

TALON Trail/Ultra Running Race Calendar and Guide



Release Date: 03/21/2012

Table of Contents

What is in the TALON Trail/Ultra Running Race Calendar and Guide?	3
New to the Sport?	3
Document Updates	3
What is TALON?	4
About the Author	5
David Hanenburg	5
<i>Mostly</i> Complete List of TALON Trail/Ultra Events	6
January 2012	6
February 2012	6
March 2012	7
April 2012	8
May 2012	9
June 2012	9
July 2012.....	10
August 2012.....	10
September 2012.....	11
October 2012.....	12
November 2011	13
December 2011	13
Trail/Ultra Running Guide.....	15
Basic Definitions of the Sport.....	15
Trail Running and Ultrarunning Community	16
Do You Need Trail Running Shoes To Run On A Trail?.....	17
Trail Running Basic.....	17
How To Survive Technical Downhills	19
Trail/Ultra Running Race Basics.....	20
What are 3, 6, 12, 24, and 48 Hour Timed Event?.....	22
Endurance Sports Nutrition.....	24
Low-cost Recovery Tool Every Ultra/Trail Runner Should Own.	25
Endurance Buzz Discounts	26

What is in the TALON Trail/Ultra Running Race Calendar and Guide?

This document is a living resource that contains the entire collection of trail running and ultra events in the south midwest region of the country...that I could find (my disclaimer ☺). I dug around the internet searching and searching so you don't have to.

Some of the events are high-profile events with racers from all over the world and others are low-key, please put \$2 in the box kind of events. This highlights the beauty of the sport. There is something for everyone.

If you happen to be aware of an event that isn't on the list, please send an email through the EnduranceBuzz.com [Contact page](#) and the event will sure to be included.

New to the Sport?

After the race/event calendar and event summary section, you will find a trail/ultra running guide which contains information to help jumpstart your endurance sports journey.

This section will include:

- regional club links
- trail/ultra running tips
- sports nutrition insight
- special EnduranceBuzz.com visitor discounts

Document Updates

By subscribing to the Endurance Buzz newsletter, you will always be aware of any new update to the document as it will be stated in the weekly newsletter. I decided this was the easiest way to keep you in the loop so that you have the most current information. At the bottom of the cover page contains the *Release Date* to help identify when the document was last updated.

What is TALON?

In case the cover page hasn't given it away, TALON simply represents the south Midwest region of the United States as I define it. This includes **T**exas, **A**rkansas, **L**ouisiana, **O**klahoma, and **N**ew Mexico.

I decided this would be the easiest way for me to refer to this particular region. Plus it is somewhat of a cool sounding word so, hey, that will work.

About the Author

David Hanenburg



(Image: Post Bandera 100 km trail run)

David Hanenburg has been a passionate ultra endurance nut for the last 10+ years. He loves to go *long*.

His endurance sports journey has included:

- Mountain Biking
- Adventure Racing
- Duathlon/Triathlon – Completed three Ironman events
- Road and trail running – Boston Marathon qualifier and finisher. Finished up to 100 km trail run.

His current endurance sports home is trail/ultra running.

David publishes frequent content on EnduranceBuzz.com that provides recent TALON ultra/trail running news, ultra/trail running tips and concepts, and insight into his own personal endurance sports journey.

David lives in Texas with his wonderful wife, active four year old son, and baby girl.

Mostly Complete List of TALON Trail/Ultra Events

*Note: Any event that has a **tba** for specific date means that an official date has not been announced for this year (or I may just have missed it). I will continually look for updated race dates and new events. You will see the previous year's date listed for some kind of reference.*

January 2012

- 1 [Foothills Fat Ass 50k](#), Distance: 50 km
Location: Albuquerque, NM
- 7 [Athens-Big Fork Marathon](#), Distance: Marathon, 17 mile
Location: Big Fork, Arkansas
- 7 [Bandera Endurance Trail run](#), Distance: 100km, 50km, 25km
Location: Bandera, Texas (NW of San Antonio)
- 8 [Brazos Bend Trail Run](#), Distance: 50 km, marathon, ½ marathon
Location: Brazos Bend State Park (Needville, Texas)
- 21 [Forge Racing Trail Series #1](#) (2011 date), Distance: 5 mile
Location: Mandeville, Louisiana
- 15 [Big Bend 50 Ultra](#), Distance: 50 km, 25 km, 10 km
Location: Big Bend National Park (SW Texas)
- 21 [Wee-Chi-Tah Trail Marathon and Half Marathon](#) , Distance: 50 km, 26.2 mile, 13.1 mile
Location: Wichita Falls, Texas (NW of Dallas/Ft. Worth)
- 21 [Forge Racing Trail Series #1](#), Distance: ½ mary, 10km
Location: Mandeville, Louisiana
- 28 [Sportsspectrum The Trail Run](#), Distance: 10 mile, 3.8 mile
Location: Lake Bistineau State Park, Louisiana
- 28 [Sooner State Games Trail Run](#), Distance: 12 mile, 8 mile, 4 mile
Location: Oklahoma City, Oklahoma
- 28 [Piney Woods Trail Run](#), Distance: 10 mile, 5 km
Location: Houston, Texas

