

10 Running Golden Nuggets

Running is a simple sport but not an easy sport.

To become the best you can possibly be, there are some basic 'rules' that must be followed. Use these 10 nuggets as your guide and you won't go far wrong.

1. Little and often is the way to go. Training where each new year builds on the previous. It's why a 5-year-old doesn't sit GCSEs.
2. Unless you have years of solid training behind you, forget the 12-week programme. View the final 12 weeks before your race as akin to revision for a GCSE exam. Without the years of previous education, your revision will be shallow and not get the result you want.
3. Keep a written training diary and record everything about your training session. You'll be able to look back and see what did and didn't work. You'll find that the best 12-week programmes are the ones you create yourself.
4. You've often already got the speed you need. If you can run a sub-8-minute mile but not a sub-80-minute 10 mile, it's not speed you need. It's endurance.
5. Distance is rarely the reason for failure. It is nearly always the speed you're trying to cover it at. It's true that unless you can run easy, you'll never be able to run hard.
6. 80/20 is a great rule of thumb for training. The vast majority of your training should be easy/steady with the rest being high quality. Those with less experience, concentrate on the former until mastered.
7. Try not to compare yourself to others too much. Everyone responds to training in different ways and at different paces. Concentrate on doing 'your thing' and measure yourself against a previous you.
8. Training should not be about improving your time at each outing. You will not see any improvement in a week - it'll be at least 12 weeks- and then it won't be dramatic. If you're a racer, only races count. If you're not, don't worry about time.
9. Generic training programmes will not give you what you need as they aren't aligned with you personally. Again, this is fine if you're not looking to take advantage of your potential, but if you want to be competitive, your training has to be tailored.
10. There are no shortcuts - you will not receive anything your training doesn't justify. The result of your training will be what you put into it. Consistency and progression are the name of the game but running aimlessly, aka junk miles, will not get you through.