

Fuel and Hydration

There are lots of articles and theories about nutrition and hydration, but here are a few basics that will help to support and enhance your running experience.

If you're unsure about kit, fuelling or have any questions about your training, take a look at our FAQs on BookTrust's website or email us at fundraising@booktrust.org.uk.

Hydration

It's important to drink enough water to stay hydrated. You should aim to drink around 2 litres throughout the day. On training days, you should increase that intake, especially after your workout. Staying hydrated is also a good way to reduce cramping after a run.

Refuel - but don't overeat

If you find yourself more hungry than usual after a run, make sure that you're well hydrated and then opt for healthy snacks, such as fruit or nuts. It's best to avoid eating a large meal straight after a long-distance run.

A balanced diet

There's lots of information out there about diets and carb-cycling, but there's no need to over-complicate things. A balanced diet and a healthy variety of food is all you need to feel the benefits when you run. While preparing for a long-distance run, focus more on carbohydrates; wholewheat pasta the night before a race is perfect as it tops up your muscles' energy stores and releases the energy steadily rather than all at once. Wholewheat ingredients are a good way to avoid your blood sugar crashing.

Power up

It's important to eat properly before a long run - but the best time to power up is 2 to 3 hours before you set off. The larger the meal, the longer you need to wait to avoid upsetting your stomach.

Supplement

If you're struggling to keep your energy levels high during runs of over 60 minutes, it might be worth packing energy gels to take with you. There are a variety of brands and flavours available, with the option to choose caffeinated or not. If you do decide to try energy gels, it's important to incorporate them into your training so you can test how you get on with them and how many you might need. It might take several runs to figure out what works for you.

You can also use rehydration tablets or electrolyte tablets that you add to your water to help you with your hydration if you're struggling.