February 2012

- 4 [Rocky Raccoon Endurance Trail Run](#), Distance: 100 mile, 50 mile
Location: Huntsville State Park, Texas (Northwest of Houston)
- 4 [White Rock Classic Trail Run](#), Distance: 50 km
Location: Cass, Arkansas (Northeast of Fort Smith)
- 4 [Eisenhower 10k Challenge](#), Distance: 10 km
Location: San Antonio, Texas
- 10,11,12 [Rouge-Orleans](#), Distance: 126.2 miles (point-to-point)
Location: Baton Rouge to New Orleans

TALON Trail/Ultra Running Race Calendar and Guide

- 11 [Orphan Hope Marathon](#), Distance: Marathon, ½ Marathon, Relay
Location: Huntsville, Texas
- 11 [Placitas 50 km](#), Distance: 50 km
Location: Placitas, New Mexico
- 11 [Q50 USA](#), Distance: 10 km
Location: Mandeville, Louisiana
- 18 [Surfside Beach Marathon and Half Marathon](#), Distance: 26.2 miles, 13.1 miles
Location: Surfside, Texas
- 18 [Cross Timbers Trail Run](#), Distance: 50 mile, 26.2 mile, 13.1 mile, 5 Mile
Location: Lake Texoma, TX (North of Dallas/Ft. Worth)
- 18 [Sylamore Trail Run](#), Distance: 50 km, 25 km
Location: Allison, Arkansas (Northern Arkansas)
- 18 [Sierra Vista Trail Run](#), Distance: 26.2, 13.1, 5 mile
Location: Las Cruces, NM
- 26 [The Traveller Mini-Loop](#) (2011 date), Distance: 25 miles
Location: Williams Junction, Arkansas
- 26 [Cowtown Marathon and Ultramarathon](#), Distance: 50 km
Location: Ft. Worth, Texas
- 25,26 [The TRC Post Oak Lodge Run](#), Distance: 50km, 26.2 mile, 25 km, 10 km
Location: Tulsa, Oklahoma
- 25 [Trails of Hope 5 km](#), Distance: 5 km
Location: Belton, Texas

March 2012

- 2-3 [The Rock-Y 5k-Trail Run](#), Distance: 5 km
Location: YMCA Camp Flaming Arrow (Hunt, Texas)
- 3 [The Crazy Desert Trail](#), Distance: 50km, marathon, half marathon
Location: San Angelo State Park, Texas
- 3 [Nueces Endurance Trail Run](#), Distance: 50 mile, 50/25/10 km
Location: Rocksprings, Texas (Northwest of San Antonio)
- 4 [A-OK Atoka Trail Run](#) ([FaceBook Page](#)), Distance: 50 km, 25 km
Location: Stringtown, Oklahoma (Southeast region of Oklahoma)
- 9,10,11 [3 Days of Syllamo Trail Run](#) Day 1: 50km, Day 2: 50 mile, Day 3: 20 km
Location: Blanchard Springs Caverns, Arkansas (Northern Arkansas)
- 10 [Prickley Pear Trail Run](#), Distance: 50 km, 10 mile
Location: San Antonio, Texas
- 10 [Toughest N' Texas](#) (cancelled), Location: 50 km, 20 mile, 10 mile, 5 mile
Location: Waco, Texas
- 10 [Forge Racing Trail Series #2](#) Distance: 10 km
Location: Baton Rouge, Louisiana
- 17-18 [Seabrook Lucky Trail Marathon](#): Distance: 26.2 miles, 13.1 miles
Location: Seabrook, Texas
- 17 [Big Rock Mystery Run](#), Distance: 12-13 mile
Location: North Little Rock, Arkansas

TALON Trail/Ultra Running Race Calendar and Guide

- 24 [Grasslands Trail Run](#), Distance: 50 mile, 26.2 mile, 13.1 mile
Location: Decatur, Texas (NW of Dallas/Ft. Worth)
- 24 [TATURS Six & Three Hour Snake Run](#), Time: 6 hour, 3 hour
Location: Tulsa, Oklahoma
- 24 [Steamboat Challenge](#), Distance: 50 km, marathon, half, 10 km
Location: Buffalo Gap, Texas
- 25 [Bataan Memorial Death March](#), Distance: 26.2 mile, 15.2 mile
Location: White Sands Missile Range, New Mexico (Southern New Mexico)
- 31 [Highrock Hop trail run](#), Distance: 10 mile, 5.5 miles
Location: 15 miles north of Batesville, Arkansas
- 31-4/1 [The Texas Independence Relay](#), Distance: 203 Mile (relay)
Location: Bastrop to Houston, Texas

