

# RESPECT THE CHALLENGE

## FOR A FIT, HAPPY AND HEALTHY GREAT NORTH RUN



**W**ELCOME to your Runners' Guide. Over the next few pages you will find a wealth of information about the run-up to the event and the big day itself that will help your run go more smoothly. Running is great for your health, but it does not suit everyone and it's important to read the following information to make sure you are ready to take part:

Make sure you are healthy enough to train for your run. Talk to your doctor if you have any long-term health conditions or any health concerns.

See your doctor if you feel unwell at any time in your training, but especially if you experience heart palpitations, light-headedness or dizziness, chest pain or tightness, shortness of breath, excessive wheezing or severe joint and muscle pain. Seek advice about resuming training after a bout of gastroenteritis or flu.



### FIT TO COMPETE

**01**

Start running slowly and build up gradually. Always allow time to warm up and cool down, but also time to rest and recover between your training runs. A good warm up should include activity that slightly raises the heart rate (such as walking or slow jogging) followed by stretching.

**02**

Vary your running surfaces and pace. Run facing oncoming traffic and wear bright, reflective clothing, especially when it's dark.

### HYDRATION

Make sure you stay well-hydrated. In the weeks leading up to the event, the colour of your urine is a useful indicator of hydration. Generally, dark urine suggests you are dehydrated (although nutritional supplements can also alter urine colour), with pale straw-coloured water being ideal.



Alcoholic drinks are dehydrating, so avoid them in the 24 hours before you run.

During a run, drink when you need to. Don't gulp large volumes of fluids if you aren't thirsty – it can result in a condition called hyponatraemia in which your body salts become diluted, possibly causing confusion and vomiting.

Make sure you know where the drink stations are on the run's route. Aqua Pura and Lucozade Sport will be available, but only take a drink if you need one. In hot weather, water will be available at the start and a shower on route to help you cool down.

### RUN WITHDRAWAL

If you decide not to take part in the run, you will be able to withdraw your place and have guaranteed entry for the event next year, at the standard entry fee. For more information, please see page 45.

# RESPECT THE CHALLENGE TOP TIPS

IN THE WEEK BEFORE YOUR RUN, WE'LL SEND YOU A FINAL EMAIL WITH LAST-MINUTE ADVICE AND THE LATEST WEATHER FORECAST TO HELP YOU DECIDE WHICH CLOTHES YOU WILL NEED

#01

Never wear new trainers for the first time on the big day. Ideally, you should have run in your shoes for around a month beforehand.

#02

You might want to bring along some old clothes to wear while standing on the start line. Once you start the run, you can throw them away.

#03

Don't forget to bring your own safety pins to fasten on your run number.

#04

Remember to apply Vaseline to any areas where you have had chafing during training – that might include the groin, under your arms, the bra band or toes.

#05

Wear weather resistant sun-cream, but not too much – you don't want it running into your eyes as you sweat.

## FIT TO RUN?

Don't run if you feel unwell or have been ill recently. Running can put you at risk of serious illness if you have been vomiting felt dizzy or had chest pains. Don't be tempted to start just because you have collected sponsors to raise money for charity. You can attempt another run in the future.

As a guide, during the weeks before the Great North Run, you should aim to have run eight miles continuously in training to be prepared for the 13.1-mile distance. If you can't manage this, you may not enjoy it or complete it safely, so please don't run this time.

Remember to fill in the requested information on the back of your run number – including contact numbers for the day of the event. You must run with your own number, nobody else's. don't let anyone else use it if you decide not to take part.



## NUTRITION

Stick to a healthy, balanced diet during training. In the week before your run, don't try any new foods and drinks as it may affect your digestion. Check out our nutrition guide on pages 70 and 71 for more information.



## ON THE DAY

The first few miles of the run can be very crowded. Many people tire themselves out by dodging in and out of runners because they are behind on their personal run plans. Try to maintain a steady, even pace – enjoy the event.

After the run, collect your bag as soon as you can. Put on some warm, dry clothing and don't get cold.

Some runners don't drink enough when they are running and need to rehydrate afterwards, so make sure you take a drink as soon as you can after crossing the finish line. Make sure you are fully hydrated with water or squash before consuming any alcohol.

Try to eat some starchy foods within two hours of finishing the event – your muscles can replace energy (in the form of glycogen) most efficiently during this post-run window.

For all your training needs visit:  
[greatruntraining.org](http://greatruntraining.org)