

Born To Run Summary

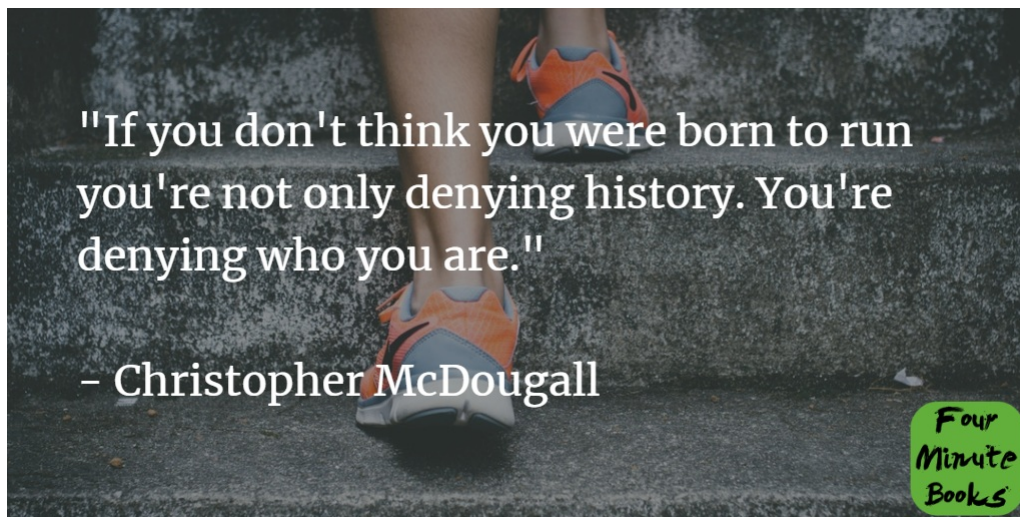


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1-Sentence-Summary: *Born to Run* teaches the natural virtues and secrets of long-distance running based on the author's research, experiences, and training.

Read in: 4 minutes

Favorite quote from the author:



All of us know those people who enjoy running marathons. We can't understand why they seem to run long stretches with ease, yet, many of us struggle just to run a few miles. Maybe you think these people are crazy and have superhuman abilities. But what if I told you that you are capable of running long distances also?

As wild as it sounds, you are physiologically built to run great lengths. The human body has gifted you with the tools you need to be able to run for hours. All you need to do is dedicate the time and patience to train.

Christopher McDougall is an author, journalist, and TED speaker, and of course, an avid runner. It wasn't always easy for him, though. He suffered from a painful foot ailment that doctors said would prevent him from ever running again. In search of a remedy, he found the Tarahumara Indians of Mexico, who are the best distance runners in the world. From them, he learned the healing effects of barefoot running and that the secret to becoming a talented distance runner is remembering to love it.

McDougall's book *Born to Run: A Hidden Tribe, Superathletes and the Greatest Race the World Has Ever Seen* is credited for sparking the barefoot running movement. In it, you'll learn the secrets of the best runners in the world, and how you can become a superathlete too.

Here are the 3 most helpful lessons I've learned from this book:

1. We were made to run long distances.
2. Our bodies are built to run barefoot, and it's better for our feet.
3. The key to long distance running is having good form and pacing yourself.

Are you ready to find your inner-athlete and start moving? Let's learn how!

Lesson 1: Your body was constructed to run far.

Compared to animals like horses, you might think your human body is pretty slow. But did you know those two legs of yours are capable of outrunning any animal on the planet? When talking about sheer speed, many animals will win over a short distance. But where homo sapiens wins is endurance. On a hot day, someone who is fit can outrun a horse in a marathon. This is because human bodies are efficient.

Your body can regulate temperature much more efficiently than other animals through sweating. Most other mammals can't sweat, so they are forced to release heat through breathing. They are much more prone to overheating and have to stop much sooner than us, or they risk heat exhaustion.

Another advantage comes from being on two legs. When four-legged animals run, they break into a gallop. It's quick, but the movement of galloping legs compresses the animal's lungs. Because of this, when these animals run fast, they can only breathe one breath per stride, which they are unable to keep up after too long. **Our ability to run on two legs, though slower, allows our chest to expand and enables us to increase air capacity so we can breathe at whatever rate we need.**

Lastly, our specialized Achilles tendon also gives us a leg up on the competition. As it stretches, the Achilles stores energy. When that power is released, it propels us forward. This allows us to use less energy per step than other animals.

Lesson 2: Dumping the running shoes and running barefoot is more natural and better for your feet.

By now you might have heard about the barefoot running movement, or maybe you've seen people doing it. No, they didn't lose their running shoes-or their mind. Running barefoot is much better for your feet. As we've seen, our bodies have many evolutionary traits that help us run. Your feet also have natural gifts that are hindered by running shoes.

Modern running shoes stabilize the foot too well. When we run, our foot rolls inward, which is called pronation. This acts as a shock absorber for our lower leg. Unfortunately, we blamed pronation for a common ailment called runner's knee. Because of this, pronation-

alleviation shoes flooded the market, though only 3% of people have a medical need for such shoes.

For most runners, wearing a shoe is not unlike wearing a plaster cast around the foot. **Like a cast, a shoe inhibits movement and causes the muscles in the foot to lose strength.** Because of this imbalance, the rest of the body has extra stress on other muscles and joints, and the risk of injury increases.

Shoes also harm your good form. Because they are so cushioned, runners can't feel the discomfort from harmful impacts on the ground as they run. This may cause them to adopt poor running gait, making them more prone to injury. Running barefoot, however, allows the body to adapt to a better running gait.

Lesson 3: Learning good form and pacing yourself are essential distance running skills.

If you've ever watched distance running in the Olympics, you've seen the incredible abilities of the Kenyan runners. When a physiologist set out to find out their secret to elite running, he discovered it was in their form. The Kenyan runner's leg contractions were quicker as was their foot turnover. He found this faster; shorter stride is best for running long distances.

How can we adopt this form, too? Set a metronome to 180 beats per minute and run to that speed. This technique has helped many runners improve their long distance running beyond where they thought possible, and it can help you too.

Learning to pace yourself is also an art. **The trick is to run just below your aerobic threshold, or the place where you start to breathe heavily.** When you do this, you will use fat stores rather than depleting your limited sugar stores. The average body has plenty of fat stored for long distances, and if you use this as a source rather than sugar, you can run much longer.

Born To Run Review

Born to Run is an amazing book for anyone who runs, wants to run, or needs convincing that they should be running. In a world where people often have excuses not to run, it serves as a fresh take on why everyone should stop making excuses and start enjoying what our bodies were evolutionarily built to do.

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Who would I recommend the Born To Run Summary to?

The 29-year-old that is training for their first marathon, the 45-year-old who is overweight but doesn't believe running will help, and anyone who wants to be healthy.