April 2012

- 5 [Tour de Bayou Stage 1](#), Distance: 3-6 miles pavement-free run
Location: Houston, Texas
- 7 [Hells Hills Trail Run](#), Distance: 50 mile, 50 km, 25 km, 10 km
Location: Smithville, Texas (Southeast of Austin)
- 7 [Muddy Trails Bash](#), Distance: 5 km, 10 km, Kids Run
Location: Houston, Texas
- 7 [Cedro Peak Ultra](#), Distance: 45 mile, 45 km
Location: Tijeras, NM
- 7 [Tatur's Lake McMurtry Trail Race](#), Distance: 50 km, 25 km ,12 km
Location: Lake McMurtry, Oklahoma (North of Oklahoma City)
- 12 [Tour de Bayou Stage 2 \(no cost!\)](#), Distance: 3-6 miles pavement-free run
Location: Houston, Texas
- 14 [Ozark Fitness Challenge](#), Distance: 100 km, half marathon, 10 km
Location: Harrison, Arkansas
- 14 [The Original Mud Run](#), Distance: 10 km adventure mud run
Location: DFW area
- 14 [Hog's Hunt Trail Run](#), Distance: 50 km, 25 km, 10 km
Location: Huntsville, Texas (North of Houston)
- 14 [Hoof it for Heifer](#), Distance: 20 km
Location: Morrilton, Arkansas
- 19 [Tour de Bayou Stage 3 \(no cost!\)](#), Distance: 3-6 miles pavement-free run
Location: Houston, Texas
- 21 [Ouachita Trail](#), Distance: 50 mile, 50 km
Location: Little Rock, Arkansas
- 21 [Bluebonnet Trail Run](#), Distance: 10 km, 5 km
Location: Burnet, Texas
- 22 [The Maze](#) (Rogue Trail Series Race #1) Distance: 30/10 km
Location: Austin, Texas
- 26 [Tour de Bayou Stage 4 \(no cost!\)](#), Distance: 3-6 miles pavement-free run
Location: Houston, Texas

TALON Trail/Ultra Running Race Calendar and Guide

- 28 [Skinnydipper Sun Run](#), Distance: 5 km
Location: Decatur, Texas
- 28 [Sand Crab Beach Run](#), distance 10 km, 5 km
Location: South Padre Island, Texas

May 2012

- 3 [Tour de Bayou Stage 5 \(no cost!\)](#), Distance: 3-6 miles pavement-free run
Location: Houston, Texas
- 12 [Mount Magazine Fun Run](#), Distance: ~18 miles
Location: Paris, Arkansas
- 12 [El Chupacabra de Houston Nighttime Trail Run](#), Distance: 10 km
Location: Houston, Texas
- 13 [The Loop](#) (Rogue Trail Series #2), Distance: 30/10 km
Location: Austin, Texas
- 19 [Jemez Mountain Trail Runs](#), Distance: 50 mile, 50 km, ½ Marathon
Location: Los Alamos, New Mexico
- 19 [Hillbilly Porkchop Roundup](#), Distance: 5 km
Location: Van Buren, Arkansas
- 20 [GOTR Greater Houston 5 km](#), Distance: 5 km
Location: Cypress, Texas
- 26 [The Original Mud Run \(Houston\)](#) (2011 date), Distance: 10 km adventure mud run
Location: Houston, Texas

June 2012

- 2 [War Eagle Trail Run](#), Distance: 3.8/8.5 mile, 25/50 km
Location: Rogers, Arkansas
- 3 [Merrell Down and Dirty Mud Run](#), Distance: 10/5 km with obstacles
Location: Cedar Hill State Park, Texas
- 4 [National Trails Day](#) (2011 date), Distance: 19 mile, 10 mile
Location: Albert Pike Campground, Arkansas (Near Langley)
- 2 [Q50 Bogue Chitto State Park](#), Distance: 10 / 5 mile
Location: Bogue Chitto State Park, Louisiana
- 9 [Forge Racing Trail Series #3](#), Distance: half mary, 10 km
Location: Ruston, Louisiana
- 10 [The Ranch](#) (Rogue Trail Series #3), Distance: 30/10 km
Location: Austin, Texas
- 10 [Run the Caldera Marathon](#) Distance: Marathon, Half marathon, 10 km
Location: Los Alamos, New Mexico
- 12 [The Catsmacker Fun Run](#) (2011 date), Distance: 23 mile
Location: Ouachita Trail, Arkansas (Near Williams Junction)
- 16 [Caveman Crawl](#), Distance: 5 km mud adventure run

TALON Trail/Ultra Running Race Calendar and Guide

- Location: Bridgeport, Texas
- 17 [Gator bait Trail Run](#), Distance: 15 km, 5 km
Location: Huntsville, Texas
- 17 [Pure Austin Xterra Muleshoe](#), Distance: 16/6 km
Location: Muleshoe Bend Rec Area, Texas
- 22 [Summer Solistice 3 and 6 Hour Endurance Runs](#) (paved loop), Time: 3/6 Hour
Location: Abilene, Texas
- 23 [Pedernales Falls \(Capt'n Karl Series\)](#), Distance: 60/30/10 km
Location: Pedernales State Park, Texas
- 30 I Ran Marathons Challenge ([I Ran Marathons Challenge - Facebook page](#)),
Distance: Marathon, Half Marathon, 100 mile, 50 mile, 100 km, 50 km, 25 km, 10 km
Location: San Antonio, Texas
- 30 Angel Fire Endurance Run ([FB Page](#)), Distance: 50 km, 100 km, 100 mile
Location: Angel Fire, New Mexico

