Life

# HOW TO MAKE RUNNING ENJOYABLE



**Person runs along a path. Running is a common hobby amongst many people, but some don't find it appealing.**

PHOTO COURTESY OF PICRYL

**by Elijah Polance**
STAFF WRITER
HE/HIM/THEY/THEM
elijah.polance@uconn.edu

We've all been there: seeing people out running, or maybe on a run yourself, and thinking it's the worst thing ever. At times, you may question why anyone would ever do it, even if you are a fan of the occasional jog or two. With the exertion and physical stress involved, running can be incredibly daunting to get into.

But it doesn't have to feel like that forever. Over the past year-and-a-half, running has gone from a rare undertaking of mine to one of my main hobbies and something I could hardly live without. While it may not be for everyone, here's some advice that may make it feel more fulfilling.

**Curate Your Environment**

One of the easiest ways to make running more approachable is by choosing exactly where, when and how you do it. Are you a big fan of trails with a familiar route near your house? Start your running journey there. If you're just getting into it, try taking on a marked path or two with a combination of running and walking. If you want to add some distance, it's easy enough to add trails, run through the route again or find a looping segment to practice on.

Or maybe you're picky about the weather. You may find your stride best with a treadmill or an indoor track. Finding where you're most comfortable is a big step in making running not feel like a drag.

This can extend to what you listen to as well. Motivational music might be the play, but it's worth considering podcasts or even audiobooks as well. The latter options might make the experience more relaxing overall. And if you're inside, you can put on a YouTube video or movie instead.

**Take it Easy**

One of the biggest ways you can make running easier and less intimidating is by running slower. Keeping most of your runs at a conversational pace will require less energy, reduce the risk of injury and allow you to run farther and more often.

This is great to keep in mind mentally as well. If you pressure yourself to run at a minimum pace or for a certain distance, you might develop an uncomfortable relationship where you push too hard. Running can be relaxing; there's no need to prove yourself to yourself every time you partake in it.

**Share the Time**

Spending time with friends is another surefire way to make running more fun. There's plenty of ways to do this: You can recruit a friend or two, join a run club or even call a friend while running. Sharing the burden, whether it's a tough workout or a quick neighborhood journey, adds to the experience and can deepen your connection with others. There are few better ways of getting closer with someone than by crushing miles, especially when you could be doing something else.

**Let Yourself Think**

Even if you're a fan of listening to music or other audio media while running, it can be nice to take the headphones out and hear what's around you. Whether it's a bustling city or bird-filled countryside, there's an unmatched serenity from all the noise going by as you travel.

Once you hit a rhythm, you may be able to enter a flowing creative state or even a meditative one. As a writer, I know I often draft ideas or descriptions in my head based on all the sensory stimuli there is to work with.

**Set Fun Goals**

It might be hard to stick with running if you're not actively working toward something. Finding a quantitative goal is a great way to change that. Maybe you want to run a certain distance or for a certain amount of time without stopping. Or maybe you want to improve the time it takes to cover a certain distance.

Not only do these goals give you something to work for, but it may help structure the running you do. There are plenty of training plans online that can loosely help you accomplish more race or endurance-oriented goals.

While races can seem scary, they can be a great benchmark test to see how far you've come. It doesn't have to be a competition with the people next to you, in fact, you can see them as motivational companions. Races can also provide unexpected entertainment, local treats and support from the audience that make them memorable.

These are things that have helped me become a regular and enthusiastic runner. If you're looking to get into it or are on the fence about committing to running more, I hope these tips can help you too.



**People run up a hiking trail. Running is a common hobby amongst many people, but some don't find it appealing.**

PHOTO COURTESY OF PICKPIK

## SUBOG Weekly Events:

### October 19th – November 8th

November 4th – GTA VI Trivia @ 7:00 pm in the Student Union Theatre

November 5th - Coffee House @ 4:30 pm at the Benton Museum

November 6th – Jersey Day @ 6:00 pm in SU 325

November 7th – Harvest Fest @ 12:00 pm on the Student Union Mall

November 8th – Amazing Race @ 11:00 am across campus

Any questions? Email subog@uconn.edu!




**Setting fun goals is an important part of getting into running. If you want to get into running, setting a goal like wanting to run a 5K or even a marathon can be great motivation.**

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