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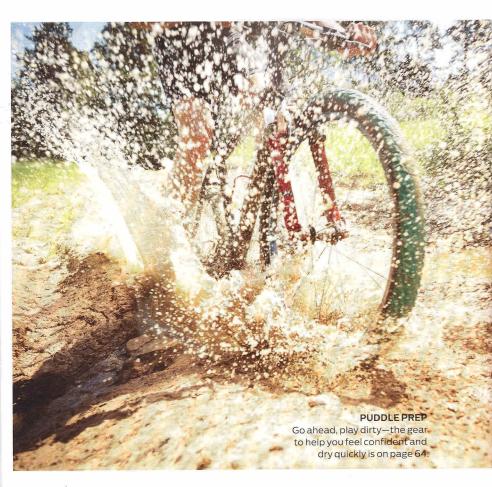
# getfit





Our new #BeAnOutsider column kicks off this month to help you maximize your freshair fun and fitness—rainy-day runs, yoga in the sun, adventure treks, and everything else alfresco just got a little more OMG.

If you've ever felt the delicious relief of raindrops in the middle of a hot, sticky run, you get a hint of how adding water can transform your usual outing and elevate your senses. Part of choosing the pavement over a treadmill or the bike path instead of Spin class is to get a dose of nature with vour workout—and that's powerful, mood-boosting, stress-soothing stuff. So you really don't want to skip any opportunities to soak up the scenery—or derail your outdoor training—even if the weather is on the wetter side. All you have to do is open up to the amazing feeling of experiencing nature in its most refreshing form. "When you tell yourself that-rain isn't a big deal, the whole idea of doing wet workouts feels easier and more fun," explains Kristen Dieffenbach, Ph.D., spokesperson for the Association for Applied Sport Psychology. We've got the benefits, how-tos, and gear that you need to amp up for a rainy run, hike, or bike ride so you never need-orwant-tomiss a chance for some outside play time, rain or, well, rain.



### You can go longer and faster

When you exercise, your muscles naturally produce heat, which can increase your body temperature to upwards of 100 to 104 degrees, explains exercise physiologist Rebecca L. Stearns, Ph.D., at Korey Stringer Institute, University of Connecticut, which studies maximizing athletic performance and safety. Even just 2 degrees above normal and your performance can start to suffer because in order to cool down your body with sweat, some blood flow gets diverted from working muscles to your skin. But rainwater could act like a cooling system and prevent you from overheating. Minimizing your rise in body temperature during exercise allows you to work harder and more efficiently, and it reduces your risk for

heat illness, explains Stearns. Recent research in the Journal of Sports Sciences found that when runners' faces were sprayed intermittently with cool water during a 5K run in the heat, they shaved at least 36 seconds off their regular time and they had 9 percent greater activation in their leg muscles.

### You'll feel like you could conquer anything

"My coach calls rain rides 'toughness training,'" says Kate Courtney, a Red Bull professional mountain biker. "On the worst weather days, you can be sure that most people aren't out there getting after it, and the fact that I am really motivates me to keep going, and it gives me a huge sense of accomplishment once I'm done."

Think of crappy weather as an obstacle, says Dieffenbach. Once you finish your workout, vou'll have a feeling of pride and satisfaction knowing that vou overcame an added challenge. Plus, it can be the simple shift that keeps your go-to loop feeling fresh. "I tell myself that it will be an adventure. a new way to experience my regular trail routes," says pro ultra trail runner Gina Lucrezi, a Buff headwear ambassador. "Once I'm out, I'm really loving running through puddles."

# It's extremely stress relieving

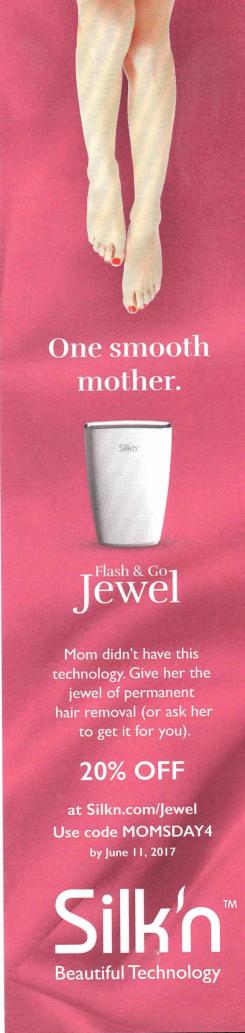
Outdoor workouts are serious head-clearers, and rainy ones may rank as the best at making you feel Zen. "Nonthreatening sounds like a gentle rainfall can be relaxing and comforting," says Joshua M. Smyth, Ph.D., associate director of the Social Science Research Institute at Penn State University. "There's a nice quiet solitude that I've found-often there aren't many people out in the rain so it's extra peaceful—like you own the road, trail, or even world," says Katie Zaferes, an Olympian and professional triathlete with Roka. "It makes you appreciate the beauty of the nature that surrounds you." And that might be just what you need to take your mind off how hard you're working.

# Your body learns to react better

Changing up your workout environment (say from running on flat, dry pavement to wet, slippery pavement) will make you more assured and quick on your feet. That's because



every time you ace a more demanding version of your routine, it can motivate you to step outside your comfort zone, says Dieffenbach. "Each time you do, you'll not only build your confidence but likely get better at the mechanics." Think of a baby learning to walk, she explains. He or she may learn on a hardwood floor, and when faced with carpet, it can take some practice to adjust-but soon it becomes second nature. Her tip: Start off at a slightly slower pace than normal so you can watch out for manhole covers and rocks, which can be dicier in the rain. As you adapt to riding or running on slick roads and trails, your muscles will begin to anticipate the new challenge, says Dieffenbach. >





6/CELL SHIELD

Even in a downpour you can still tote your phone with the Outdoor Research Sensor Dry Pocket Armband (\$45, outdoorresearch.com). It's fully waterproof—including the headphone jack.

7/INTREPID TREKKERS
The Altra Peak

3.0 Neoshell Low (\$150. altrarunning.com) makes it easy to brave the road or trails with its special waterproof upper that forms a barrier to keep feet dry and warm. The outsole is made of sticky rubber and has two types of lugs designed to help your stability both uphill and down. For muddy or rocky trails, add the Altra Trail Gaiter (\$20, altrarunning.com) to keep out water and wet debris.

8/LIGHTWEIGHT LEGGINGS The North Face Hybrid Hiker Tight (\$80,

thenorthface.com) is the best of both worlds: a snug legging and rugged hiking pant. Quick-drying fabric at the thighs, butt, and knees helps you stay drier where rain hits the most.

### 9/DO-IT-ALL TANK

With a swimsuitmaterial bratop and mesh on the bodice, the **GracedbyGrit Show**'Em Whatcha Got Cami (\$54, gracedbygrit.com) was made for surf or turf workouts. Adjust the side ruching for your perfect fit.

### 10/NO-SUN SUNNIES UV light still exists on dark, rainy days. Protect

your eyes with the

Costa Corbina sunglasses
with Sunrise Silver
Mirror lenses (\$189,
costadelmar.com).
A special coating repels
water—raindrops slide

right off without streaks.\*