July 2012

- 2 [Independence Day 5 km](#) (2011 date), Distance: 5 km
Location: Ruston, Louisiana
- 6 [TATUR Midnight Madness](#) (11:59 pm start), Distance: 50 mile (paved trail)
Location: Tulsa, Oklahoma
- 14-15 [El Scorcho](#), Distance: 50 km 25 km
Location: Ft. Worth, Texas
- 16 [Sandia Peak Challenge](#) (2011 date), Distance: 7.2 mile, 5 km
Location: Albuquerque, NM
- 16 (2011 date) [Full mOOn Run](#), Distance: 50 km, 25 km
Location: Lake Sylvia, Arkansas (Near Williams Junction)
- 17 [Spillway Classic Trail Run](#) (2011 date), Distance: 3 mile
Location: New Orleans, Louisiana
- 21 [Mule Shoe \(Capt'n Karl Series\)](#), Distance: 60/30/10 km
Location: Mule Shoe Bend Rec Area, Texas
- 27 [San Antonio Chupacabra](#), Distance 5/10 km (Headlamp run!)
Location: San Antonio, Texas
- 28 [Cedar Ridge Trail Run](#), Distance: 36 km, 18 km
Location: Dallas, Texas

August 2012

- 4 [Q50 – Full Moon Fontainebleau State Park Trail Run](#), Distance: 5 mile
Location: Fontainebleau State Park, Mandeville, Louisiana
- 5 [La Luz Trail Run](#), Distance: 9 mile (12 % grade!)
Location: Albuquerque, New Mexico

TALON Trail/Ultra Running Race Calendar and Guide

- 11 [Colorado Bend \(Capt'n Karl Series\)](#), Distance: 60/30/10 km
Location: Mule Shoe Bend Rec Area, Texas
- 20 [Fatasstic Challenge in the Ho](#) (2011 date), Distance: 6 Hour
Location: Houston, Texas
- 25 [Taos Ski Value Up & Over Trail Run](#), Distance: 10 km (2600+ feet of climbing)
Location: Taos Ski Valley, New Mexico
- 25 [Jalapeno del Sol 10 km](#), Distance: 10 km
Location: San Antonio, Texas
- 25 [TATUR Mud Run](#), Distance: 2 mile
Location: Tulsa, Oklahoma
- 27 [Mt. Nebo Trail Run](#) (2011 date), Distance: 14 miles
Location: Dardanelle, Arkansas
- 28 [Pure Austin Magnolia Hill](#) (2011 date), Distance: 16/6 km
Location: Magnolia Hill Ranch, Texas
- 28 [Wee-Chi-Tah Trail Run](#) (2011 date), Distance: 13 miles, 10 km
Location: Wichita Falls, Texas

September 2012

- 1 [Reville Ranch \(Capt Karl Series\)](#), Distance: 60 km, 30 km, 10 km
Location: Burnet, Texas
- 8 [Do-Wacka-Do Trail Run](#), Distance: 50 mile, 50 km, 25 km, 5 km
Location: Erick, Oklahoma (Sandy Sanders WMA)
- 10,11 [Run for Remembrance Relay and Ultra](#) (2011 date), Distance: 9 hour 11 minute run
Location: San Antonio, Texas
- 11 [Got Guts Trail Run](#) (2011 date), Distance: 5 km
Location: Austin, Texas
- 11 [Dirty Half Marathon](#) (2011 date), Distance: 13.1 miles, 10 km
Location: Albuquerque, New Mexico
- 15 [Play Dirty Adventure Trail Run](#), Distance: 3 mile
Location: Baton Rouge, Louisiana
- 18 [St. Charles Trail Run](#) (2011 date), Distance: 5 km
Location: Norco, Louisiana
- 22 [8 Hour Run from the Ducks](#), Time: 8 Hour
Location: Weatherford, Texas
- 28 [Lighthouse Hill Ranch](#), Distance: 20 mile, 10 mile
Location: Johnson City, Texas
- 29 [Pajarito Trail Runs Festival](#), Distance: 15 mile, 10 km
Location: Los Alamos, New Mexico
- 29 [Rugged and Raw 10K/20K](#), Distance: 10 km, 20 km
Location: Lake Grapevine, Texas
- 29 [Mt. Taylor 50k](#), Distance: 50 km
Location: Grants, New Mexico
- 30 [Squash Blossom Classic](#), Distance: Half marathon, 4.5 mile, 1 mile

