



Common Sense Rules for the Road

Most running/walking safety rules are just common sense. But you see so many walker/runners — both male and female — who violate them every day that a rules review is indeed in order. Consider the following:

- **Don't wear headsets.** This is the No. 1 rule for safe walk/running. Why? Because when you listen to music or the radio while walk/running outside, you can't hear car horns, cyclists, or, heaven forbid, the footsteps of someone coming up behind you.

"But I love to listen to my music!" is a common rejoinder from those who refuse to give up their headsets. Ok then, we recommend that you wear them when you're running on a treadmill. But when you're outside, especially when you're on the roads, you are simply asking for trouble if you tune out your surroundings.

If you need distractions, tune into the sound of the environment around you instead. Or listen to your music at home while you warm up, and play it back internally as you run. Or enjoy the conversation of other runners.

- **Run against traffic.** A bicycle is considered a vehicle, so it is subject to the same laws as cars and trucks. Cyclists ride with traffic. You are not a vehicle. You are a runner. You are also in a highly vulnerable position if you're running near cars, trucks, and bicycles.

So the best way to prevent an untimely meeting with one of these vehicles is to be able to see them. That means running on the side of the road or on the sidewalk and running while facing traffic.

- **If you run at night, make yourself visible.** Wear light-colored clothing and invest a few dollars in a reflective vest, which you can purchase at a [Fit Right Northwest](#).

- **Don't challenge cars to a race.** If you and a car are both approaching an intersection, stop and let the car go first.

- **Beware of stopped cars waiting to make a right turn.** Stop and wait until they make the turn, or run behind them.

- **Walk/Run with others.** This may be the easiest way to avoid problems altogether. Sharing the road with other walk/runners is also a great way to stay motivated and to enjoy the sport. You can find potential partners through our running group [Get Fit Live Fit Training Programs](#) or at our [1st Thursday Urban Adventure Runs](#) created by F Right Northwest, or community bulletin boards at your library.

If you must walk/run alone, a treadmill at home or at a health club is a much safer option. A local track also offers some protection, but not if you're walk/running alone and after dark.

- **Avoid walk/running alone in unpopulated, unfamiliar areas and stay away from trails surrounded by heavy brush.**

- **Do not wear jewelry.** But do carry identification or write your name, phone number, and blood type on the inside sole of your running shoe.
- **Always trust your intuition.** If you're unsure about a person or a place, avoid it.
- **Carry a noisemaker or get training in self-defense and the use of pepper spray.** And always call police if something happens to you or someone else or if you see something or someone suspicious.
- **Don't stop to give directions to strangers in cars if you are walk/running alone.**

For more safety tips and running and walking group information please visit WWW.FITRIGHTNW.COM or our Group Training program website at WWW.GETFITLIVEFIT.ORG.

