




THE ULTIMATE

RW+ MEMBER SURVEY

 We sent RW+ members a massive questionnaire about every facet of the running experience. Here's exclusive insight into what makes the community tick, plus gear recommendations, best training (and snacking!) tips, top motivation secrets, and more.

ILLUSTRATIONS BY
JOEL KIMMEL

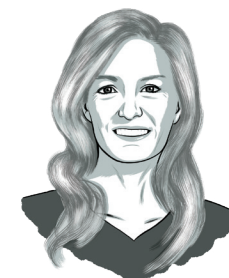


PEOPLE

Who are the runners you admire the most?

➔ **DES LINDEN.** She's a badass. Her grit and work ethic stand out.

Ann Griffith, Orinda, CA



SHALANE FLANAGAN.

She is an inspiring and accomplished American runner who continues to make a career out of supporting the running community even after retirement. *Julie Shelton-Grimshaw, Astoria, NY*

NIKE COACH CHRIS BENNETT.

When I "graduated" from the Couch to 5K app, I wanted something else to keep me focused and training the right way. I found the Nike Run Club app, and it was exactly what I needed. Coach Bennett has cheered me through my first run over 5K all the way to my last 10-mile run. And he'll be there for my solo half marathon in a few weeks! He's consistently positive, funny, uplifting, and challenging, and I am so grateful to have that app! *Sarah Sico, Portland, OR*

GABE GRUNEWALD inspires me every day with how she approached life in the face of her cancer. *Kathleen Hiniker, St. Paul, MN*

Nina Ericson

I really admire the non-pro but still super-fast **MOTHER RUNNERS!** They are training at such a high level, with kids in the mix. It's so impressive. *Joie Neely, Arlington, VA*

Following **AMELIA BOONE'S** struggles with eating disorder and anxiety on social media and in interviews has been inspirational. She is honest and doesn't give AF—and if she does, she owns it and turns it inward. Her abilities and accomplishments haven't just come out of the blue, she has worked to do what she's done, and she embraces her failures and learns from them. *Marleah Augustine, San Jose, CA*



MEB KEFLEZIGHI

for his relentless pursuit of goals. **ELIUD KIPCHOGE** because thinking about his sub-2-hour marathon finish still gives me chills. **DEENA KASTOR** for her focus on intentionally cultivating optimism. *Katelyn Doran, Seattle, WA*



What's the toughest challenge you've faced as a runner?

SURVIVING THE 2013 BOSTON BOMBING. I WAS CLOSE TO THE FIRST BOMB. I CONQUERED MY FEAR OF RUNNING THAT MARATHON AGAIN BY GOING BACK THE FOLLOWING YEAR TO COMPLETE THE RACE.

Peggy R. Boren, St. George, UT

There are many days when getting myself out the door is hard. There can be a million excuses not to get moving, and sometimes the run itself isn't great. But I've never felt worse after going for a run. *Graham Smith, Columbus, OH*

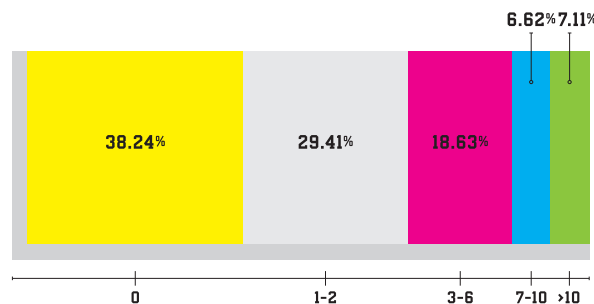
Believing in myself—actually considering myself an athlete—and believing that I can get better at this and that I don't have to be stuck with the same results time after time. *Nicole Tilzer, Washington, D.C.*

Finding a balance between running and graduate school. Sometimes, it's difficult to feel like it's okay to take time away from grading, lab work, writing, and meetings to go for a run, especially because the schedule is unpredictable. *Rachel Sherbondy, Golden, CO*

Recovering from a major knee surgery. I had the surgery in 2012 and wasn't sure I'd be able to run again without severe knee pain. But I just ran my first marathon this year and accomplished my goal of finishing it in less than 4 hours! *Troy Hurst, Neosho, WI*

PEOPLE

'Fess up: How many toenails have you sacrificed?