TALON Trail/Ultra Running Race Calendar and Guide

Location: Gallup, New Mexico

October 2012

- 1 [Fall Classic Trail Run](#) (2011 date), Distance: 5km, 1 km
Location: Denison, Texas
- 5,6 [Capital 2 Coast Relay](#) (Austin, Texas -> Corpus Christi, Texas)
- 6 [Big Tesuque Trail Run](#), Distance 11.6 miles
Location: Santa Fe, New Mexico
- 6,7 [Arkansas Traveller 100](#), Distance: 100 mile
Location: Ouachita National Forest, Arkansas (Near Williams Junction)
- 8,9 [Tough Mudder Adventure Run](#) (2011 date), Distance 7-12 mile trail run with challenges
Location: Paige, Texas
- 9 [Xterra Bluff Creek Ranch Trail Run](#) (2011 date), Distance: 24/12/6 km
Location: Bluff Creek Ranch, Texas
- 13 [Whispering Pines Trail Run](#), Distance: 50/25 km
Location: Tyler, Texas
- 15 [Forge Racing Trail Series #4](#), Distance: 5 mile
Location: Jackson, Louisiana
- 20 [Pumkin Holler Hunnerd](#), Distance: 100 mile, 100 km, 50 km
Location: J.T. Nickel Preserve, Oklahoma
- 15 [Palo Duro Trail Run](#) (2011 date), Distance: 50 mile, 50 km, 20 km
Location: Palo Duro Canyon State Park, Texas (South of Amarillo)
- 15 [XMA Trail Run](#) (2011 date), Distance: 5 km
Location: Lake D'Arbonne State Park , Famerville, Louisiana
- 20 [Deadman Peaks Trail Run](#), Distance: 50 miles
Location: Cuba, New Mexico
- 22 [El Chupacabra DFW Night Trail Run](#) (2011 date), Distance: 10 km
Location: Flower Mound, Texas (Murrell Park)
- 22 [Styx 'N Stones](#) (2011 date) (free race), Distance: 15 km, 30 km
Location: Devil's Den State Park, Arkansas
- 22 [Cossatot River Trail Run](#) (2011 date), Distance: half marathon
Location: Wickes, Arkansas
- 22-23 (2010 date) [Syllamo 100](#), Distance: 100 mile
Location: Blanchard Springs Campground, Arkansas (Northern Arkansas)
- 28 [Brazos Bend Gator Run](#), Distance: Half Marathon, Relay
Location: Brazos Bend State Park, Texas
- 26,27 [Great Brazos Relay](#), Distance: ~120 miles
Location: Independence, Texas to Waco, Texas
- 27-28 [24 The Hard Way](#) / [Double Dirty Dozen](#), Time: 24 hour, 12 hour, 6 hour (road and trail)
Location: Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

TALON Trail/Ultra Running Race Calendar and Guide

- 27 [Cactus Rose](#), Distance: 100 mile, 50 mile
Location: Bandera, Texas (Northwest of San Antonio)
- 29 [30K of the Dinosaur](#) (2011 date), Distance: 30 km, 15 km
Location: San Angelo State Park, Texas
- 29 [Hot Potato Trot Trail Run](#) (2011 date), Distance: 15 km, 5 km
Location: Tyler State Park, Texas

November 2011

- 5 [Rocky Raccoon](#), Distance: 50 km, 25 km
Location: Huntsville State Park, Texas (North of Houston)
- 6 [Q50 Trail Ultramarathon](#), Distance: 50/25/10 km
Location: Fontainebleau State Park, Mandeville, Louisiana
- 6 [Turkey & Tatars Trail Race](#), Distance: 50 km, 25 km, 10 km
Location: Tulsa, Oklahoma
- 12 [Louisiana Trails Missions Marathon](#), Distance: 50 km, 26.2 miles, 13.1 miles
Location: Shreveport, Louisiana
- 12 [Rockledge Rumble](#), Distance: 50 km, 30/15 km
Location: Grapevine, Texas (Dallas/Ft. Worth area)
- 13 [White Mesa Fat Ass 50 km](#), Distance: 64 km and 50 km (unsupported)
Location: Near Albuquerque, New Mexico
- 12 [Bona Dea 50 km](#), Distance: 50 km
Location: Russellville, Arkansas
- 18-20 [Ultra Centric Experience](#), Time: 48, 24, 12, 6 Hour
Location: Meadowmere Park, Texas (DFW - Grapevine)
All Active Duty, Veterans, and First Responders (Police, Firefighters, and EMS) Special half off coupon code through Nov 13: VETSRESPONDRS
- 19 [The Wild Hare](#), Distance: 50 mile, 50 km, 25 km, 10 km
Location: Warda, Texas (East of Austin)
- 19 [FatAssTic Challenge in the Ho](#), Distance: 6 hours-ish
Location: HochiMinh Trail, Houston
- 25 [Fat Ass Turkey Trot](#), Distance: 50 km
Location: Grapevine, Texas
- 26 [Big Dog Trail Run](#), Distance: 31 mile, 20 mile, 10 mile, 5 mile
Location: Ruston, Louisiana

December 2011

- 3&4 [Cajun Coyote Trail Run](#), Distance: 100 mile (solo or team), 100 km, 20 mile
Location: Ville Platte, Louisiana (Chicot State Park)
- 3 [Run Like the Wind](#), Time: 24, 12, 6, 3 Hour
Location: Austin, Texas
- 3 [Texas Trail Runs](#), Distance: 50 km, 20 km
Location: Huntsville State Park, Texas (North of Houston)
- 10 [LoVit Trail Marathon](#), Distance: 26.2 miles
Location: Hot Springs, Arkansas

