

Get Set, Ready...Run!

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Whistler Valley Trail Run Newsletter

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Getting ready for the WVTR— with all the right tools

Special points of interest:

- At home or at the gym fitness tests
- A Goal Properly Set
- Build Strength NOW!

Fitness test scores are based on statistics of the overall population.

Nine weeks to go! Have you started preparing for this year's Whistler Valley Trail Run on Sunday, May 23rd?

If you have started then good on you! If you are a bit late to the start line no worries—you still have a time.

No matter where you stand you can get yourself running right by starting off with a bit of knowledge of where your fitness stands.

The purpose of testing is NOT to tell you how bad you are, but to let you know where you are now, so you can plan the steps on how to get to where you want to be.

While it is always good to get a certified trainer to take you through a fitness test (they tend to make sure you give your all to increase accuracy), there are some great online tools now available to help you do your own assessments at home or at-the-gym.

One of the best online fitness testing sites I have found is www.exrx.net. This site features a wide variety of test protocols and the calculators needed to score yourself. I suggest the following fitness tests for WVTR:

Pre-requisite: Just as we do with all our provincial & national team athletes at Canadian Sport Centre Pacific, you should get a check-up from your doctor prior to starting any fitness program.

Rockport Walk Test: if you



There are many ways to test your fitness; a simple cardio test is the right beginning for a run program.

have not been participating in regular cardio activity for three times per week for the last 2 months, then I suggest starting with the walk test. This test includes a 10 min warm-up + as brisk a walk as possible for 1 mile (treadmill or outdoors). You need to take your heart-rate and note how long it takes to reach the 1 mile mark. Use this calculator to find out where your fit: <http://www.exrx.net/Calculators/Rockport.html>.

12-Minute Run Test: if you have been consistently at your cardio training for the last 2—3 months (a mini-

mum of 20 mins x 2 -3 workouts/week), then you can give this test a go. After a 10 minute warm-up, run as fast as you can for 12 minutes. Note distance run and heart-rate. Use the following calculator to see where you score: <http://www.exrx.net/Calculators/MinuteRun.html>

Flexibility Tests: Knowing your mobility limitations is important to help minimize your injury risk...all the tests can be found at this link—<http://www.exrx.net/Lists/Tests.html>

Bent knee foot raise (ankle/calf)

Straight knee foot raise (ankle/calf)

Active knee extension (hamstring)

Ely's Test (quad)

Shoulder Mobility—open hand (shoulders for shoulder swing)

Taking the time to complete a few simple objective fitness tests will help you set the stage for your running program. Knowing where you are can help you plan how to get where you want to be.

The added bonus is that once you have done these tests once, they are even easier to repeat to monitor your progress!

A goal properly set is halfway reached

Abraham Lincoln

Types of Goals: *Outcome Goals, Performance Goals, and Process Goals.* Of note, *your level of control goes from low to high* as you move from Outcome to Performance to Process Goals.

- **Outcome Goals** are those which focus on the end-result of a competition that depends on how well you perform against / compared to an opponent(s). **Control Level = LOW**, since the actions and behaviours of your competitors can significantly impact whether or not you achieve your goal.
- **Performance Goals** are those which focus on achieving a certain standard of performance or an objective measure that is comparable to your own previous results. **Control Level = MEDIUM to HIGH**, since these are determined primarily by your actions and behaviours, although some external factors may impact you (e.g., environmental conditions, race strategies of others, equipment issues).
- **Process Goals** are those which focus primarily on the 'quality' of a skill, technique, strategy, behavior, etc. These goals are the fundamental building blocks to achieving both performance and outcome goals. For example, to improve your personal best or win, you may need to improve your stride or become more 'fluid' in your execution of a skill, etc. **Control Level = HIGH**, since these are generally things you can work on and develop independent of your competition and in a variety of environmental conditions.

Goal Setting Process: When setting your goals (Outcome, Performance, or Process), use the following acronym for setting **S.M.A.R.T.(S)** goals and the sample worksheet at the bottom of the page:

- **S** for **Specific** – avoid vague or general goals
- **M** for **Measurable** – working from a baseline measurement, what are you aiming for?
- **A** for **Achievable** – aim for something that will be a challenge, but not unrealistic
- **R** for **Relevant** – pick something that YOU want to achieve
- **T** for **Target-date** – when are you aiming to have it achieved by?
- **(S)** for **Strategies** – what, where, when, or how are you going to achieve it
- If appropriate, **you can set additional sub-goals** (i.e, steps, blocks, etc) here if they will facilitate your ability to map out a course of action to achieving your primary goal.

Information courtesy of Canadian Sport Center Pacific

Build Strength NOW!



Using the treadmill to run is safe in the winter and can help you accurately monitor pace

Many articles have been written in runner's magazines and on websites on the importance of strength training. Although there is a plethora of great information out there, most runners (especially beginners) continue to skip the strength.

Strength training is not all about muscles. In fact the most important phase in a strength training routine is the first phase.

Called Anatomical Adaptation, the first 4–6 weeks of a strength training program emphasizes higher reps per exercise with non-

specific loads (just enough to tax the muscles by the end of a set of reps). This design isn't just for the novice in the weight room...even elite athletes go through an Anatomical Adaptation (AA) phase each year.

During AA not only muscles are strengthened. It is at this time that the connective tissue (tendons and ligaments) is strengthened.

The connective tissue needs to gain resilience before because they must withstand the force/work of the muscles. Stronger connective tissue reduces the incidence of injury, especially from

repetitive athletic skills. (NOTE: increasing the strength of the connective tissue is why run coaches always recommend walk/run programs to new runners or those who have been away from running for awhile).

Besides positive changes in connective tissue, the neural connections between the brain and muscles gets clearer.

The lesson here is that you should not shy away from strength training—with it you will be able to run stronger, with less injury risk, for longer.