

# FREEDOM

on

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FEET

No equipment, no gym, just you and the open road.  
Or, grab a group and find fellowship.  
Millions of regular people around the country  
have discovered the simple joys of running—Read  
about the rewards that come from just by putting  
one foot in front of the other, and how you  
can get started today.

BY BENJI FELDHEIM

## 5 PATHS TO A SAFE RUN

Running injuries can be devastating, and orthopedic surgeon Dr. Sam Carter has seen the worst. Carter, a Louisville, Ky.-based doctor who specializes sports medicine, offers five tips to keep you on your feet.

**1 Start slowly.** If you are a beginner or a re-energized runner, don't start at a pace or a mileage that makes you miserable.

**2 Don't increase your pace or mileage too quickly.** Total weekly mileage should increase by no more than 10% per week.

**3 Don't run through pain.** Sometimes knowing the difference between fatigue, discomfort and true pain is the most difficult or a new runner, Carter says. Pain that does not go away with rest after a run is a warning sign of impending injury.

**4 Start at the bottom.** Well-fitting shoes that match your gait and running style are a crucial factor in avoiding injury. Running shoes should be replaced after 300 to 500 miles, depending on your weight and running surface. Ask the experts at a specialty running store for help finding the right shoe and the correct fit.

**5 Listen to your body.** Most running injuries are from overuse—trying to do too much, too fast. If you need to take a day off, it's not the end of the world, Carter says. Try cross training, so you still get some conditioning and cardiovascular work without taxing your sore legs.

**M**el Diab motioned with his hands for about 30 runners at his store to join him for a picture. The runners, clad in tights and layers of bright neon clothing against the cold February night, gathered around the ever-energetic 64-year-old Diab inside his running shoes and apparel store, Running for Kicks in Palos Heights, Ill.

After taking the picture, the group headed out for its weekly Monday night group run, traversing about 10 miles as they snake through neighborhoods. The photo was used as part of a fundraiser in May for the family of fellow runner Mark Reilly, who abruptly died in 2013.

"That's what runners do," Diab says. "This is what it's all about. Everybody is looking out for everybody else. And it's something just about everybody can do. One foot in front of the other."

Most of the regulars at Diab's Monday night runs are part of the Yankee Runners, an Oak Forest, Ill.-based running club with members who compete in several marathons throughout the year, including in Boston and Chicago.

Among the Yankee Runners who laced up that Monday night was Tracy Rosensteihl, a 48-year-old who took up running about two years ago. Since then, he's lost more than 50 pounds, and doesn't have to take cholesterol medication anymore. He's also able to take a smaller dosage of medicine for his type 2 diabetes.

Rosensteihl has raised about \$20,000 in support of the American Cancer Society through races and other efforts, including his first-ever full marathon in November 2013.