TALON Trail/Ultra Running Race Calendar and Guide

- 8 [Isle du Bois Trail Run](#), Distance 50 km, 10 mile
Location: Pilot Point, Texas (Isle du Bois State Park)
- 10 [Kronkosky Place Holiday Hustle](#), Distance 5 km
Location: Boerne, Texas
- 10 [el Sendero Endurance Trail Race](#), Distance: 50 mile, 50/25 km
Location: Reveille Peak Ranch, Texas
- 17 [Thunderbird Moonlight Trail Run](#), Distance: 6 km
Location: St. Francisville, LA
- 18 [Thunderbird Trail ½ marathon](#), Distance: 13.1 miles
Location: St. Francisville, LA

Trail/Ultra Running Guide

Note: Trail/Ultra running can be strenuous on the body, mind, and spirit. It is always wise to seek medical clearance from your preferred professional.

The following is some information to help jump-start your trail/ultra running journey.

Basic Definitions of the Sport

- Trail Running
- Ultrarunning
- Ultramarathon

These are all words often used within this community. Here are some basic definitions I have created to sort out the similarities and differences.

Trail Running

Trail running can simply be broken down to running on a surface other than concrete or asphalt. This could include grass, rock, sand, or dirt and could be located anywhere from a national park in the Rockies to alongside your local highway.

Key component: No(minimal) concrete or asphalt.

Trail running events can be of any distance such as one mile, five km, 100 mile +, or multi-day.

Ultramarathon

The ultramarathon is a running event that covers a distance greater than a marathon and can occur on any and all surfaces.

Key ingredient: Longer than a marathon (26.2 miles).

Ultramarathon events could include various running flavors such as 50km trail, 50km road, 24 HR, or multi-day.

Ultrarunning

See ultramarathon above.

Ultrarunning and ultramarathon event are the same. At least I haven't been able to determine a difference.

How Do They Mingle?

As you can see these terms have a related yet sometimes unique relationship.

- Trail running event (>26.2 miles) = Ultramarathon
- Trail running event (<26.2 miles) ≠ Ultramarathon
- Ultramarathon (road/trail) = Ultrarunning (road/trail)

Hopefully this helps clarify a few of the pillar words of these growing yet fairly intimate endurance sports.

Trail Running and Ultrarunning Community

One of the fast tracks to learning about local trails, running partners, training groups, and an abundance of ultra knowledge is to check if a trail running or ultrarunning club exists in your area of the state.

Even if the club isn't conveniently close to where you live, there still may be value in joining the group to receive internet based knowledge sharing and support (yahoo groups, club message board, etc).

Here are the trail running and ultrarunning clubs in our region. If you are aware of others, please let me know and I will add them to the list.

Texas

[North Texas Trail Runners](#) – Dallas/Ft. Worth, North Texas area.

[Hill Country Trail Runners](#) – Austin area

[Houston Trail Runners Extreme](#) – Houston area

[Texas Trail Nerds](#) – North Houston area

Arkansas

[Arkansas Ultra Running Association](#)

Oklahoma

[Oklahoma Trail Runners Association](#) – Oklahoma City area

[TATUR Tulsa Area Trail & Ultra Runners](#) – Tulsa area

Louisiana

Could not find any.

New Mexico

Could not find any.

Do You Need Trail Running Shoes To Run On A Trail?

Short answer – No!

Whatever running shoes you currently use will most likely work fine. Over time, you may be interested in trying some trail running shoes. Great, go for it! Just don't let the lack of trail shoes stop you from getting out there and exploring the dirt.

Trail Running Basic

Yes, trail running is still running but it does contain a few layers of complexity that you most likely won't have on the road.

Here are five basic getting-started tips to help your transition to the trail be more comfortable and with less blood and bruises.

Pay Attention To The Trail Or Eat Some Dirt

Nature, beautiful scenery, majestic views, and the trail.

All of them are vying for your visual attention. If the trail doesn't win you over, your body will likely be spread upon it. It is way too easy to stub a toe, catch a rock, or run into a tree if you aren't paying attention.

If you want to truly soak up a view, stop your run and enjoy. Then when you start running again, get your eyes back on the trail.

Light Feet Or Eat Some More Dirt

Roots, rocks, stumps, or sticks may all be encountered on your running surface. Lazy, low lifting feet will often catch these items if they exist. You will either say "Ouch!" or some loud expletive as you pick yourself off the ground.

Shorten the stride and raise that heel up a bit when you run.

Ignore Pace – Use Perceived Exertion Or Heart Rate For Effort Guidance

Due to the variety of terrain and trail conditions pace is often useless. A better effort guide is developing your own awareness of effort (PE).

You may consider becoming familiar with three effort ranges to keep it simple:

- *Easy* – Fairly relaxed and able to have a conversation with someone.
- *Moderate* – Requires a bit more focus to hold this effort. You may be able to say a few words but a full conversation is not likely.
- *Hard* – Complete focused effort and no talking going on here.

If you use a heart rate monitor, this would be another useful method to provide feedback on your effort as you know what your heart rate range is for various effort levels.

