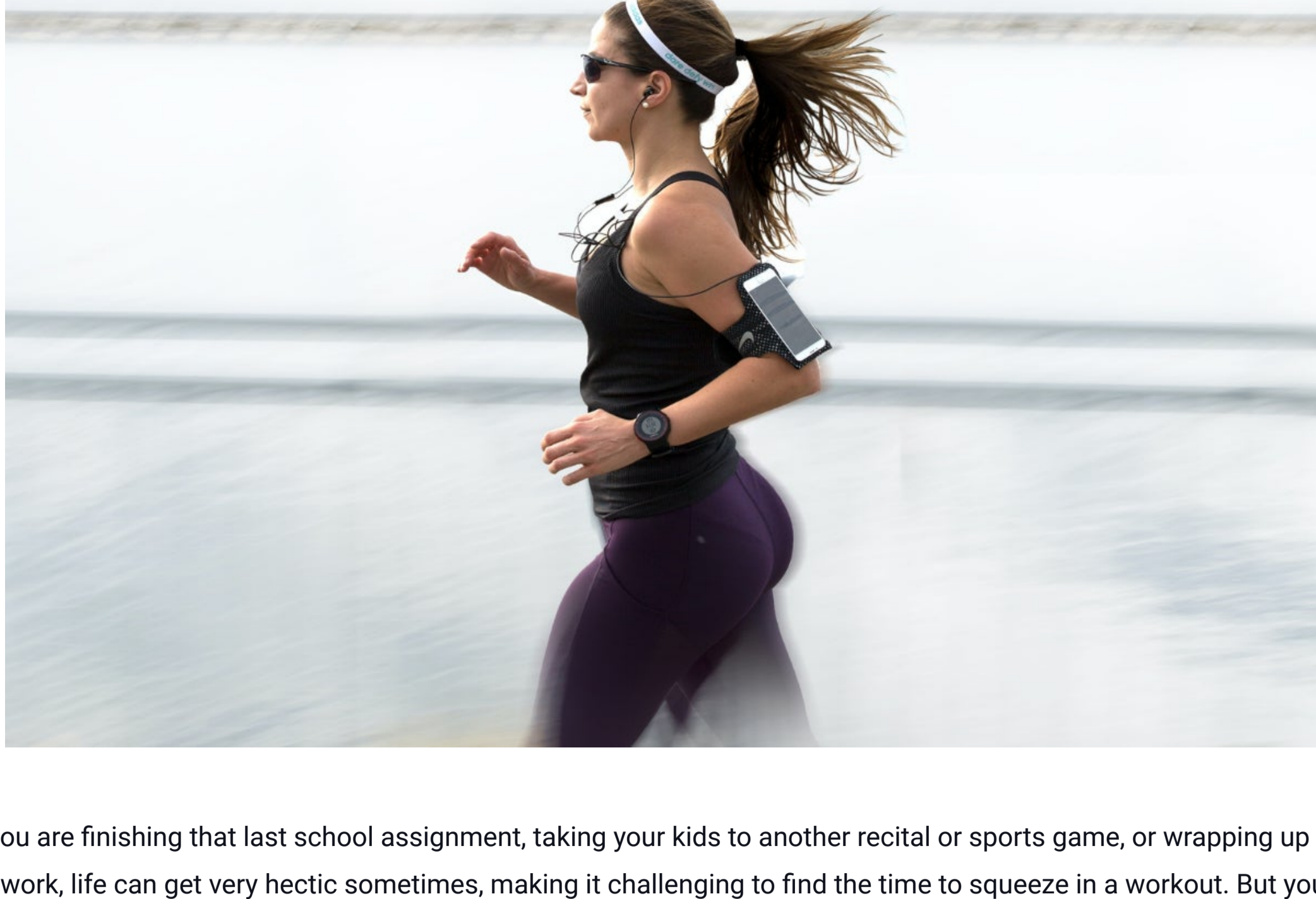


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5 Tips on How to Run on a Busy Schedule

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Whether you are finishing that last school assignment, taking your kids to another recital or sports game, or wrapping up that big project at work, life can get very hectic sometimes, making it challenging to find the time to squeeze in a workout. But you don't have to sacrifice the countless [health benefits of running](#) (such as alleviating stress and boosting your mood) because you are overwhelmed by your jam-packed schedule. From getting an early head start and staying committed to becoming more flexible and creative, learn how to prioritize time for running despite your busy schedule with our top 5 tips.