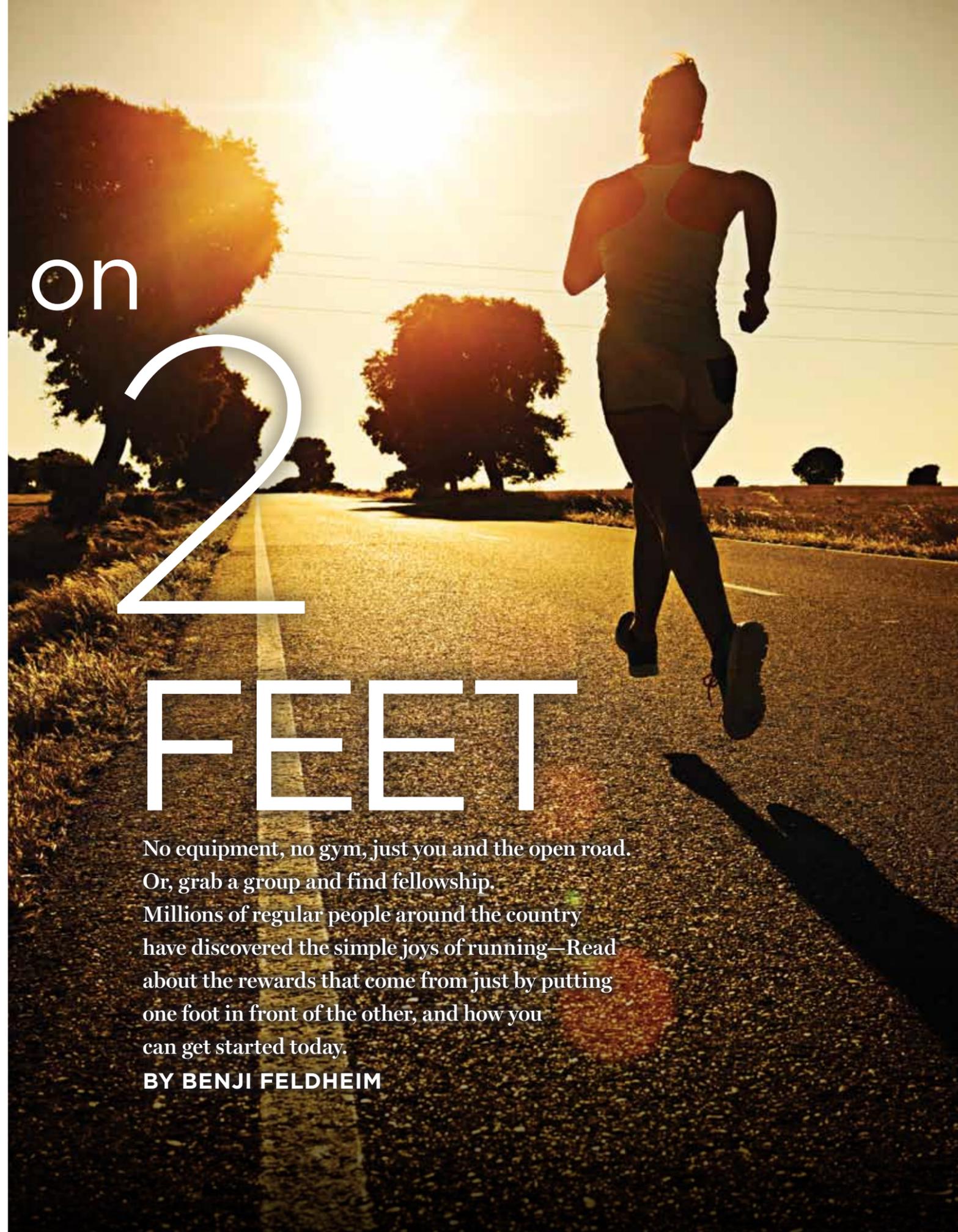
"It's a matter of fitness, friendships and fundraising," Rosensteihl says. "They all relate together in running. I've met so many great people through the running community."

Running has grown way beyond just a way to stay fit. Old and young, men and women, people of all walks of life are finding fellowship and run through running. And it's still a killer workout.

51.4 million

Americans went running at least once in 2012, 51.4 million, and 29.4 million ran at least 50 days during the year.

SOURCE: SPORTS & FITNESS INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION



## GET THE RIGHT GEAR

### CLOTHING

**Warm weather:** Get clothing to keep you cool and dry, such as Nike DriFit, *at right*, or Saucony and Mizuno Coolmax shirts. “You never want to wear cotton,” Diab says. “It just holds the sweat.”

**Cold weather:** Stay warm and dry by using a base layer on your upper body to wick away sweat, a second layer for insulation, and then a jacket on top to seal in warmth. Thermal tights keep legs warm, while mittens work better than gloves to keep fingers insulated, Diab says.

“And you definitely want to wear a facemask that wicks sweat away and filters cold air,” he says.



### SHOES

Diab says you should consider much more than brand and color when choosing the right shoes.

“We don’t push one shoe company over another. Everything depends on foot structure, any issues you have like injuries, and what you are training for,” Diab says.

Once they analyze your feet and training needs, he uses a Brannock Device—the foot-measurer that was once a shoe store staple—find your exact fit. “We’re old-fashioned in that respect, but they still work well,” Diab says.

Then, the customer stands up and bends their knees into a squat to make sure the shoes keep their feet stable and level. Lastly, they go outside for a short run while a staff member watches to see if the shoe helps their stride, especially if they pronate (feet roll inward) or supinate (feet roll outward).

“We’d never tell a runner to buy a pair of shoes and break them in,” Diab says. “They have to feel good when you put them on.”

## Toe to toe: The evolution of running shoes

### LATE 1890s

British company J.W. Foster and Sons, known today as Reebok, builds one of the earliest-known shoes with spikes jutting out of the sole.

### 1920s

Germany’s Adi Dassler follows with his own running spikes, before starting Adidas.

### 1960s

University of Oregon track coach Bill Bowerman develops the waffle-iron pattern on shoe bottoms to cushion impact, while also giving runners more traction. Bowerman’s innovations, which also included the raised heel and nylon upper, led to the creation of Nike.

