



ASK MILES



He's been around the block a few times—and he's got answers

DEAR MILES,
My friend is training for his first race and is really anal about running the exact mileage his plan calls for. How can I get him to relax?
—CHRIS R., Buffalo, New York
Bad news: You can't. Good news: He'll learn to loosen up on his own. As a first-timer, your friend is probably just nervous, and channeling that nervous energy into something he can control—like running the exact mileage. It's a harmless habit, unless he runs exactly the mileage his plan calls for, even when he

shouldn't (while injured, for instance, or during an electrical storm). Or unless it annoys you enough to garrate your pal with a tape measure. In which case the real question is: How can we get you to relax?

TWEET MILES

DEAR MILES,
My buddy chomps an energy chews with his mouth open. Gross! Can I say something? If it's the sight that offends, don't look. If it's the sound, pop a mouthful of chews and out-gross him. He'll get it.



To see past Ask Miles columns or ask a question, visit runnersworld.com/askmiles, or follow Miles on Twitter. Submit questions or check his advice at twitter.com/askmiles.

DEAR MILES,

A coworker races a lot for charity, and I feel like she's always hitting me up for donations. What should I do?
—MCKENNA A., Fort Lauderdale, Wisconsin
In flush times, McKenna, this might be a tough one. But with the economy stuck in first gear, it's much easier: Simply

tell your colleague that you have a strict budget for charity, and that you're planning to write some checks at year's end, directly to your organizations of choice. Then do it. (Bonus points if your coworker sees or hears you doing so: "Well, off to mail these checks to the organizations of my choice!")

BACK STORY Samia Akbar, 28

When she's not wrangling kids, this substitute teacher in Arlington, Virginia, is chasing a sub-2:30 marathon

1 Temp work My flexible teaching schedule lets me train. I'd like to be a sports psychologist.



5 Smart start Breakfast is oatmeal, nuts, a banana.

6 Sweet finish I love going to George Town Cupcake shop.

2 Staying strong I do sit-ups with a medicine ball and 40 push-ups daily.

7 Pump it up I listen to "Heads Will Roll" and think about my competition.

3 Recent win Last October's Army 10-Miler in Washington, D.C. (55:25).

8 Big plans Running the Boston Marathon in April, getting married in June.

4 Inspired chef I love to cook and watch "Hell's Kitchen." Gordon Ramsey is awesome.



9 Hands on I'm a wimp in the cold. I'll wear two pairs of gloves plus mittens.

10 Heroes Deena Kastor, Joan Samuelson, Lornah Kiplagat



43% OF RW POLL RESPONDENTS SAY THAT THEY SOMETIMES GIVE MONEY TO CHARITY RUNNERS. 25% ALWAYS MAKE A DONATION