

From Walking To Jogging

This is for people who have failed at making the transition from walking to jogging. If jogging has always been difficult for you, it's not necessarily that it has to be that way. You may be simply out of shape.

When you are out of shape, you can hear your breathing even at a painfully slow pace. The problem isn't in your lungs, it's in your leg muscles. They aren't able to supply enough energy for jogging with oxygen. As a result, your heart rate rises, you can hear your breathing and the exertion becomes uncomfortable.

Most women have husbands that tell them they *should* hear their breathing, and jogging *should* be uncomfortable. Usually, that's the way *they* learned to run, therefore, that's the way *you* should learn to run. If you are normal, however, you are not into pain. Painful exercise is burdensome exercise. And your husband's advice notwithstanding, you are not going to continue doing it if you can't enjoy it.

Your first goal, therefore, should be to create a regimen you'll want to continue. That means being able to enjoy the activity, or at least be satisfied with it. And generally that means going slow enough that the activity feels comfortable. This may be difficult to accept at first, but if jogging is uncomfortable for you, maybe you should stick with walking. A brisk walk is great exercise, even if it isn't painful.

The good news is that your capacity for walking is capable of growing quickly. Even novice walkers can prepare for a marathon in a few months. As you get in shape, you'll be able to walk at a faster pace for a longer time. When you can walk for an hour or two without feeling greatly fatigued, or without needing a nap because you feel weary or exhausted afterwards, you know you are in shape to take the next step towards being able to jog.

Most novice joggers try to jog at a running pace. This is a major mistake because slow jogging is already a level above walking. If you try to fast-jog or run, you take your effort up two levels, which is usually more than your body can handle initially. So here's how to control your pace so you can make the initial transition from walking to jogging. Find yourself a partner who is at your level of ability. You and she will trade off walking and jogging until you learn how to do it without hearing your breathing. Here's how:

Whenever you are jogging, jog at your partner's walking pace. Make sure that your partner walks while you jog. A walk is the same walking pace you have been using to get in shape. Not a sprint-walk, but a recovery walk. Here recovery means that your heart rate and breathing return to your usual walking rate. Meanwhile, if you are jogging, pay attention to your breathing. If you can carry on a conversation without hearing more than a "huff" between sentences, you are jogging at the right beginner level.

When you jog so fast that your partner can hear your breathing, your body is producing energy *without* oxygen. This sort of jogging is inefficient and uncomfortable. When you are out of shape for jogging, you don't have to jog fast before you can hear your breathing. This problem of having a small capacity is made worse when you jog fast early in the workout, before you have had a chance to warm up.

Thus, if you want to make your jogging easier you should go very slowly for the first ten minutes. It will seem like you are holding yourself way back, but keep this in mind: even at your slowest jogging pace you will have *doubled* your resting heart rate, which is a significant increase in your metabolic rate.

If you want to make your jogging easier, you should also consider losing weight. It takes a lot of effort to carry extra weight around. So you don't have to become more aerobically fit to make your jogging easier. Just lose weight and you'll make it easier.