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INSPIRATION

How To Start Running Easily (Tips From 5 Inspiring Runners)

BY SAMANTHA KHOO ON FEB 5, 2020

No matter where you are, let's start running today.

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Are you always procrastinating when to run? Or maybe you are waiting for the best time to start the journey? Starting your running journey does not need any right timing, what you need is a little oomph!

People run for different reason and we are glad to have the opportunity to talk to 10 motivational runners in the running community to understand how they fell in love with running. We are making a two part article series so we don't overwhelm you.

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Besides that, they had shared their running techniques and advices, so from there you might get an idea on how to improve your run as well.

We hope you will find their stories inspiring.

How To Start Running For Beginners

Step 1

It is always challenging and difficult in the beginning. Especially to make it as a habit. But here's the trick: Don't go all-out, and run for six days in a week if you've barely run before.

Sit down, grab your pen, plan a realistic schedule and stick to it. You can start your run with 30 minutes a day, three to five times per week or 10km in 10 days.

Gradually from there, you can build your stamina.

Step 2

As a newbie, it's crucial to set your running goals on what you want to achieve during the process. Giving a purpose on whether to lose weight, finish that first race, or set a personal best time.

This can make your goals more valuable than running aimlessly. Goals keep you move on through your difficult times in your running journey.

Step 3

Running shoes that is what you need. Make sure you find a perfect pair that makes your feet comfortable and as well as matching up a friction-free pair of shorts, performance socks, and sweat-wicking tops.

Step 4

If you feel pain during your run, do take a break and rest for awhile. It is important to stop to prevent any injuries. When you first explore the running world, do take note of the common injuries in running. Of course, you can avoid these issues by taking some precautions.

First, do not ramp your weekly runs up too quickly. You will get injured easily as your body did not used to the effort before.

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Second, do include strength training and stretching. They are the key to achieve strong, pain-free running. Exercises like squats, lunges, glute bridges, and planks are great for strengthening your legs and core. It can help you to form better, run faster and longer during running.

Last but not least, you will need to spend some time in the kitchen. As nutrients it is essential for your body after your run. For example, carbs, protein, fibre, and iron will give you energy, build your muscles, and ensure you to fuel enough.

Step 5

After getting over the difficult times in the beginning. Your routine will start getting easier. Remember to stretch and keep learning throughout your journey.

Do not afraid to seek for help or guidance. Most importantly, enjoy your run in your running journey.

Now let's hear from our runners on how they step out and fall in love with running.

1. Tay Wei Lun, Vince

Bio: 33 year-old Malaysian, Website developer and online marketing consultant

Vince is a simple guy who likes to do video editing and sports. He like outdoor activities because every time after running, it will make him happy and help him to release his stress in a natural way.

> Never give up, nothing is impossible in life.

RS: What inspired you to start running?

Vince: Due to my injury back in the year of 2015, I was told that I can't walk for the rest of my life. At the moment, if I can walk on the ground, it is a simple and happiness for me. Once I recovered, I started to go for hiking and running, because I don't know when I will not be able to walk again.

RS: Since you start running regularly, how do you balance your work and life?

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Vince: Actually, running did not interfere with my work and life, I just plan and arrange my time to run. After my run, I feel comfortable and energised during my work.

RS: How do you overcome the hardships when you start to run?

Vince: Your body and your legs will feel sore and

extremely uncomfortable at the beginning, but if you persevere, your body will slowly adjust to it and you will become immune to the sore and pain.

RS: How do you handle the stress and pressure during your training for your first race?

Vince: In my mind, I just want to complete my run within the time set by the organiser, so I will run every day for around 2 to 3km to practice and let my legs get used to it when the race is started.

RS: How long does it take you to train for a race?

Vince: At least two weeks of continuous run everyday.

RS: What is the best advice you had on your running journey?

Vince: Never give up, nothing is impossible and Vince run Vince.

RS: What are the best techniques you had picked up for running?

