

SPRIKE

Finish line

HOLIDAY 1998

*winter
blast*

TRAINING in cold
WEATHER

*cool
internships*
will WORK for FUN

**TEAM
JORDAN**

the MEN who will
fill MICHAEL'S shoes

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GEAR UP FOR WINTER FITNESS

THE WELL-DRESSED RUNNER STAYS IN SHAPE ALL SEASON

"Use it or lose it." In sports, that's one of the coldest, cruelest facts of life. It takes months of hard work to get into shape, but if you lay off for even a little while, "detraining" sets in. It's like swimming against the current: as soon as you stop stroking and kicking, you get pushed backward.

But there is hope: you can beat the detraining effect by getting outside and running as few as three days a week.

"Outside?" some of you are **BY DAVE MCGOVERN** sputtering. "It's cold outside!" Well, that's another cruel fact of life: in most places, it gets colder this time of year. But that doesn't mean you can't get out the door to run. Any rumors you might have heard about freezing your lungs or losing toes to frostbite are just that: rumors — probably spread by the guy who wants your spot on the team next season.

Sure, cold-weather running takes getting used to, but with the proper frame of mind and the right equipment, running in the dead of winter can be just as much fun as running through the warmth of spring.

Ask veteran runner Bill Gardner. He rarely misses a day, running no matter how cold it gets — and he lives in Fairbanks, Alaska, where winter temperatures have been known to plummet to 50 or 60 degrees below zero. "Temperature doesn't matter," says Gardner. "It's your gear and your attitude. If they are both good-quality, then the cold isn't going to stop you."

LAYERS

Gardner and other cold-weather running enthusiasts say the big hazards of winter running — frostbite, hypothermia and icy running surfaces — certainly aren't to be trifled with, but dressing properly can minimize the risk of all three. Following are some suggestions for staying warm and safe.

1. Dress in layers. Warm air trapped between layers of clothing makes all the difference in keeping warm on cold days. As you warm up, unzip or remove the outermost layers to regulate your temperature. However, when protecting your tootsies, less is more: one pair of socks is usually >

If you dress right and plan ahead, you can train in even the worst weather.



More than what you wear

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS FOR WINTER TRAINING

Your gear will have a lot to say about how well you survive temperate training, but other factors play into your health and safety, too. Following are a few to consider.

* **HOW YOU RUN MATTERS.** Start out running into the wind and finish with the wind at your back. Also consider running a number of small loops instead of one long, out-and-back course in case the weather changes.

* **USE YOUR HEAD.** In icy conditions, face traffic and don't assume drivers can see you. Also, don't assume they can stop if the roads are slick. If your footing is bad, think how tough it is for a '74 Pontiac with bald tires.

* **TOUCH BASE.** Just to be on the safe side, let someone know where you'll be running and when you expect to return, and carry emergency ID and some loose change for a phone call (or a hot chocolate).

* **WARM UP.** Allow your muscles to warm up thoroughly during early miles before picking up your pace. Muscle strains and pulls may result if you try to do too much too soon.

* **GO ALTERNATIVE.** If even the right gear and a good plan can't keep you running outside, consider running on a treadmill inside or cross training in the great outdoors — cross-country skiing or snowshoeing are great alternatives.

sufficient, since running itself will push enough blood to the lower extremities to keep your feet warm.

2. **Pull away the sweat.** Inner clothing layers should be made of materials like wool, silk or "space age" synthetics like polypropylene, which carry sweat away from the body. Avoid cotton, which absorbs sweat and holds it close to your body rather than pulling it away from your skin.

3. **Block the wind.** Even a lightweight, nylon windbreaker will cut down the wind chill. Put on a light-colored or reflective jacket to enhance drivers' ability to see you in the late-morning and early-evening darkness that winter brings.

4. **Get the right shoes.** Make sure you have a pair of "studded" running shoes with a pronounced tread pattern to prevent slipping on ice and snow. Don't take chances — excessively worn shoes can be very slippery!

5. **Top it off.** Gloves and a hat will help you retain body heat, and they are also useful in regulating body temperature. If you start to get hot, you can pull off your hat or gloves for a while — it's easier than yanking off your jacket or pulling off a sweatshirt while on the run.

6. **Avoid overdressing.** With all these layers, gloves, hats and jackets, it would be easy to overdress. Don't. Remember that it's okay to feel a bit cold and underdressed when you start your workout, because once you get moving you'll feel as much as 20 degrees warmer.

WARM UP AND CHILL

While you're out there battling the elements, don't worry too much about your speed, especially if the footing is bad. Winter is the time to maintain conditioning and work on an endurance base for the spring. If you do feel the need to run fast, work into it slowly, making sure your muscles are warmed up before you pick up the pace. When you've finished your workout, get out of all those layers and into a nice warm shower. Then stretch gently for five or 10 minutes and rehydrate by drinking plenty of water.

Finally, sit back and think of this: thanks to several months of easy winter mileage, you'll be in great shape once spring training rolls around. And you'll also be mentally tough after battling — and beating — Mother Nature at her absolute nastiest.



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