What motivates you to get out for a run?



Knowing I will be in my element: **in nature, alone, with no demands from others.** I work in healthcare and field many calls for help every day. It is therapeutic to run and disconnect, so I can refresh to help others again the next day. *Claudia Shook, Dallas, TX*

I love wildlife, and try to run where I can see deer, birds, or other animals. *Robbi Sumner, Okeechobee, FL*

Knowing how much improvement I have seen through hard work and dedication. I love being able to look back on cross-country or track season and just be like, "Wow, who coulda thunk it?" *Luke Mason, Madison, MS*

Self-competition. Hoping for a race soon to test my fitness! *Ed Kornoelje, Grand Rapids, MI*

Having a goal is a big help. A race on the calendar keeps me accountable. *Dale Ottosen, Cayuga, NY*

The runner's high! I also love races. *Ashley Pedersen, Scottsdale, AZ*

What animal most represents your running style?

Probably a **squirrel**. I'm easily distracted. *Jennifer Reifsnyder, Woodridge, IL*



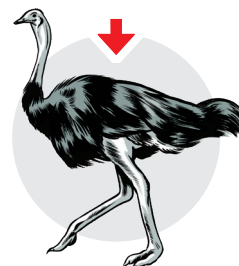
A **leisurely basset hound**. *Carolyn Thompson, South Lyon, MI*

An injured **hyena**. I try to run smoothly, but it just never feels 100% natural. *Justin Ritter, Port Washington, WI*



Hamster. I like running in circles. *Jay Jacob Wind, Arlington, VA*

An **ostrich**, kinda awkward but gets the job done. *Helen Chisholm, Henry County, KY*



How has running helped you get through the COVID-19 pandemic?

IT'S A GREAT OUTLET FOR MY PENT-UP ENERGY. WFH HAS BEEN A CHALLENGE AS I'M JUST SITTING ALL DAY.

Sunita Liggin, Oakland, CA

It's been my only sanity, truly. It's guaranteed time out of my house, time away from my family, time to process and to feel like my "old" self. *Jodi Eichler-Levine, Allentown, PA*

I now run or walk every day. The virus has made a streaker out of me. *Jennifer Baskerville-Burrows, Indianapolis, IN*

It's the one constant that I've been able to hold onto with everything else being altered and unfamiliar. It provides an escape from the chaos and a way to

connect with nature and myself. *Danielle Buglino, Huntington, NY*

It's my meditation and my main form of exercise. It's the one thing in my life that is almost completely unchanged from before COVID-19. *Josh Frank, Miami, FL*

It gets me out of the house! *Sharon Schoenfeld, New York, NY*

Being home with my husband and two kids all the time, it's very much my alone time! *Ashley Lauren Matthews, Monroe, GA*

Any race-day good luck charms or rituals?

I have a special pair of Sherpa shorts I save for race days. I always set my clothes out the night before—bib pinned to my shirt, the shorts, the socks—so when I wake up all I have to do is chug my Propel and pound the pavement. *Paul Them, Lansdowne, PA*

I always wear a combination of red, green, white, and black. I'm originally Palestinian, and those are the colors of the national flag. *Jafar Abunasser, Cleveland, OH*

Peanut butter on pumpernickel bread for breakfast. *Andy Romanelli, Princeton Junction, NJ*

I need to be wearing my favorite hat with the brim reversed to lock in my confidence and game face. *Gary Chatham, St. Charles, MO*

Red toenail polish! *Denise Smith, Athens, GA*

Small breakfast, stretch, listen to early 2000s music. *Rachel Strodel, Jersey City, NJ*

I eat the same thing every morning of a race and put all my stuff together the night before, **especially the race bib** and timing chip. I always have a nightmare that I forget my bib and chip. *Angie Roy, Bella Vista, AR*



Oof. What's the most embarrassing thing to happen to you on a run?