1. Early Bird Gets the Miles



For some of us, getting up at the crack of dawn comes naturally, while others are ready to hit the snooze button as soon as the alarm goes off. But whether you are a morning person or a night owl, there is no denying the many benefits of becoming a morning runner.

One of the advantages of going on an early morning run is you have fewer distractions vying for your attention. This helps you get it out of the way, as opposed to later in the day when you're more likely to procrastinate and become busy and weary. A morning run is also a great start to the day by providing you with that personal quiet time of mental clarity and peace. Whether you hit the road or the trail, being surrounded by nature is very calming and is bound to lift your mood and relieve stress.

Running in the morning also allows for a more consistent, regular schedule, making it easier to establish a habitual routine. Studies have shown that people who work out in the mornings are more successful in making it a long-term habit. You will be surprised at how setting your alarm an hour or two earlier can make a big difference and impact other areas of your life, such as staying on course with your nutrition goals. Being a morning runner does mean embracing the "early to bed, early to rise" motto, which entails limiting screen time (less scrolling through social media) and not staying up late, so you're fully rested for your run the next day. Set your running gear and [nutrition](#) out the night before to avoid wasting valuable time in the morning and for that extra motivation to lace up. Once you breathe in that crisp air and experience the beauty of a sunrise run with the background melody of chirping birds, it will be a game changer for rejuvenating your spirit and being ready to seize the day. Discover more tips on how to become a morning runner in our [article](#).

Note: If you prefer to exercise later when your body is more alert, you can still get up early and use that time to get a head start at work and other responsibilities, allowing you more free time later in the day to devote to training.

2. Plan a Training Schedule



"Failing to plan is planning to fail." Let's face it, leaving running to happenstance will not ensure consistency with your training goals. Take a proactive approach and plan your miles and workouts at least a week in advance into your calendar. Whether using the calendar on your smartphone or a tangible written planner, becoming organized is key to making time for your runs.

Start by having a realistic and manageable schedule (whether you're committing to running every day or a few times a week) and section off a block of "me-time" to help you honor your commitment to yourself. While unforeseen events, such as emergency appointments and cancellations, can occur, having a planner will help you achieve a better work-life balance (instead of the chaotic juggling act). Checking your schedule and seeing what lies ahead for the week is also an effective productivity tool to help you stay on top of meetings and responsibilities, deterring you from overbooking and stretching yourself thin. And just like a "to-do" list, there's that feeling of accomplishment when you complete your workout for the day.

A planner is also helpful in mapping out a more effective training schedule, allowing you to track your progress. If you're running the same mileage at the same pace six days a week, time to stop and reevaluate. Whether you choose a self-made plan or follow an already established [training guide](#), implement a training schedule that involves a variety of runs (such as [intervals](#), easy, speed, etc.) to help your body recover faster and grow stronger while freeing up time that you wouldn't have had otherwise. Plan a long run on the days when you don't have a full calendar and lower mileage runs for when you have a busy week or [traveling](#). Check out our expertly crafted [workout](#) and [race prep](#) guides for more training tips and inspiration.

