



Knowing Your Running Safety Rules

Most runners' safety rules are just common sense. But you see so many runners – both male and female – who violate them every day that a rules review is indeed in order.

Consider the following:

- **Don't wear headsets.** This is the No. 1 rule for safe running. Why? Because when you listen to music or the radio while running outside, you can't hear car horns, cyclists, or heaven forbid, the footsteps of someone coming up behind you.

When you're outside, especially when you're on the roads, you are simply asking for trouble if you tune out your surroundings.

- **Run against traffic.** A bicycle is considered a vehicle, so it's subject to the same laws as cars and trucks. Cyclists ride with traffic. You are not a vehicle. You are a runner. You are also in a highly vulnerable position if you're running near cars, trucks, and bicycles.

So the best way to prevent an untimely meeting with one of these vehicles is to be able to see them. That means running on the side of the road or on the sidewalk and running while facing traffic whenever possible.

- **Run defensively.** Look both ways before crossing and make sure you watch for vehicles that are making a right turn. Be sure the driver of a car acknowledges your right-of-way before crossing in front of a vehicle and be courteous to thank them with a little hand wave. Obey traffic signals
- **Keep right.** If you're running on a cycling path or pedestrian path, always run on the right hand side so that faster runners and cyclists can easily pass. If you're running with one or more companions, don't hog the path and prevent others from easily overtaking your group.
- **Don't challenge cars to a race.** If you and a car are both approaching an intersection, stop and let the car go first. (They're faster than you)
- **Dress Smart. If you run at night or in low light conditions, make yourself visible.**
 - Invest in reflective gear, vest, jacket, arm bands, headlights
 - Wear bright colored clothing
- **Run with others.** Avoid running alone in unpopulated, unfamiliar areas and stay away from trails surrounded by heavy brush
- **Carry a noisemaker and pepper spray**
- **Don't stop to give directions to strangers in cars if you are running alone**
- **Do not wear jewelry**
- **Do carry identification.** Write your name, phone number, and blood type on the inside sole of your running shoe. Or wear an id tag on your shoe, ankle or wrist.
- **Carry a cell phone.** Invest in a running belt with a pouch to carry your phone, keys, id card, money, and even water bottles
- **Let someone know where you are running.** Tell them your route, approximate time you will return
- **Always trust your intuition.** If you're unsure about a person or place, avoid it. Trust your gut!
- **Always stay alert and aware of what's going on around you.** Be in the present! The more aware you are, the less vulnerable you are.