LIKE MOST OF US, I'VE SHAT MYSELF.

Dan Haas, Kennett Square, PA

I did a face plant while exiting a porta-potty. *David E. Stauffer, Red Lodge, MT*

I ran into a telephone pole! *Geoffery Root, Stone Mountain, GA*

Let's just say snow makes great toilet paper! *Douglas Few, Driggs, ID*

Your ideal running partner is...

Someone with no expectations or an agenda of having to hit a certain goal. *Martha Rhine, Vancouver, WA*

Someone who runs at a similar pace but occasionally pushes me to run harder. *Danielle Lutz, Pittsburgh, PA*

Someone who builds up others, someone I can learn from, and who makes the run seem effortless. *Brian Rensing, Ashburn, VA*

My shadow! I have always preferred running solo, because I love taking the time to think and meditate. *Ashley Bashur, Vienna, VA*

Someone that can handle my mood swings. Some days I do not want to say a word. Other days, I want to talk about how to solve world hunger, and yet other days, I just want to talk about that colorful leaf that just fell in front of us. *Leslie Cothren, Morganton, NC*

My iTunes. *Ed Burke, Barnesville, PA*

Someone who humors me when I say, "How about a hilly run today?" *Stephanie Phelps, Fort Worth, TX*

Anyone! I run with new people whenever I can. New stories to share and memories to make. *Nicole Albright, Shippensburg, PA*



4-LEGGED!

Krysten Sanderson, Lakehills, TX

Not a fan! Your biggest running pet peeves:

PEOPLE WHO SPIT ALL OVER THE PLACE!

Kristen Heinan, Charlottesville, VA

LOUD FOOT STRIKES.

Michelle Hills, Louisville, KY

NOT WAVING WHEN YOU SEE ANOTHER RUNNER.

Sandra Carey, Naperville, IL

EXCUSES.

Megan Daly, Jefferson, NJ

Best advice for beginners: Go!

Take it slow; know that it will be hard at first, but each run gets a little easier and before you know it you're running a mile without stopping! *Robin Iser, Palatine, IL* • Every day does not need to be as good as or better than the day before. It's more important to keep moving forward. *Ed West, Topeka, KS* • Using the walk-run method makes it easy and fun to progress. *Katie Bommarito, Aberdeen, SD* • Don't worry about time, pace, etc. Just focus on getting out the door and putting one foot in front of another. The rest will come later. *Maura Weadick, Tyngsborough, MA* • Start slow! *Josie Robinson, Bendigo, Australia*



SHOES & GEAR

What running shoes are you training in these days?

ON CLOUD I have a neutral step and don't like a lot of extra cushion or weight. I like most shoes to feel more like a racing shoe. *Sibel Canlar, New York, NY*

BROOKS ADRENALINE I have a narrow foot, so these were the first shoes that felt like my foot was secure without tying the laces sooo tight. *Kate D'Agostino Russo, Brooklyn, NY*

ADIDAS BOOST Love the cushioning! *Debra Gersten, Phoenix, AZ*

For race day, **NIKE 4%** Do I even need to explain this? *Erik Valiente, Los Angeles, CA*

NEW BALANCE 860 V9 I have three pairs of running shoes, but these are labeled "Best Shoes" in my running app for a reason. *Benjamin Miller, Troy, OH*

SAUCONY KINVARA 11 I became a Kinvara fan with the 9th edition, after hearing so many great things about them. They can get me through long runs AND speed sessions, making them ideal for my training. *Etta Eckstrom, Lake Bluff, IL*

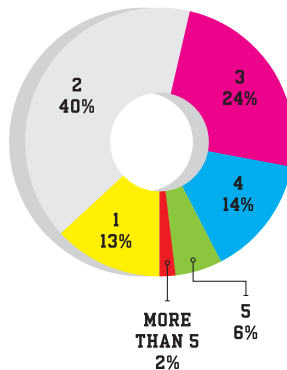
SAUCONY GUIDE I have high arches, a bad hip, and I overpronate, so I need a pretty serious stability shoe. *Elizabeth Ohneck, Stillwater, OK*

Nike React Infinity Run Flyknit. I under-pronate a little on the right side and wanted to see if they would help. My wear patterns suggest that, yes, they do.

