

# Lazy girl running

“I can’t run in the morning,” Laura Fountain had told herself, until she realised that running to work was the best commute of all

A few months ago I caught myself telling a group of new runners that I can’t run in the morning. I was leading one of my beginners’ running groups and suggesting to them different ways they could fit running into their week. “You could run before work or run to work; I’d love to be able to run to work, but I can’t run in the morning.”

I thought about it on the way home. It was four years since I’d tried running in the morning before work. It was during the first few weeks of training for my first marathon. Running before work seemed the perfect solution for fitting a couple of shorter runs into the week. But it didn’t quite go to plan. My run had to be cut short as I sprinted home and straight into the bathroom. I tried again the following week – maybe it was a one off – but the same thing happened. So from then on I avoided running in the mornings other than for races.

Although I’d much rather stay in bed for an extra hour, I started getting up earlier to train for triathlons. I cycle to work and I’ve woken in the dark to fit in an early morning swim before the day begins. But I still didn’t run to work.

I don’t like to use the word can’t, especially when it comes to running, and I encourage my beginner runners to stamp it out of their vocabulary too. When I tell them they’re going to run for 10 minutes and their worried faces look back at me and they say “I can’t,” I ask them to say instead, “I’m going to try.”

It was four years since I’d last tried running before work. Since then I’d done a lot of things that at one time or another I thought I couldn’t do: eight marathons; learning to swim; and finishing a few triathlons. It was time I gave running to work another try.

I laid out my kit the night before, packed my backpack with a change of clothes, filled the kettle ready to just flick it on in the morning and set a new alarm on my phone. It was still dark when the alarm went off the next morning and I wanted to roll over and go back to sleep. ‘What’s the point? You can’t run in the morning. It doesn’t work for you.’

But I’m going to try.



**ABOUT THE AUTHOR**  
Laura Fountain is a blogger, author and editor living and running in London. She’s run seven marathons and is now training for an Ironman but just six years ago she couldn’t run 400 meters. Her book *The Lazy Runner* was published in 2012. She’s a UK Athletics qualified run leader and helps beginner runners learn how to run and, more importantly, how to enjoy it.

A bowl of cereal and a cup of tea later I was out the door. I ran past the station at the end of my road and down the hill towards Kentish Town. I’d chosen a different route to the one that I cycle; this route traced the Northern Line all the way down to Waterloo so I could bail out at any point if I needed to. It was just five miles door-to-door but the memories of those two aborted runs four years ago still haunted me.

I got to Kentish Town; I ran through Camden and passed Euston Station. I watched the sky get lighter and the city wake up. I crossed Waterloo Bridge and turned left to run the last half mile along the Thames and I enjoyed every step.

For the past six months I’ve been running to work once a week. Each week the sky has been a little lighter when my alarm has gone off and the air a little warmer when I open the front door. I’ve learnt the rhythm of the traffic lights, the best places to cross the

road and recognised a few of the same faces running the opposite way. Some days I’ve run fast and others I’ve run slow with aching legs. Each morning when I arrive sweaty and tired at the office I’m happy that my day started with a run. And I think about what else I’ve told myself I can’t do.