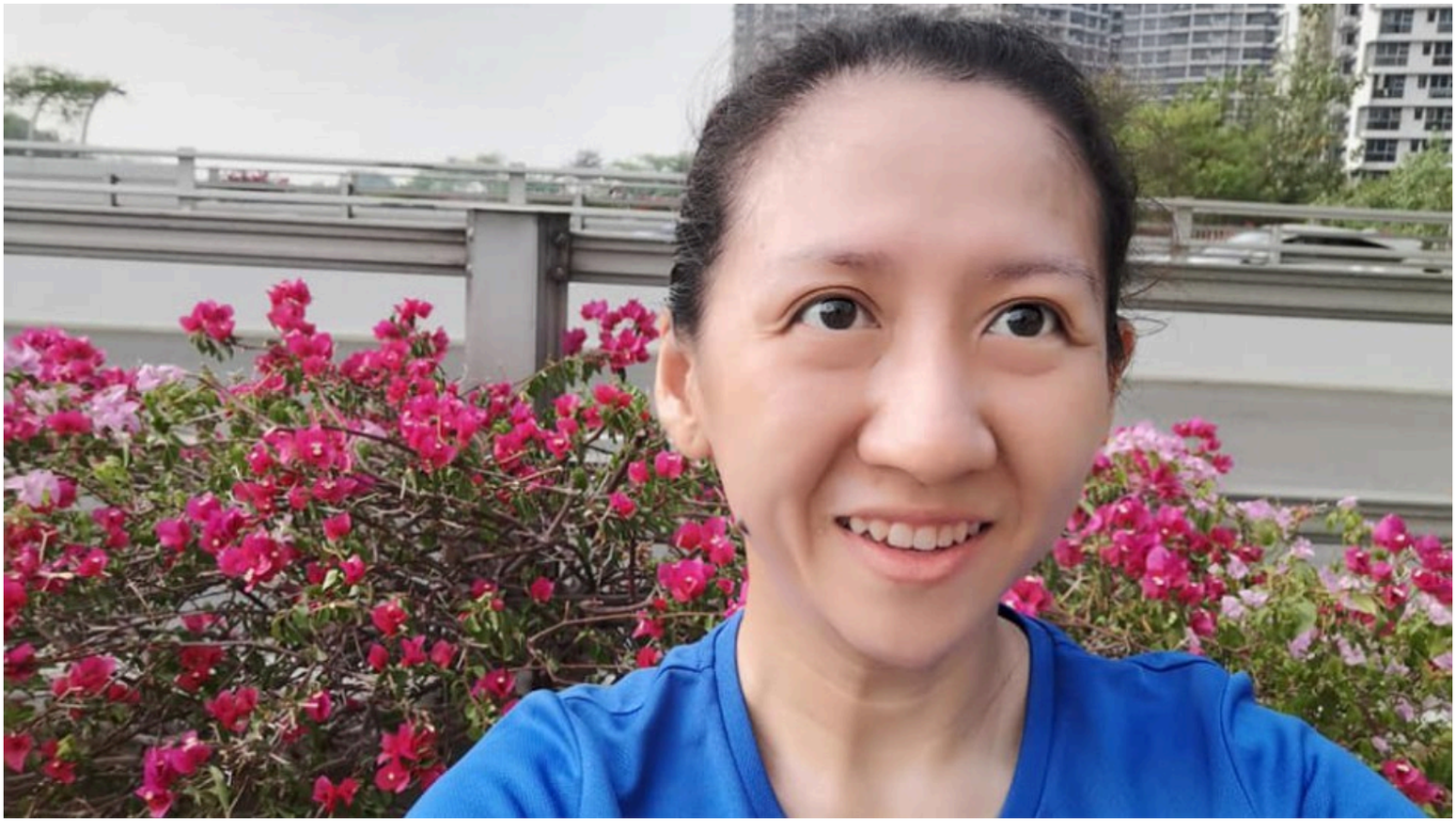
Vince: Choose the right sport shoes and the pace during running is important. Don't forget to do stretching before running, normally before I go out for a run, I will do stretching at home.

You can follow Boon An on Instagram: @vinceicelun

2. Teo Lian Gek, Cindy

Bio: 39 year-old, Singaporean, Education Officer

Cindy is a mother of 2 kids, age 4 and 9, who is always surrounded by children and teenagers. She teaches Mathematics and Elements of Business Skills in a secondary school. Cindy loves to cook, bake, knit, crochet, doing arts and crafts. She started to get herself active in sports in 2018.



> It is always the perseverance that pushes me to complete my races.

RS: What inspired you to start running?

Cindy: I have been always in poor health since born, an asthmatic. Never could I able to do well in the shuttle run during the school NAFA Test every year.

This made me worry that I would not be able to complete the annual school cross country run when I was in Secondary One. Hence, I went to see my family doctor to buy a medical certificate for $10. I was reprimanded by my doctor for taking my asthmatic condition as an excuse.

In the following year (1993), I plucked up the courage to participate in the annual school cross country. Surprisingly, I was able to achieve the 8th position in the lower secondary girls category.

Thereafter, I discovered that I could run long distance and participated in sports meet and cross country. However, with a busy work schedule, I stopped running for almost two decades.

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I started running again in 2016, participated in the fun run in the annual school road run, with the aim to motivate my form class to run. It was a tough start as I did not have the stamina to complete a 3km run. I stopped at least twice during the run.

In 2017, I was approached by my colleague to participate in the team relay in our annual school road run. The three other members of the team were fast and strong runners. This made me ponder if I should gear up for some training to pick up running again.