Maureen Mahoney, Ottawa, Ontario



How many pairs are in your rotation?



50

Richard Casados, Albuquerque, NM

CURRENTLY AT

18

Amanda Beucler, Medford, MA

In the past 10 months I have probably run in 20 different shoes. I have my go-to 4 pairs tho! I keep 2 in my office and the rest at home.

Brenda Wilson, Eugene, OR

What are the raddest shoes you've ever laid eyes on?

I love the **ADIDAS ADI-ZERO** because they look like racing cars without wheels! *David Dorsey, New York, NY*

NIKE ZOOM PEGASUS 36 in the green snakeskin. I have a pair that I don't run in, they just don't fit right, but I love looking at them. *Dale Moss, Ocala, FL*

The **BOSTON-THEMED SHOES FROM BROOKS.** I want to BQ, and I will get a pair after I do. *Tom Ellefson, Indianapolis, IN*

I had a pair of **BROOKS GHOST OMBRE.** They were half bright blue and half bright yellow. The shoelaces matched the

sections of the shoe. Teen-agers actually told me I was cool! *Jennifer James, Verdon, NE*

SAUCONY RIDE "TOE THE LIME" SHOES.

Saucony used to have a Runpops collection with a bright lime-green shoe. They were my favorite. I bought 6 or 7 pairs and ran in them until they wore out. Then they were discontinued and my whole world fell apart, you know, relatively speaking. I still have some old pairs that I use for yard work or errands, and I always have people come up to me and say, "Cool shoes!" *Samantha Brooks, Baltimore, MD*

If you had an unlimited gear budget, what would you splurge on?

A large and dependable RV so I could travel all over the world to races with my family! *Pam Landry, Andover, MA*

I'd probably get all the Salomon S/Lab gear. It looks awesome. *Mike Brennan, Walpole, MA*

A professional masseuse to work on sore spots every single day. *Nicole Foster, Palm Beach Gardens, FL*

A Zero Runner machine so I could run inside without pounding my joints. *Craig Sheldon, Oswego, NY*

I would find a way to make every stinking sportswear manufacturer understand that WOMEN NEED ZIPPER POCKETS. *Renee Coxa, Palatine, IL*

A million more sports bras. Due to my size, I can't wear just any bra, and they're EXPENSIVE. *Caitlin Beal, Memphis, TN*

All Nike and Lululemon! *Camille Ybanez, New York, NY*

Probably just more spares of all of my current running clothes so I didn't have to do laundry every other day. *Jesse Dekker, Birmingham, MI*



Lakota Gambill (shoes, watch, leggings)

The running tech you can't live without...

65%
YOUR WATCH



My Garmin 935 with Running Dynamics Pod. I love it and all the nerdy data it collects and crunches for me. *Lauren Abel, Cincinnati, OH*

I am a data nerd, and I don't want a watch just for running. I like that my Apple Watch is a seamless part of my day, including when I run. *Diana Mitchell, Buffalo, NY*

Truly wireless bluetooth headphones are the best. They stay in my ears and I don't even realize I'm wearing them. *Cameron Lind, Evanston, IL*

All sweat-wicking fabrics. I'm a cold-weather Midwesterner, so at 65 degrees, I get hot! *Brianna Hansen, Chicago, IL*

My Aftershockz. I need music to run with. Last year my headphones died at mile 6 during my marathon. Those 20 miles took forever to get through. *Teri Rossi, Concord, CA*

Your absolute favorite, best-ever, go-to clothes to sweat in...

I was late to the Lululemon bandwagon, but now they are the only running bottoms I use—shorts, capris, and tights. They have a gazillion pockets for all your gear and nutrition, and they never lose their shape or their stitches. *Claudia Cantarella, Brooklyn, NY*

New Balance Running Heatgrid Hoodie—it's soft and comfortable (doesn't rub), and it keeps me warm without overheating or restricting airflow. *Gwen Oliver, State College, PA*

⬆️ Sweaty Betty leggings! They don't fall down!