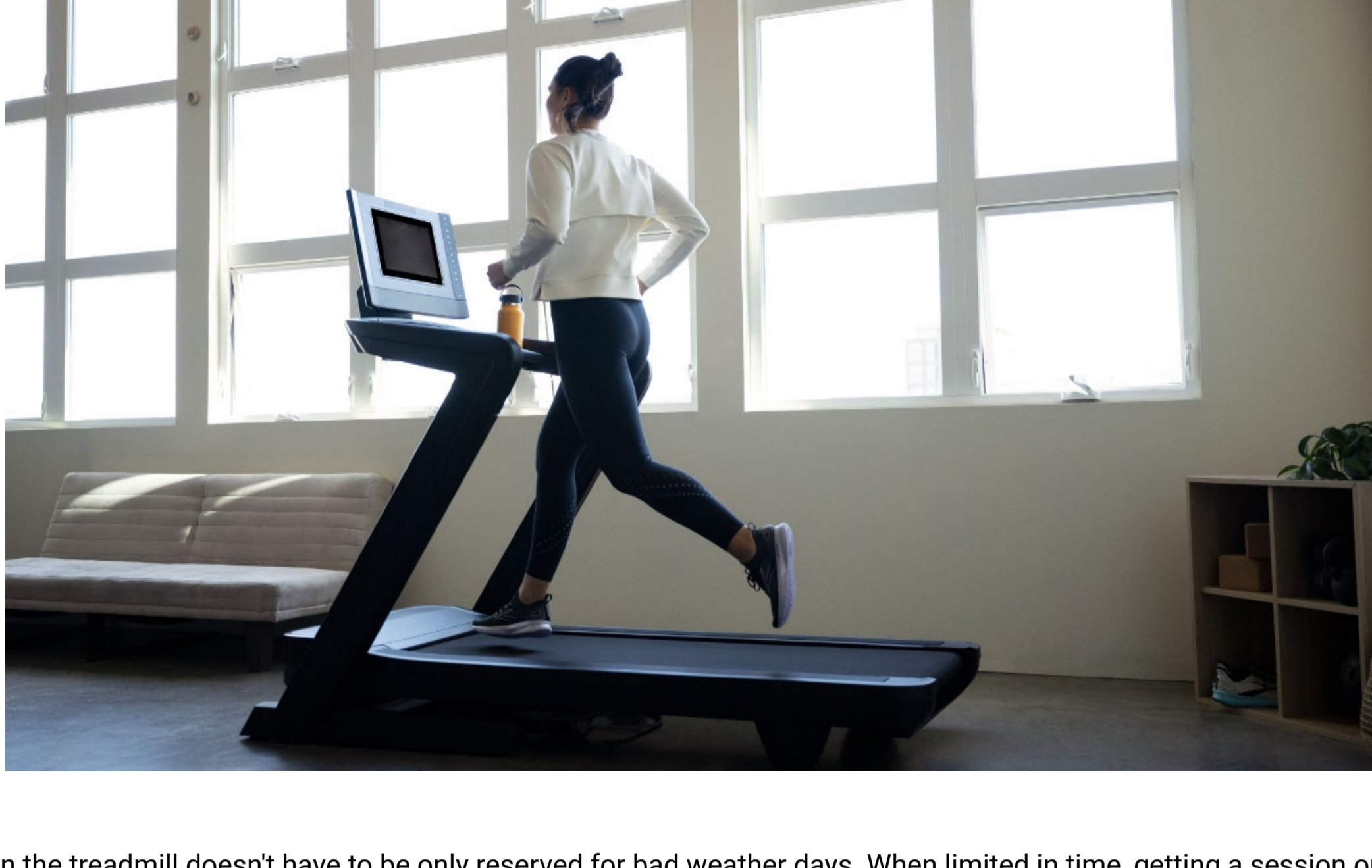
3. Go on Social Runs



Being a runner doesn't mean you have to sacrifice your social life. You can still remain active and fit while enjoying the company of others! Mix it up and make your [runs more fun](#) by including your loved ones along. Whether that means investing in a baby jogger, having your older kids cycle on their bikes as you break a sweat, or running with your significant other, having company on your runs allows you to engage and invest in the relationships that matter the most to you.

Running with another person also allows you to have an accountability partner to keep you committed to achieving your [goals](#). If your circle of friends or acquaintances doesn't include runners, then join a runners' group in your local community where you can meet new people with shared interests and lifestyle goals.

4. Embrace the Treadmill



Running on the treadmill doesn't have to be only reserved for bad weather days. When limited in time, getting a session on the treadmill allows you to keep up with your training while still catching your favorite TV episode or watching that newly released movie. As a bonus, streaming makes the miles and time fly quicker, and you don't have to experience FOMO. Should you decide to invest in a treadmill at home, you can even get in a quick workout while your dinner is cooking in the oven or crockpot, and there's no need for a baby or pet sitter either (win-win!).