As my girl was only 2 years old then, I decided to put on hold. In 2018, the school started to organise more sports activities for staff and I felt weak when students ran past me during the annual school road run.

As such, I started to pick up more sports in August 2018 to be more active and build up my stamina. Thereafter, I planned my training for running in November, starting from 3km, to 5km to 7km and slowly to 10km with encouragement from friends.

During each run, I realised that perseverance to complete my goal in the distance has to do with my own mindset. It is just like how I always encourage my students not to give up in anything they do, therefore, I reminded myself of my favourite quote “Life Rewards Effort, Not Excuses” and this is a good real-life example to motivate my students not to give up on anything they do.

In addition, I chanced upon various virtual run websites. The collection of medals through these virtual runs become a secondary motivation for me to continue my running routine.

RS: Since you start running, how do you balance your work and life?

Cindy: I pick up other workouts such as Zumba, Piloxing, Fight Do, Resistance Band workout, Yoga on weekdays and go for running only on Saturday mornings. It does not affect my work and life unless I have to report to work on Saturdays.

RS: Do you encounter any obstacles when you start to run?

Cindy: Yes, I started to have blisters in between toes and my knees started to hurt, making me climbing up and down stairs in pain. Friends who are regular runners advised me to get one size bigger for my running shoes to avoid blisters. That resulted me to get two pairs of Of Cloud Running shoes on different occasions at Running Lab with the assistance of the expertise of the sales promoters.

I always love to challenge myself and get back my gold achievement in running during my secondary school days. But the 2.4km Fitness Assessment under IPPT standard was a tough nut to crack. I seek advices from experts at Sengkang Sports Centre Active Health Lab. They recommended me to try Fartlek training. I did twice in short distance when I did not have to achieve my running distance to get my medals and it was tough but in good progress for my running speed.

With more warm up exercises and more stretching after each run suggested by many friends who are runners and my senior who is a coach, the pain in my knees reduced. However, I eventually got myself a knee brace to give my knees better support during running too.

RS: Do you feel stress and pressure during your training for your first race?

Cindy: I did not have any stress and pressure in any run or race. All I did was to have a positive mindset that I am able to complete the 3km/5km/10km without stopping. It is always the perseverance that pushes me to complete the first run/race.

RS: How long does it take you to train for a race?

Cindy: It took me two Fartlek training for me to complete my 2.4km Run in GE Women's IPPT and achieved the Gold Award. Pacers are very good assistants during any competitive race to me.

RS: What is the best advice you had on your running journey?

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Cindy: Good pair of running shoes recommended by

experts at Running Lab and a pair of Phiten knee braces recommended by my Resistance Band Workout Instructor.

RS: What are the best techniques you had picked up for running?

Cindy: Stretches that I need to soothe the aching and tightness in my legs and Fartlek training to train for speed in running.

You can follow Cindy on Instagram: @icookibakeueat

3. Mohd Harris Bin Mohd Noor Firdauz Wong

Bio: 27 year-old, Malaysian, Freelance and part time at Checkpoint Spot (Sport Timing Management)

Harris studied Bachelor of Sports Science in Universiti

Teknologi MARA (UiTM) and started running since 2011. Harris first trail run was in 2013, and his half marathon was in 2015. Follow up, Harris full marathon and ultra marathon was in 2016 Recreational hiker and climber.

> Never compete with others, instead fight with your inner self so you could improve.

RS: What inspired you to start running?

Harris: I started running when I participated in a 5km charity run in 2011 in Kuala Lumpur. I was interested in the prize money of that event, but it was not that easy to earn it. Subsequently, I signed up for another 5km and slowly upgrade the distance.

Somehow, it turns out to be part of my life and I don't care about those prize monies anymore. Instead, I would just enjoy the run. But, what inspired me the most to run is my all-time idol, Kilian Jornet, an Ultrarunner from Team Salomon. I found his awesome mountain, trail videos on YouTube very inspiring and from that moment, I fall in love with trail running.

RS: Since you start running, how do you balance your work and life?

Harris: Usually, I will run at night at all over the place because the world is my running course. If I got free time on Thursday night, I will join Naked Spirit Runners session at LHDN, Jalan Duta.

RS: Do you encounter any hardships when you start to run?

Harris: I did encounter some hardships during my early run when I get my first injury, Shin Splint. So, I search some running injury info regarding shin splint. Some of it suggest to change & wear a suitable running shoes. And another issue is my lack of muscle strength. From there, I am slowly learning about running.

RS: Are you stressed during your training for your first race?

Harris: I don't have much of stress or pressure in preparation for my first run because I just enjoy in whatever I'm doing at that time. I used to running and listening to music, but I slowly ditch everything & focus on my breathing, strike and pace.

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