

It is important to choose the right trainers in a sport such as running. Trainers are for *running* in, not a fashion statement! There's no single 'best trainer' - everyone has different needs. All sorts of things - your biomechanics, your weight, the surfaces you run on, and obviously, the shape of your feet - mean that one person's ideal trainer can be terrible for another person.

Trainers are split into three main categories: cushioned, stability and motion control. The first three are everyday options and are categorised essentially by your biomechanical needs.

One good way to find out your basic trainer needs is to try the 'Wet Test', below or, preferably, to visit an experienced trainer retailer such as 'Sweatshop' in Ransomes Europark.

The Wet Test works on the basis that the shape of your wet footprint on a dry floor or piece of paper roughly correlates with the amount of stability you might need in your trainer. Take note: 'roughly'! It's a handy starting point.

The Normal Foot Normal feet have a normal-sized arch and will leave a wet footprint that has a flare, but shows the forefoot and heel connected by a broad band. A normal foot lands on the outside of the heel and rolls inwards slightly to absorb shock.



It's the foot of a runner who is bio-mechanically efficient and therefore doesn't need a motion control trainer.

Best trainers: Stability trainers with moderate control features.

The Flat Foot This has a low arch and leaves a print which looks like the whole sole of the foot. It usually indicates an overpronated foot - one that strikes on the outside of the heel and rolls inwards (pronates) excessively. Over time, this can cause many different types of overuse injuries.



Best trainers: Motion control trainers, or high stability trainers with firm midsoles and control features that reduce the degree of pronation. Stay away from highly cushioned, highly curved trainers, which lack stability features.

The High-Arched Foot This leaves a print showing a very narrow band or no band at all between the forefoot and the heel. A curved, highly arched foot is generally supinated or underpronated. Because it doesn't pronate enough, it's not usually an effective shock absorber.



Best trainers: Cushioned (or 'neutral') trainers with plenty of flexibility to encourage foot motion. Stay away from motion control or stability trainers, which reduce foot mobility.

Selecting the right spikes is also important. For track work there are two main types, sprint spikes and distance spikes. Sprint spikes are very light and have almost no padding on the sole. Distance spikes have a decent amount of cushioning to protect your feet during an endurance race.

And remember, on the track the spikes themselves must not be longer than 6mm. In cross country spikes between 9mm and 12mm are recommended. Anything longer is dangerous, and anything shorter will not provide any grip.

Before training nights don't eat a heavy meal. Stick to something light such as a sandwich and drink plenty of fluids. If you eat too much before training you will get a stitch, preventing you from running and wasting your time.

On training nights always bring a warm top and track suit trousers, especially during Autumn/Winter. When it looks wet, bring a set of waterproofs as rain does not normally stop us! And don't forget to bring a bottle of water. Training can be thirsty work.

Track etiquette encourages a safe training environment. Always ensure when going round the track to starting points that you do not impede other athletes on track *and* field. Watch out for yellow warning triangles and obey what they say. And always listen out for and respond quickly to calls for "TRACK!"

Always ensure that you inform your coach of any other sporting activities that you are undertaking. This helps us to tailor your coaching for you and prevents you from getting injured due to exhaustion and overuse.

After training nights Continue to drink plenty of fluids and try to eat a nutritious meal soon after to restore the energy you will have used up during training.

Non-training nights. If you want to excel in your sport, running away from the track sessions at Northgate is an important part of your development. We will often recommend training to do during the week and weekend, but if we don't, it will never hurt to run just a few miles over the weekend. Be sure to us first though, so that we can make sure you don't over do it.

More questions? If you have any questions about the information in this leaflet or need further advice please talk to Eric or Kevin before or after training.

Ipswich Harriers Athletics Club

Endurance group

Eric Phillips
(01473) 463609
&
Kevin Peirce
(01473) 716005

<http://www.ipswich-harriers.ac.uk>

Some portions of this document based upon an article at: <http://www.runnersworld.com/>

Ipswich Harriers Athletics Club

General help and advice for endurance athletes