Emilee Risteen, Derry, NH

Stance Running and Balega socks are very comfortable. They don't slip on my foot or down in my shoe. *Andy Weissinger, Chesapeake, VA*

Love Athleta 3" Run With It short. Comes in my size (XXS), washes well, and doesn't bunch up when I run. *Ann Grossman, Delray Beach, FL*

Under Armour's Speed-pocket collection has a pocket in the front waistband that holds your phone right at your lower stomach area. It holds tight to your body, it's waterproof, and I've never had my phone fall out. I won't buy running shorts, tights, or pants without it now! *David Loessberg, Bozeman, MT*

If you could invent one gadget to make your running experience better, what would it be?

SOMETHING TO FILTER THE POLLEN OUT OF THE AIR DURING ALLERGY SEASON.

Tracy Roseman, Tallahassee, FL



EVENTS

Allow us to present your bucket-list marathons...

The **LA TO VEGAS ULTRA RELAY!** *Allison Bloom, Amherst, VA*

That's easy—**THE NYC MARATHON!** I have gotten rejected for the past 6 years straight! *Linda Valazza, Old Bridge, NJ*

THE BARKLEY MARATHONS. I don't think I'd ever be trained up for it, but the sheer craziness of it all appeals to me. *Marleah Augustine, San Jose, CA*

2024 OLYMPIC MARATHON TRIALS! *John Morse, Washington, DC*

THE BERLIN MARATHON. I loved the city when I visited, and I would love to run its empty streets. I bet the after-party is great! *Brenda Ramirez, Chicago, IL*

THE NIKE WOMEN'S MARATHON. I want the Tiffany necklace at the finish line! And running with other women is really, really inspiring. *Colleen Demers, Milford, MA*

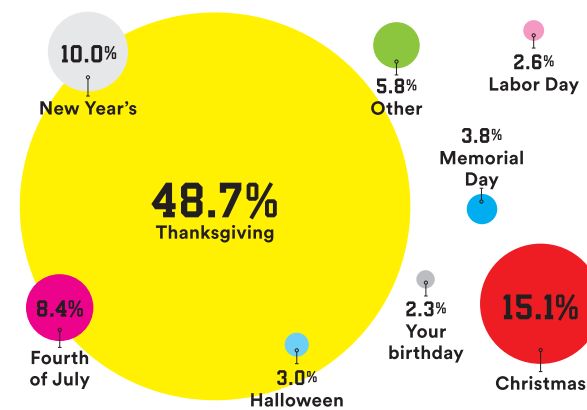
THE GREAT WALL HALF MARATHON. *Erik Matey, Philadelphia, PA*

BOSTON MARATHON WOULD BE A DREAM SOMEDAY!

Brianna Dibble, Red Wing, MN



What's the best holiday to run on?



What's the most ridiculous place you've ever gone running?

Running in place in my living room for an hour. *Cindy Kulikowski, Christian Contaoi, Los Angeles, CA*

Nine miles of circles inside a parking garage during Hurricane Harvey. *Abigail Allard, Belleville, IL*

I'm in the Navy, so I've run a lot on our treadmill at sea. It's a totally different experience with the entire ship moving around you! *Lydia Gibson, Friendswood, TX*

Laps on a track for 15 miles. *Cindy Kulikowski, Edgewater, MD*

I did a virtual half marathon on a treadmill. Lake effect snow is no joke! *Will Stimeling, Strasburg, PA*

I ran in an airport bathroom to keep my running streak alive. *Mac Lower, Dallas, TX*

Laps from my living room up and down the stairs to the basement. *Christine Stocker, Lemont, IL*

I was in Amsterdam once and it was raining and cold. My hotel did not have a working treadmill, so I alternated between running in place and going back and forth in my hotel room for an hour. I was so incredibly sore after that run! *Todd Whitemore, Singapore*

The Wakefield Marathon in Wakefield, MI. A Boston Qualified course takes you around the scenic Sunday Lake 9.5 times. It was like the movie *Groundhog Day*. *Robert John Tervonen, Ironwood, MI*

The snack you crave most after a hard run...