### 1970s

Following Bowerman’s influence, shoe manufacturers start working with a substance called ethylene vinyl acetate, which captures air bubbles. In 1979, the Nike Air was born. The influence is still seen today in running and athletic shoes, even with advancements in material density, stability and isolation.

### 2010

Brooks Running announces a breakthrough—a liquid made up of tiny polymer chains that act like millions of “nanosprings.” Because it can move around inside the shoe, it allows a shoe to adapt to the force applied to it.

### TODAY

Some people say that while shoe innovations are great, we’ve been running as a species for hundreds of thousands of years without them. Thus was born isolated-toe shoes. The thinking behind toe shoes is that human feet were not made for a heel-to-toe strike that’s common when wearing shoes. Rather, it’s better to hit the ground with the ball of your foot first.

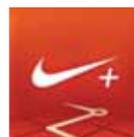
## RACE ON!

### 4 apps to help you start running

#### Nike+

Syncs to social media to post your training goals. If friends “like” your status, you’ll hear a round of applause right in your headphones.

**Free for Android and iPhone**  
[NikePlus.Nike.com](http://NikePlus.Nike.com)



#### MapMyRun

Want to find a running path just about anywhere in the world? Download this app to see where you’ve been and where you’re going.

**Free for Android and iPhone**  
[MapMyRun.com](http://MapMyRun.com)



#### Hal Higdon Training App

Get encouragement from the man himself, as this running expert guides you on your runs. Available for marathon and half-marathon training.

**\$10 for Android and iPhone**  
[HalHigdon.com](http://HalHigdon.com)



#### RunKeeper

Uses your phone’s GPS to track your distance. Offers stats for pace, distance and time, and has built-in audio cue coaching. Lets supporters watch live maps of workouts and races with the purchase of the \$19.99 RunKeeper Elite Yearly Membership.

**Free for Android and iPhone**  
[RunKeeper.com](http://RunKeeper.com)



### OLD SOLES



circa 1860  
 Dutton and Thorowgood  
 leather running shoes  
 Courtesy Bata Shoe Museum

## A WIDER TRACK

Across the country, running communities are growing, and the number of races is skyrocketing. From 5Ks and half-marathons, to theme runs and traditional marathons, the sport is in the middle of what New York Road Runners coach John Honerkamp describes as its “second boom.”

In the 1970s and ’80s, running was a male-dominated sport offering a narrow range of events. It was mostly guys running marathons. But today, the number of half-marathons is rising faster than any other running event, and you’ll see many more women running them, Honerkamp says.

“Part of the second running boom is that both genders are more involved now compared to the first boom,” says Honerkamp, who is an eight-time top 10 finisher at the U.S. Track and Field National Championships.

One of Honerkamp’s goals is to lower the barriers that may keep curious people away from running. People think it’s too difficult, and a regular routine is almost impossible to stick with. Experienced runners training for their 10th race will still call themselves as “beginners,” he says. So Honerkamp encourages people to focus on hitting their own goals, instead of comparing themselves to Olympians or people who just run more often.

“One of our jobs is to break down those walls of, ‘I’m not a real runner,’ or, ‘I’m too slow,’” he says. “We aim to show people that runners aren’t just really fast people wearing singlets and short-shorts. We help people not feel intimidated when running with people who have all the gear, and are more experienced.”

“I define running as propelling yourself forward using both feet. If you’ve chased a bus, or chased the subway, or a cab, you’re a runner. Our tagline is, ‘Run for life.’ We want to get people inspired and change lives through running.”

## 21ST-CENTURY SPORT

Running attracts people for different reasons, and some tech-heads have been pulled in by a love for gadgets. Online and mobile running apps—ones that let you map your route and track your distance and time—have also kicked into the second running boom, Honerkamp says.

The NYRR, which includes about 60,000 members, developed its own customizable training program. Running hopefuls answer about 30 survey questions, and the program produces a custom program for the person’s individual abilities, experience level and motivation. Honerkamp says many people get hooked instantly because running—and many of the apps—are basically free. And they allow people to focus on beating their own best time, instead of worry about anyone else.

“It’s much cheaper to run a marathon than to buy a Ferrari for a midlife crisis,” he says. “It’s about a process and a journey. If you run your best time, then really you did just as well as the top finisher in a race.”

*Running is something just about everybody can do.*

*One foot in front of the other.*

RUNNING ENTHUSIAST MEL DIAB





## SOCIAL MEDIA: A NEW FUEL

Running communities don't just meet on the street. Through computers, tablets and especially smart phones, runners connect with each other through social media.

