one of my coaches said you can either do pre-hab or rehab, and pre-hab is strength training. Rehab is when you have to go to the physical therapist twice a week and spend 90 minutes there getting all kinds of awful things done to you.

And then you have homework to do every day. You don't want to do rehab. Pre-hab, one or two days a week of strength training is going to make all the difference in your running.

Alright, number eight, the biggest mistake. I guess I've said that about all of them. These are all the biggest mistakes. But seriously, going out too fast. So we talked about getting you warmed up and how a warm up means that first mile is going to feel a lot better, but then a lot of people have this weird thing in their head that they say I've got so much energy at the beginning of my run, that's when I should run the fastest.

And this is a huge mistake because then what happens is by the end of your run, you're dragging. And this happens a lot to people when they're doing a 10K or a half marathon or something where they really have to manage their energy over a period of not just 45 minutes for a 5K, but maybe 90 minutes, two hours, three hours, four hours.

And if you go out too fast, if you use up some of your precious energy in that first mile or two, you're not going to have it for the last mile or two. And what that looks like is first mile, faster than normal but you feel good, you're excited, everybody else is running, you're trying to keep up with people.

Second mile, you're still running pretty fast. By the third mile, you're like, I'm getting a little bit tired. By mile eight, you're like, shit. I got nothing. I got to walk extra now. And then by the very end, you're not running at all. If you

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have run a half marathon like that, you know exactly what I'm talking about and you can help influence that by deliberately keeping yourself running slower in the beginning of a long run or a race so that you have energy for the end.

Think about your energy during a half marathon or marathon or any race. Think about our energy like a budget. Imagine you get paid on the first of the month. So your paycheck drops the first of the month and you got all these different bills to pay throughout the month.

And you know you're going to have to pay your rent, so you pay your rent right away, but you also know you're going to have to pay the electric bill and the phone bill and the cable bill and maybe buy some groceries every single week.

If you look at your bank account on the day your paycheck drops, you're like, oh my god, look at all this money, I'm rich. And you go out and you buy a new flatscreen TV, you're not going to have enough money to buy groceries at the end of the month or pay the electric bill.

So you got to budget your energy the same way you budget your money. And if you don't budget your money, maybe this is lost on you. You might want to try it. It's really helpful. But seriously, don't go out too fast in that first mile. If you can develop the skill of running slower on purpose, you will be so much happier with your race day performance. We work on this a lot in Run Your Best Life and it's definitely a skill that requires practice but it's very, very powerful.

Okay, the number nine mistake that most runners make, including myself sometimes has nothing to do with your running technique or your running form or any of that. It's your brain. This mistake is when you believe your own bullshit stories, you will never become the runner that you want to be.

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Because your brain is going to offer you all kinds of stuff like you're not fast enough, everybody else is faster than you, you'll never be able to finish that half marathon, you have no business being a runner, you're way too fat to run, your ass looks terrible in those tights.

Your brain is going to give you all kinds of bullshit and you got to be able to navigate through that. If you believe it, you're going to feel discouraged, embarrassed, frustrated, ashamed, apathetic, and you're going to quit. And I don't want you to quit.

So stop believing your bullshit stories. Start telling yourself a better story. If you need help with that, check out episode 33 of this podcast, which is called How to Coach Yourself, because I give you a framework for how to do that. I teach the framework in the Rebel Runner Roadmap, I teach the framework in Run Your Best Life. It's super powerful. It's a game-changer.

But seriously, if you make the mistake - even if you don't make any of the first eight mistakes that I talked about, if you make the mistake of believing your own bullshit stories, it doesn't matter how good of a runner you are because you're always going to struggle.

Alright, so those are the nine mistakes. I hope this was helpful to you today. I feel like I got through it pretty well without my script. I didn't make too many mistakes. I didn't even drop very many F bombs, so fuck that. I'm going to write a script for next week.

Anyway, if you're just starting out as a runner, I want to invite you to sign up for my 30-day free running start program. It's basically for anybody who's brand new to running or maybe is coming back to running after taking some time off. Maybe you took a couple years off, maybe 10 years, who knows? Maybe you were a track star in high school and now you're 60 and you're like, hey, I want to start again.

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Whatever it is, this is a great training plan to give you your first 30 days as a runner so that you get started off on the right foot. And if you want to sign up for this, you can go to notyouraveragerunner.com. It's right there at the top of the page.

We also will have a link in the show notes for this episode and of course, if you know somebody who could benefit from this program, just have them head over to notyouraveragerunner.com and sign up for the free 30-day running start program.

That's it, my friends. I love you. Get your ass out there and run and I will talk to you next week.

Oh, and one last thing. If you enjoyed listening to this episode, you have to check out the Rebel Runner Roadmap. It's a 30-day online program that will teach you exactly how to start running, stick with it, and become the runner you've always wanted to be. Head on over to rebelrunnerroadmap.com to join. I'd love to be a part of your journey.