

## THINGS TO WATCH OUT FOR WITH WINTER RUNNING

### ● CHOOSE ROUTES YOU ARE FAMILIAR WITH

You can't afford to get lost in the dark so always go to places that you know well and that are open, public, lit and welcoming. Do not run along remote and isolated routes.

### ● FIND A TRAINING PARTNER

You'll be safest if you can buddy up with someone for your winter running. Having a training partner is also a good idea as you can motivate each other to run on some of the worst days when you would otherwise let yourself off the hook.

### ● USE YOUR EYES

Keep your wits about you by using your eyes to scan the terrain in front of you and pay attention to people, animals, cyclists and cars, as they can all behave differently as they cope with winter conditions. You need to be prepared to react at a moment's notice.

### ● USE YOUR EARS

Avoid using portable CD players and the like and use your ears to monitor what's going on around you. You need to hear other people and be aware of traffic at all times.

### ● CHECK THE WEATHER

Boring as it may sound, keep an eye on the weather forecasts during your winter running programme and also take a look out of the window before you leave. Running in the winter is great fun, but there may be the odd day when it's just not sensible. Rain is usually fine, and wind is inconvenient but tolerable. Running in fresh snow can be a risk as it can obscure uneven terrain beneath, which could lead to a fall and possibly an injury. Pay particular attention to ice on cold days and be extra careful if the sun is out. There may still be some ice patches in the shade that haven't defrosted and could be potentially dangerous.

### ● DON'T STRAY TOO FAR FROM HOME

Obviously, the weather can change quite quickly in the winter, so choose running routes that enable you to get back home easily if it suddenly turns really nasty.



## COPING WITH THE COLD

If you enjoy running outdoors and you want to keep up with your training during the cold winter spell, you need to take extra precautions to reduce your injury risk. **Jeff Archer** has some top tips to keep you injury-free this winter

**A**s we enter the new year and the cold weather really sets in, there are a few important things to think about to keep your running schedule on track. Running in the summer months is easy with the bright weather and long days meaning that you can go out and hit the streets whenever you fancy. In the winter months, things are different. Days are shorter and our winter weather means that going outside to pound the pavements is often the last thing you feel like doing. Staying inside where it's warm and cosy might seem like a more appealing option, but you won't thank yourself if spring arrives and you've let your exercise routine slip.

Running throughout the winter is a great thing to aim for and, given the right approach and precautions, will be every bit as enjoyable as running in the summer. Going for a jog on a cold and frosty morning when the air is pure can be a really uplifting experience. And far from putting you off, a session of running in fresh rain can be cleansing and will give you a real glow when you finish.

So what can you do to guarantee that your winter routine will be as appealing as your summer running? And what precautions do you need to take to keep yourself safe and protected? Enjoying winter running is simply a question of choosing the right kit (see box far right for a list of essentials), taking a few simple precautions (see left and below), and warming up and cooling down properly (right). Off you go!



'If you've had a tough workout, your core temperature will be high. If you stop exercising suddenly in cool air conditions you could catch a chill, so cool down gently'

## THINGS TO AVOID WITH WINTER RUNNING

### DO NOT RUSH YOUR TRAINING SESSION

Fitting a quick run into your schedule in the summer is all very well, but be careful with the same approach in winter. If you rush your warm-up, you could injure yourself and if you're preoccupied due to time constraints when you're out running in winter conditions, you might pick the wrong clothes or get distracted and take a tumble. Plan your winter runs carefully so you can prepare properly, enjoy yourself and remain injury-free.

### INDOOR RUNNING IN THE WINTER

On the days when running outdoors just isn't viable, you can opt for the treadmill, but follow the same principles as when you're running outdoors. Warm up slowly to raise your core temperature and make sure you stretch thoroughly while you're still warm.



Always warm up and cool down properly in winter. If it's very cold, you could do your stretching indoors.

Photos and clothing: Nike

## HOW TO STRUCTURE YOUR WINTER RUNNING PROGRAMME

### ■ WARM UP GRADUALLY

When the weather is cold, raising your body temperature gradually is essential to avoid injury and acclimatise your body for the exertion to come. It's fine to be just a little chilly as you set out – in fact, this is more advisable than being too hot at the start, which could lead to you overheating as you get into your stride.

### ■ PLAN YOUR WORKOUT INTENSITY CAREFULLY

Design your workout so that any high-intensity components are safe. If you're hill training, make sure the hill you're running on is clear of slippery leaves and that the path is not icy. There shouldn't be too much running water on any surfaces that you train on, as this could affect your traction. Also, make sure that any hill training comes at a point in your workout when you're fully warmed up.

### ■ COOL DOWN GENTLY

If you stop exercising suddenly in cool air conditions you could catch a chill, so cool down gently to become re-acclimatised to the conditions around you.

### ■ STRETCH INDOORS

When you've finished your workout, your body temperature can drop quickly if you stay outside. This can be a problem for stretching as your muscles may cool and shorten more swiftly than in the summer. To keep your body and your muscles warmer for a little longer, perform your post-workout stretching back at the house.

[www.personaltrainerforwomen.co.uk](http://www.personaltrainerforwomen.co.uk)

## RUNNING IN TOP GEAR

### TRAINERS

Running shoes come in many different styles, materials and weights. While a lightweight shoe may be fine for when it's dry, you might want to opt for a thicker, heavier-style trainer to keep the wet out during the winter months.

### CLOTHING

When it comes to winter running kit, layers are the key. Wearing lots of thin layers gives you the flexibility to take some off, or add something back on as your body temperature changes while you run. It's well worth investing in some kit specifically designed for winter running as this will wick perspiration away from your body, and stop moisture gathering close to your skin which could give you a chill. Something waterproof is an essential as part of your winter running kit.



### HEADGEAR

Much of your body heat can be lost through your head so you might want to wear a hat at the beginning of your run to keep you warm. You can take the hat off as your body temperature increases, but you don't want to be too cold to begin with or you risk pulling an unwarmed muscle.

### A SMALL RUCKSACK OR BUM-BAG

If you're going to be discarding the odd layer of clothing or a hat, you'll need somewhere to store them. You'll also need somewhere to keep the other things that you'll need for winter running. Any type of bag should be light and close-fitting so it doesn't move around and rub against your skin.

### AN ENERGY BAR

Your energy levels can drop quickly in the cold weather so make sure that you have something to give yourself a quick boost if necessary. An energy bar or banana should hit the spot.

### WATER

Water is an obvious thing to remember in the summer when the weather is hot, but it's just as important in the winter. You will be losing fluid as you run, so make sure you avoid dehydration by replacing this on the go. Have some water before you run and as you cool down, and if you can rehydrate on the go, you'll perform to the best of your ability.

### A PHONE

Safety should always be your first consideration, so make sure you take your phone in case you need to contact someone quickly.

### AN ALARM

It's always better to be safe than sorry. You'll probably never need to use an alarm, but you should take one just in case. It's worth having as you might need to raise the alarm for someone else who's had an accident. Oregon Scientific make pedometers with panic alarms. For more information, visit the website, [www.oregonscientific.co.uk](http://www.oregonscientific.co.uk) (click on 'sports').