



A faster path

6 reasons to consider adding trail running to your workout routine

THE COLORADO SPRINGS GAZETTE

Whether you're a long-time runner or looking to give the sport a try, trail running can be a great addition to your workout routine, engaging the body and the mind. Here are six benefits of trail running:

1

Use of a range of muscles

While a paved path is generally smooth and predictable, the underfoot terrain of a trail is constantly changing. Not only does this mean a wide range of muscles are used, they're used in many different ways due to the varied steps. This seems to help overall strength development and may help to prevent injuries.

2

Improved adaptability

It's crucial for runners to be competent in their footwork so that they can avoid making odd movements and risking injury. Interesting enough, because trail running seems to be a lot of weird and unpredictable movements, it seems to make the body more durable and adaptable when the unexpected occurs. Trail runners get used to stepping on rocks and kicking roots, getting more practice at recovering control when a fall or other misstep is about to take place.

3

Engagement of the mind

Between the body pain and cardio struggle that comes with the sport — especially when starting out — running has many moments that aren't that fun. Thankfully, the trail can offer some relief. Between enjoying scenic routes and focusing on footwork, the mind stays engaged, thus more distracted from the aspects of the sport that can push some away.

4

Fewer speed expectations

A lot of runners tend to focus on their speed — their fastest lap on the track or their quickest mile. While this can still be a factor in trail running, there seems to be a bit more freedom from this aspect in the trail running community compared to the greater group of runners. Trail runners tend to focus more on metrics like vertical gain and overall distance, as well as just getting outside and enjoying a sunny day. This can make the sport more approachable.

5

The scenes you love, faster

One big benefit of trail running is the stunning places that it can take you. Plus, by moving faster, you can see more of the places you love. While a 10-mile hike may mean five hours on the trail or more, running the route might only mean an hour and a half of activity. You know what that means — more time for more activities.

6

No shortage of variety

Running around a track or down a sidewalk is fairly consistent — and there's nothing wrong with that. However, if you're looking to test your running skills on a wider range of terrain, the trail is for you. Not only is every trail unique, trails also offer steeper grades, undulating slopes and winding curves. This variety helps to keep running exciting and it also makes it easy to train for specific skills on specific trails.

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