Pumpkin-oat muffins with chocolate chips.

Erica Foley, Manchester, IA

Tacos!

Denise Voyles, Richmond, TX

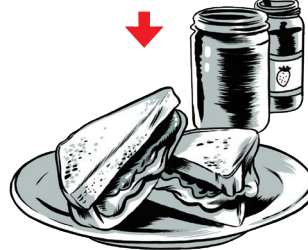


Homemade espresso energy bites (they're a fan favorite in my friend group!).

Ann Drapcho, Chanhassen, MN

Peanut butter and jelly sandwich. Nom!!

Vince Micone, Washington, DC

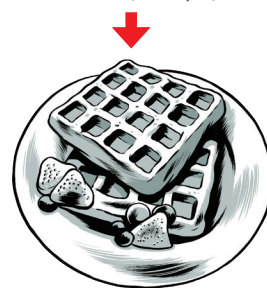


Apples and chunky peanut butter.

Ashley Lorah, Allentown, PA

Waffles.

Gertie Rizzo, Tampa, FL



Brooklyn Brown Ale and a bacon cheeseburger.

Tom Leavitt, Virginia Beach, VA

Victor Sailer/PhotoRun (Boston); Getty Images (Hong Kong)

Where is your dream running destination?

I want to run as many trails as possible in **OREGON**. That state is gorgeous, with its coastline, rivers, forest, and flatlands in the southeast area! There are so many opportunities for a scenic run in that state! *Amanda Rawson, San Jose, CA*

Anything that goes into the wilderness. The woods are such incredible places to have a quiet run. I would love to head to **NORTHERN CALIFORNIA** and run any trail through those areas. *Abigail Allard, Belleville, IL*

A half marathon near a volcano in **ICELAND**. *Thomas F. Aussem, Somerset, NJ*

The hills of Hong Kong where the ultra runners go.

Katherine Chan, New York, NY

Trails in the Smoky Mountains in **TENNESSEE**. *Chris Vargas, Palm City, FL*

THE APPALACHIAN TRAIL. *Cara Schultz, California, KY*

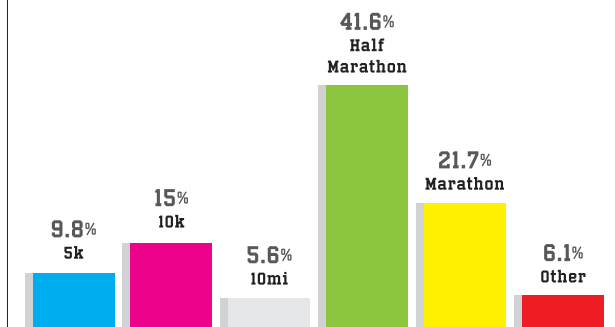
I hope and dream of running one day in **IRELAND!** *Lori Baldwin, Lewisburg, WV*

Even if I never meet my running role models, it is SO exciting to run on the routes they describe in their books. I read Deena Kastor's *Let Your Mind*

Run, and I was overjoyed to run on Green Church Road in **MAMMOTH, CA**, a few years later. I felt connected. *Megan Snyder, Ashburn, VA*

I went on a backpacking trip throughout the **GRAND TETONS IN WYOMING**. I hadn't started my running journey yet and did not run when I was there. But the sights were spectacular and I would love to return. This time, I'd make it a runcation! *Melissa Valente, New York, NY*

Your favorite race distance? 13.1 FTW!



HALF MARATHON. It is a challenge but doesn't require much recovery time. *Stephen Nowroski, Nazareth, PA*

THE MARATHON... mainly because you can't just go run one. It challenges me to train consistently and be my best. *Ann Gruenbacher, Liberty Township, OH*

At 82+ years, it is the **5K** which I run with my grandchildren. *Donald Hillebrandt, Oakland, CA*

So far it has been the **10K**. I don't really get warmed up before mile 4. *James Branch, Atlanta, GA*

THE MARATHON is king. *Jon Jasper, Hilliard, OH*