Steve Raquel is an Illinois-based social media consultant who specializes in sports marketing. He has seen first-hand how social media has aided the renewed running boom.

"It allows instantaneous communication of what you are doing," Raquel says.

"But it's not just about posting pictures. It's a way to give and provide feedback on routes, techniques, equipment, sports drinks and more. And we can all support each other."

Facebook remains the most-used social network for runners, Raquel says. Twitter offers the unique ability to directly connect with professional runners and running organizations. "That's a type of feedback you can't get anywhere else," Raquel says.

The popularity of themed runs such as "mud runs" and others has benefited greatly from social media, with participants sharing photos and videos of unique obstacles and their messy after-pictures. Instagram is also a darling of theme runs, Raquel says.

"Those events aren't just about running," Raquel says. "Everyone getting muddy, gross and sweaty together has an interesting community aspect, and makes for a good visual in promotion."

## SHARING ON THE ROAD

While most running programs and apps help you chart your progress, some have even more creative ways to motivate. Jeremy Koerber, manager of Wellware Fitness Center in St. Louis, says he enjoys a feature of the Nike+ app that involves social media. Users can sync Nike+ with their Facebook account, and their running achievements get posted automatically. If a Facebook friend "likes" the status or comments, the user hears a round of applause in their headphones while running.

"When you first get started running, your confidence may not be at its all-time high," Koerber says. "But then all of a sudden, you get that applause. Even if you don't know who that is, you now have someone supporting you. That's why running communities are so important. The solid support system is key."

Koerber thinks the social aspect of running also has gotten more rubber soles on the road. More people are running with their friends, or joining a jogging group to make new friends, he says, which gets them engaged, and off their couches.

"Whether it's for a 5K, half-marathon or a themed race, you will invariably start running with other people," Koerber says. "Then it's not just about losing weight and getting in shape. Now there's a healthy social environment."

In addition to hosting Monday, Wednesday and Saturday runs, Running for Kicks offers ice cream socials, pizza parties and chili runs. It's not unusual for runners to hang out after group runs, to share snacks and conversation about running and other parts of their lives, Diab says.

"We believe in family-orientated running," he says. "The pace groups will probably talk about their day at work, or what they'll do when they get home. Or they'll plan another run for Thursday. It's a lot of fun."

Diab also spearheaded the First Midwest Bank Half Marathon and the Running for Kicks Turkey Trot. More than \$150,000 in six years has been raised through the half-marathon for prostate cancer research, and for children with special needs. About 11,000 cans of food were collected at the previous Turkey Trot hosted in November 2013 for a local food pantry. Diab says it's just another of the many ways running brings communities together.

"We believe in giving back to the community," Diab says. "It's a very positive environment." **CH**



## HALF-MARATHONS, FULLY COMMITTED

In 2013 Running USA, a national nonprofit focused on advancing the sport, reported that the half-marathon has been the fastest-growing road race distance in the United States for seven straight years.

- ▶ The number of half-marathon finishers has almost quadrupled since 2000—from 482,000 to 1.8 million.
- ▶ In 2013, a record 36 U.S. half-marathons had at least 10,000 finishers, up from 17 in 2009. Back in 2000, only one U.S. half-marathon had 10,000 finishers.
- ▶ 60% of half-marathon finishers were female in 2012, with a record 1.1 million runners.
- ▶ Men made up 40% of half-marathon finishers in 2012, but still added up to a record high of 740,000.

*Runners aren't just really fast people wearing singlets and short-shorts. If you've chased a bus, or chased the subway, or a cab, you're a runner.*

NEW YORK ROAD RUNNERS  
COACH JOHN HONERKAMP

## 4 THEMED RACES YOU HAVE TO TRY!

### TOUGH MUDDER

This 10 to 12 kilometer race features unique obstacles such as electric wires, flames and—you guessed it—mud. Get a team together and test your grit. **ToughMudder.com**

### THE COLOR RUN

In what's promoted as the "Happiest 5K on the Planet," runners get blasted with safe colored paint as they traverse the untimed course. **TheColorRun.com**

### 5K FOAM FEST AND MUD RUN

This obstacle run features a Chamber of Foam along with mud, walls and other inventive challenges. **5KFoamFest.com**

### ZOMBIE RUN

Ready to put your zombie survival skills to the test? Running from the undead is your motivation through this 5K that also includes "chemical spill zones." **ZombieRun.com**

