This part of the PFT kills more applicants than anything. People are just intimidated to run. Running can be a lot of fun if people do it the right way. Here are a few steps to getting off on the right foot.

1. Always, always run with a partner. Running can get very boring by yourself.

2. Start at a pace and distance you are comfortable with and build steadily. Having said that, don't be afraid to push yourself outside of your comfort zone relatively soon. The key word is START at a comfortable pace and distance.

3. Every run does not have to be lightning fast. Run at a pace that you can comfortably converse with your running partner.

4. Run slower at the beginning of your run and work into a faster pace. Always finish a run strong instead of starting like fire and sputtering across the finish line.

5. Look where you are going to instead of at your shoelaces or the pavement.

6. Run at least 3 times per week every week. Work up to 4 or 5 days per week even if you only run a mile or two on some days.

Remember that there are many ways to improve your run time. The key to a good run workout is not overall mileage or speed work but consistency. Plan your runs and run your plan. Believe it or not, ANYONE can run below 18:00 minutes if they put forth the effort. If you do put forth the effort now, you will be reaping the benefits at OCS. Here are some of the key elements that I have incorporated into my run workouts to help me. I have not done all of these at once but have done all of them at one time or another.

**Medium Distance/Average Pace:** This is the backbone of any run program. These runs are anywhere from 3-5 miles at a comfortable pace. This type of run should be done at least 2 times per week in anyone's workout.

**Long Slow Distance:** These runs are a slow to comfortable pace for 5-10 miles. 10 miles intimidates most. Build 1 mile at a time. These runs are very effective at building endurance and should be done at least once every two weeks for any intermediate or better runner.

**Interval Training:** Interval training should be done once someone has advanced beyond the very beginner stages of running. There are two main types I have used. One method is where you go for a 3 mile run running at a sprint for a quarter mile and then jogging very slowly for a quarter mile. The variant method would be to run at a track and rest between each interval. The normal interval here would be 1/4 to 1/2 mile. The 1/4 mile sprints should be run at approximately 20% time of your current mile race pace. In other words, multiply your mile pace by .20 and that will give you your approximate pace for the 1/4 mile. Ensure you maintain a consistent pace during each interval and from interval to interval. You should do this once per week and start by doing 4-6 repetitions increasing 1-2 repetitions per week until you get to 12.

**Hill Training:** Find a hill of medium grade that is anywhere from 20-100 yards long. Sprint to the top, jog slowly to the bottom. Start doing this for 10-15 minutes per training session. Increase five minutes per session until you get to 30 or 45 minutes.
Fartlek Training: Find a good 2-5 mile course. Jog at your medium comfortable pace. Stop every 1/4 mile and do 10-30 repetitions of some exercise (i.e. push-ups, pull-ups, sit-ups, mountain climbers, lunges, dips, jumping jacks, 8 count body builders, flutter kicks, etc, etc.) If you want to emphasize upper body conditioning, cut the run down to 1-2 miles and stop every 50-100 yards.