Road Mileage Does Not Equal Trail Mileage

A five mile run on the road rarely equals a five mile trail run with respect to effort and time.

Learn a little bit about your trail before you head out on it so you know how much fluid and calories to bring along. It doesn't hurt to bring a little extra your first time out so there are fewer surprises.

A five mile run may take multiple hours to finish depending on the type of trail.

Bring A Map

Sometimes you get lost.

It is never a bad idea to bring a trail map of some sort with you for the first couple runs until you become familiar with the trail or confirm there are great trail markings.

If a trail is a simple loop or out-and-back, the opportunity to get lost is greatly reduced but many trails have multiple choices and decisions to make so a handy map can save the day.

How To Survive Technical Downhills

Dirt, Rocks, Roots, and a Steep Grade – And you want to run down it.

Here are five trail running tips to help you navigate a technical descent and remain on two feet (most of the time).

Watch The Trail

You hear some noises or look further up the trail, then down you go.

It takes but a split second to look like Superman exposed to kryptonite and be spread across the trail.

I like to keep my focus on the 5-15 feet (depending on the trail conditions) in front of me to be aware of the immediate trail approaching and to help pick the most efficient/safe line.

Light, Happy Feet

You want those light, agile boxer's feet so they can become very responsive to the changing trail conditions that may be coming at you fairly quickly.

Shorten the stride and think turnover – turnover - turnover.

Stay up on your feet, you will be happy. Go down, not so happy.

Spread Your Wings

Extend your elbows to a 45 degree angle from your torso.

This will help provide additional stability as you glide down the terrain.

The V Foot Formation

Angle each foot (toe box) slightly outwards.

I am not sure what it is about this, maybe the fear reduction of twisting an ankle, but I am able to move down hills much quicker. A trail running buddy told me about this and it worked for me.

Control The Throttle

Stay in control.

If you feel yourself flailing down the trail, tap the breaks a little bit. Keep it smooth and if you have to – walk/hike it.

Technical downhill running is not the time to take a digger.

Trail/Ultra Running Race Basics

So you have been trail running for a little while now and are interested in participating in a trail race.

Here are five trail running race tips that can help you get to the finish line and maybe, just maybe, cross the line with a smile on your face.

Break the Race into Small Manageable Chunks

Marathon, 50 km, 50 mile, 100 km, 100 mile

These distances can often seem daunting or nearly impossible. Then place the mileage on the trail and you have yourself a significant challenge.

Breaking a race into smaller segments can often provide some psychological cushion by placing your focus into a perceived manageable distance or amount of time.

Depending on the race you could break up a race by:

- Laps – For multi-lap courses, this is a convenient way to break up the race.
- Aid-station to Aid-station – In trail running, aid stations may be five or more miles apart so this can be a manageable distance to focus on.
- Specific amount of time – 15 min, 30 min, 1 hr, etc – I usually consume fluids every 15 minutes. I could focus on each 15 minute increment and not worry about the rest.
- Shorter incremental distances – This could include getting to a specific aid-stations or distinguishable points along the course.

Be Honest With Self

You can't fake ultra distance events so don't even try. Be honest with your fitness and current abilities. Burning out your candle very early in a race can make for a very long day or DNF.

Become familiar with what Easy, Moderate, and Hard efforts feel like for you so you can use it to throttle your efforts early in the race.

Until you gain some experience, save going after it until the final 25% of the race.

Your long runs are a great way to help get a feel for your current fitness but be willing to adapt to race day conditions (internal and the environment).

Nutrition and Hydration

Get to understand your nutrition and hydration needs during your long training runs. Don't save this for race day!

Many runners will consume 150-350 calories per hour during long running efforts. Some will consume more and some less. Some can consume only liquid calories, some only solid food, and others can eat anything put in front of their face.

Get familiar with what works for you. Then be willing to adapt if the body says "no more of that" on race day.

Hydration needs is also very individual and can be heavily influenced by the environment (hot, humid, dry, etc).

Walking is OK

Road runners may be shocked or confused at the amount of walking/hiking that takes place in trail running events.

Depending on the course, many athletes will walk/hike the steeper hills to save energy and strength for later in the race. In fact, it may be necessary to help you finish the darn race.

If you feel like you are red-lining or pushing the effort too high early in the race, walk, it does the body good and it will thank you later in the race.

Have Fun!

This may be the most important tip of all. Enjoy yourself. Soak up the experience and be grateful for the opportunity.

Chat with your fellow runners. There will be more conversations going at the start than you have seen during all your road running events combined. The long nature of the events and the aerobic effort level required by many, allows this to naturally happen.

Thank all the volunteers. They are out there giving up their time for you.

Every event will likely have a tough patch that doesn't seem to be going as planned. This is almost a law in the ultra world. Focus on the things you can control and often times the bad patch will eventually pass.

Then get back to having fun!

What are 3, 6, 12, 24, and 48 Hour Timed Events?

Timed events are basically, run/walk/crawl as far as you want within the allotted time.

The courses are generally flat with relatively short loops of two-ish miles or less. This is generally true but may not always be the case.