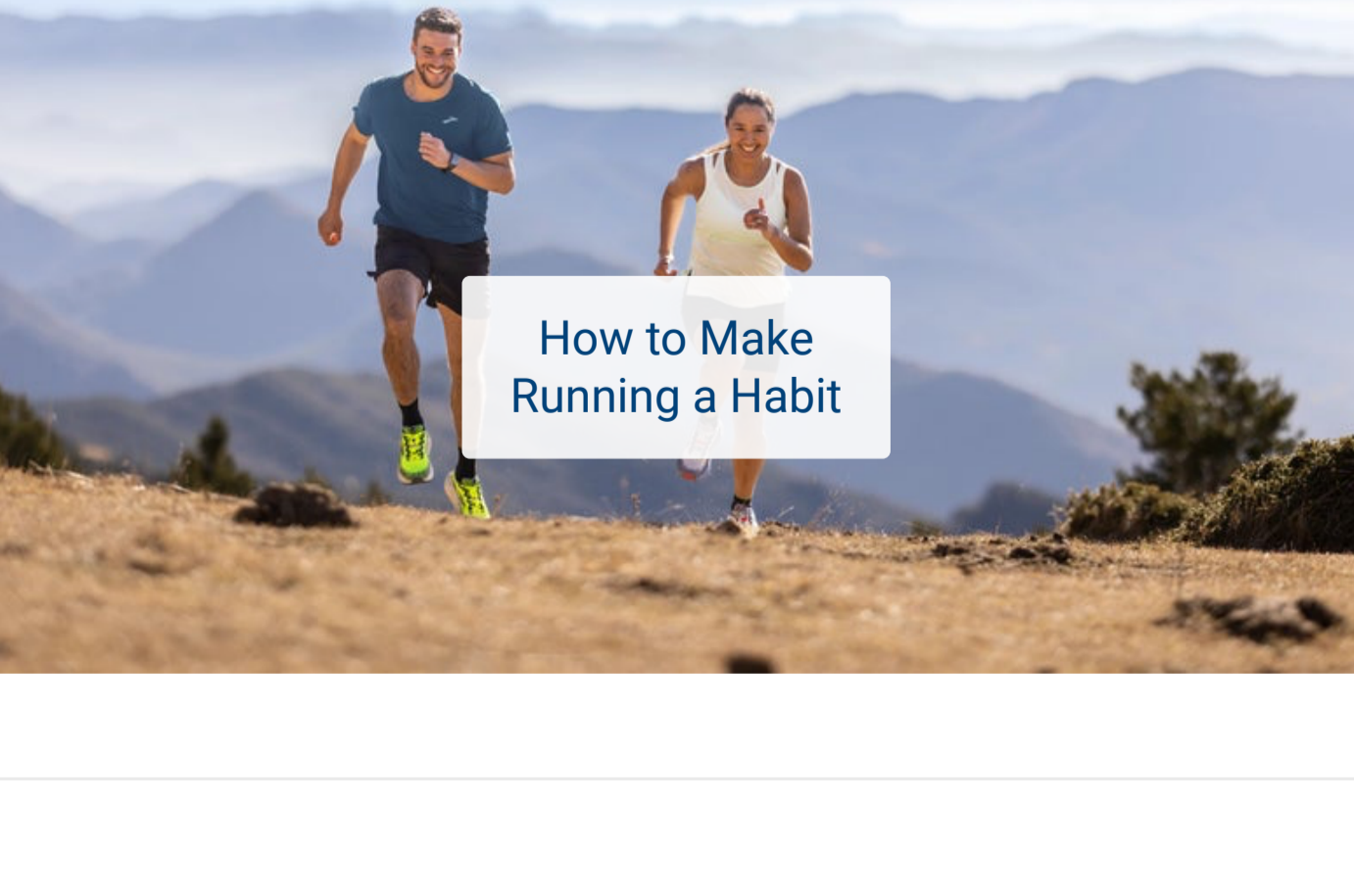
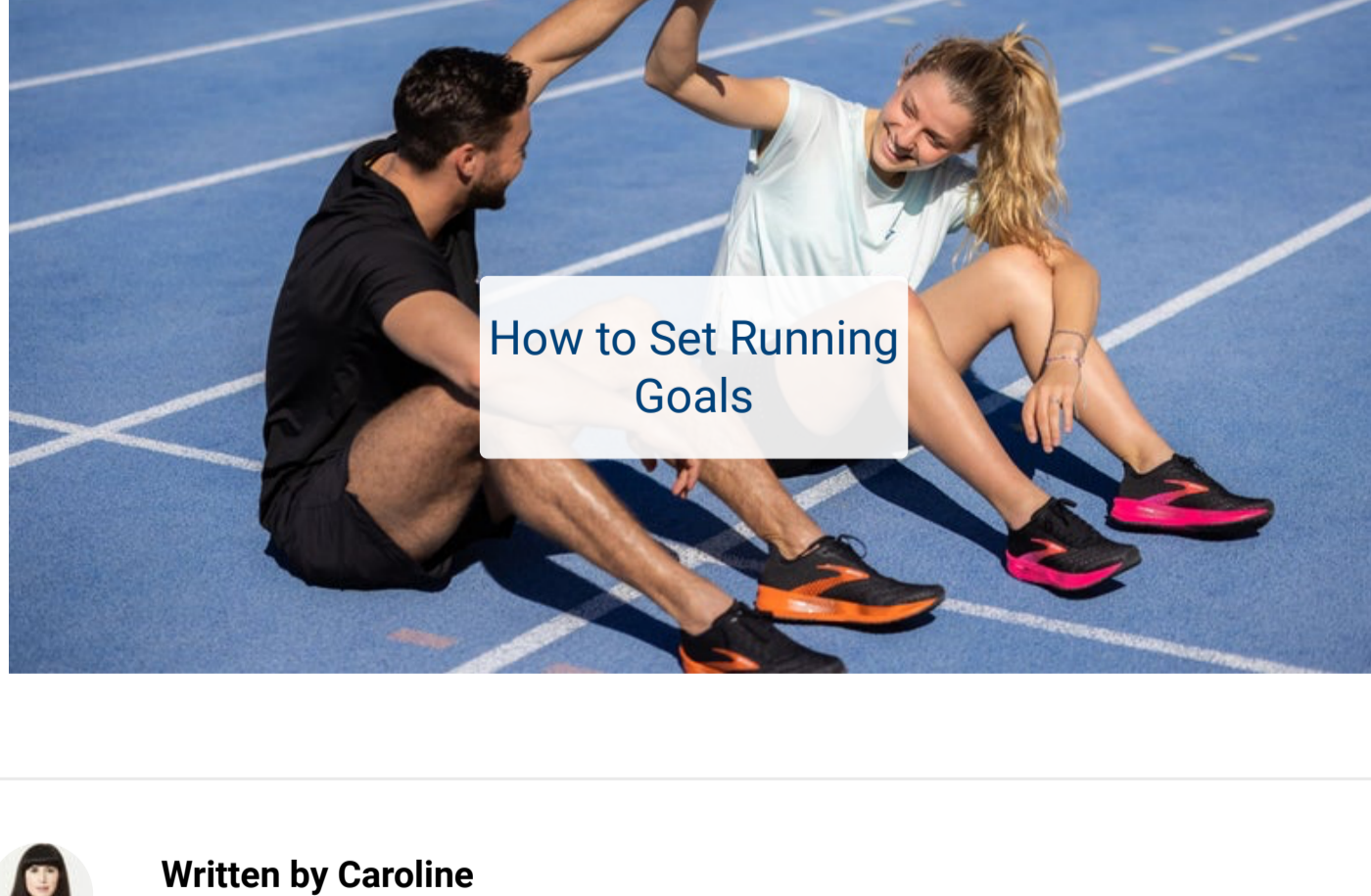
5. Be Flexible & Creative



