

Running stages: where are you now, where could you get?

This is a general picture: some elements may cross over stages for some people.

Stage	Aim	Typical training elements & intensity	Racing approach	Average time and distance
Basic running for health	To maintain health and weight, relax, socialise	Doing something is more important than pace, which is usually gentle. To jog or cross train several times a week at gentle pace – low-intensity	Races occasionally just to finish: every event for the first time is a challenge	3 and a half hours a week, around 20 miles a week
Intermediate club runner	To get quicker To be in 1 st 50% of field PBs Reasonable strength-to-weight-ratio, challenge yourself	Trains most days with at least one intense session a week and one long run, mostly fell. Training likely to be unstructured and inefficient without much knowledge of science. Lack of navigation/fell skills more likely. Diet variable.	Races regularly all year for the social scene (often too much and with less prep or tapering), with lots of low-key events. Often no 'off season'	Up to an hour a day average including cross-training, 30 to 50 miles running a week
Top club runner	To score championship points regularly, and place highly in local races. To be in first 10% of field. Low body fat	Seeks advice and info. Trains every day with at least two high intensity sessions (hill reps/speed work) a week and some double sessions. Takes time off racing for planned training blocks Higher proportion of road and x-country Plans a year ahead Careful diet, high self-belief, running is a priority.	Does British and /or English Championship. Prioritises quality races / fields. Recces and tapers for target races – trains through for prep races. Rests properly after races. Takes an off-season for training blocks. Fewer races	Up to two hours a day including cross-training, 50-70 miles running a week
Elite / international runner	To be the best possible, set records, be on the national team Very low body fat, high strength to weight ratio.	Coached. High proportion of specific pace/intensity and double sessions + cross training Planned to the last detail several years ahead. Highly self motivated, high self-belief, makes sacrifices. Attention to every detail including diet. Mainly road, track and x-country	Prioritises international selection and races. Absolute focus aiming for peak performance in selection races and international championships. Not many races a year. Off-season.	Four hours a day or more, including cross-training, 70-120 miles running a week