The running surfaces can vary from dirt, grass, pavement, concrete, or even a track.

Our region has a handful of these unique running events.

There is no true finish line that says you are done. The fastest and the slowest runner will be working it to the best of their ability for the same amount of time.

With the above in mind, here are 10 reasons why timed running events are pretty cool.

1. No DNF – You will never DNF at a 24/12 hour run event. You run one hour and call it a day. Your result will be the distance you traveled within that one hour. End of story.

TALON Trail/Ultra Running Race Calendar and Guide

2. Sit and chill – Feeling like poo and want to sit. Go ahead and put your feet up. You aren't forced to cover 50 or 100 miles before your day ends. There are no cut-off times chasing you throughout the day.
3. Rub shoulders with everyone – The short loops and significant amount of time provides opportunities to chat and hang with runners of all abilities throughout the day.
4. Rarely completely alone – The short loops will often have you running/walking with others, moving up on someone, or being passed. If you are feeling good this isn't such a big deal but if you are in that dark place, it can be nice to have people around. It is also nice to know you aren't the only idiot running at 3 am.
5. Minimal gear – The loopiness allows you the opportunity to haul little to no gear. Just run baby! But don't forget to eat and drink.
6. Happy feet – The running surface is usually friendly to running. No roots, boulders, or stream crossings to worry about. The biggest challenge will be the time on your feet.
7. Safe environment – When running 24 hours into the night, it can be comforting having people always around and the nice short loop is convenient if you want to catch a few Z's in your Lazy Boy you hauled with or grab a jacket when the snow starts falling.
8. Experiment – The short loops provide an opportunity to try-out various nutrition, clothing, or gear options that you may use in an ultramarathon that doesn't provide the ease of swapping out.
9. Family friendly – If you have friends or family that actually want to support and watch you run in circles, there isn't much better of an event to do it at. Plus, family can leave and come back at a random time later in the day and it will never be long before they see you again assuming you haven't taken a nap next to a tree at the far end of the course.
10. Help – If it gets ugly for you, help is never far away.

Endurance Sports Nutrition

Endurance sports nutrition is a very much individualized. What works for one person, may not work for another.

I have been a fan of [Hammer Nutrition](#) for over 10 years and they have provided a free resource, [Guide to Success – Fueling Handbook](#) which provides tips to improve your performances or just help you finish an event with a smile on your face.

The information is basic both on scientific research and real world data from thousands of endurance sports athletes.

The handbook is broken up into the following chapters:

- Replacement vs. Replenishment
- Hydration – What you need to know
- Electrolyte Replenishment
- Proper Caloric Intake During Endurance Exercise
- Recovery – A crucial component for athlete success
- The Pre-Race Meal
- The 10 Biggest Mistakes Endurance Athletes Make

Of course the guide will mention some Hammer Nutrition products throughout the document but nearly all of the information is beneficial even if you don't use their products.

Their knowledge sharing is based off of scientific studies as well as many years of working with athletes like us.

Don't forget that each of us is unique and what works for one person may not work for another but I feel this guide provides a huge foundation to help you find what works best for you.

Low-cost Recovery Tool Every Ultra/Trail Runner Should Own.

Simple – Foam Roller.

The foam roller is one of my top recovery tools. This round tube of dense foam provides amazing massage or myofascial release work after a run or hard workout.

What is myofascial release?

“Myofascial release is a form of soft tissue therapy intended for pain relief, increasing range of motion, and balancing the body.” – wiki definition of myofascial release

To use, you basically roll various parts of your body on top of the roller. It provides some serious deep tissue work that feels great once you are done.

My legs will always feel quite a bit looser which will help in workout recovery and injury prevention.

I usually address my calves, hamstrings, thighs, IT, and *bumper* areas. You can also use it for your upper body as well but I haven't done much with that yet.

I like to use the roller once or twice a week after a tougher workout.

The foam roller comes in a few different lengths to allow you to address a bit larger surface area at once but they all will work well. I use the six inch diameter rollers.

Here are a few examples:

- [Foam Rollers at Running Warehouse](#)

Note: You can get an Endurance Buzz discount at check out as well using the discount link below.

Endurance Buzz Discounts

Below are discounts that not only save you money but all help support the growth of EnduranceBuzz.com.

- [Endurance Buzz discount at Running Warehouse](#)
 - Wide selection of trail and road running shoes, apparel, and accessories for both male/female athletes. They also have very good pricing.
 - Free 2-day shipping.
 - Discount applied at check-out.
- [15 % off first Hammer Nutrition Order](#)
 - Endurance sports nutrition, supplements, and apparel.
 - If you have never ordered from Hammer Nutrition, you can receive 15 % off your entire first order.
- \$5 off first Nutritional Supplement order at [iHerb.com](#)
 - A huge selection of nutrition supplement and good pricing.
 - If this is your first order, receive \$5 off your first order by using referral code - **EMO849**

Visor-Tip

If the information in this regional race calendar and guide helps you and you'd like to make a secure donation to support the continued development and mission of EnduranceBuzz.com, simply check out the [Donation page](#).