



STAMFORD STRIDERS

NOW, HOW DO YOU KEEP GOING?

Well done - you have taken the first steps in running. The key now is to keep it up, a little bit at a time, increasing what you do as the weeks go by.

Some of you probably said goodbye to physical exercise when you left school. Others may have continued with sport into your twenties but after that most of us become so embroiled in the world of work and bringing up children that even if the body was willing, and even the spirit positive, finding the time means it is difficult to translate good intentions into positive action.

So imagine that your body has not had any real physical demands made on it for a number of years. Then, suddenly, you're pulling on the running shoes and expecting it to propel you over distances you haven't even walked in a very long time. Overambitious would be a polite term for such behaviour. Ill-advised another apt description. Downright dangerous a more accurate one in some cases.

The key to keeping running is to ease your body back into the world of physical activity, and that means getting tuition on stretching exercises and learning to put one foot in front of the other again.

One Step at a Time

Try to get out two or three times in the week.

Divide your session into four sections, using physical landmarks to mark them out. Walk the first section to warm up your body and let it know that it is going to be doing some work. Then break into a gentle jog for the second part. Try not to stop until you make your marker for the switch to walk the third part. Then all that is left is to jog the home straight.

When you feel more confident, split your time 50:50 so that the first half involves walking, the second running. Similarly, start by tackling the steeper gradients along the way by walking, then think about including them in the running sections.

As your confidence grows, you will inevitably want to extend the length of your course but always remember that you are in this for the long-term: Set yourself a challenge that you are confident you have the ability to meet so you don't disappoint yourself. It is your growing confidence that will not only ensure that you keep up the good work but encourage you to take your new-found fitness to the next level.

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