Take advantage of the smaller windows of time to get a run-in. Whether that means running to and from work (if you have a shorter commute) or getting a quick run-in during your lunch break, be flexible and creative and look for opportunities during the day to lace up. For those that enjoy multi-tasking, make your errands and chores even more productive (and fun) by going for a run around the neighborhood after loading the laundry or dishwasher or before you make a pit stop at your local grocery or deli. For those with little ones, do a few laps on the soccer field while your children are at their sports practice or the next time you have to take the dog for a walk, turn the outing into a running venture for both of you.

Sometimes, as runners, we think running is an all-or-nothing effort; if it's not long in duration or distance, it's not worth it, but that's not true. While we all love our long runs, you don't need to spend hours a day running to achieve your goals. Instead of adding more miles, increase the intensity. Shorter speed workouts such as hill repeats, [tempo](#), [Fartleks](#), or a 15-minute HIIT are quick and efficient ways to maintain your conditioning. And with shorter mileages runs, you still get to the [mental, physical, and emotional health benefits](#) of running without degrading your training. At the end of the day, when it comes to recovery and runs, it's quality over quantity. So flex those imaginative muscles and seize opportunities and increments of time when you can get in a quick run, and above all, give yourself grace when you miss a run day. Use that extra rest day for recovery and continue your training the following day.

Related Articles



Written by Caroline
Caroline is a lifelong, avid runner who enjoys the outdoors. Whether on the road or on the trail, running or hiking, being surrounded by the sights and sounds of nature is her ultimate happy place.

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