

Running Minimalist or Barefoot Transition Program for Weaker Feet
(i.e. Wear orthotics or Motion Control Shoes on a regular basis)

This program is built for runners & walkers who have weaker feet to transition to barefoot, minimal (i.e. Fivefingers), or Zero Drop (no elevated heel) footwear. Candidates are people who rarely go barefoot, those that don't use their feet much, older people who don't exercise often, those who wear motion control or maximum support running shoes regularly, and those wear custom orthotics or very supportive insoles in their shoes. I suggest doing the following program as part of your warm up or cool down before or after a workout. Simply begin or wrap up your workout with a few minutes in your minimalist footwear.

Week 1: Start off by going barefoot or wearing your minimalist shoes on a **five minute** run or walk. The following day, evaluate your level of comfort*. If you can't tell you did it the day before, then double your time (ten minutes) and evaluate your level of comfort the next day. Continue adding five minutes a day going minimalist or barefoot until you find an amount of time or distance that makes you a little bit sore. This is your base line and foundation to build from. Once you find your baseline, simply add 2 or 3 minutes every other day, taking a recovery day in between. The whole idea is to slowly add more minutes to your minimalist routine while taking them away from the time you are working out in regular shoes. Within a few weeks, you'll be walking or running miles and well on your way to avoiding injuries and strengthening your feet!

*The key to being successful in phasing in a minimalist routine is to evaluate your level of comfort and to find a base line to build from. If you get to the point during your workout where you feel uncomfortable, you have probably gone too long and will most likely be a little sore the next day. This is the premise for the whole program.

Sample Barefooting Transition Program:

Day	Amount of Exercise	Notes
Day 1	5 minutes	Easy
Day 2	10 minutes	Didn't notice the 5 minutes from yesterday
Day 3	None	A little sore from the 10 minutes yesterday
Day 4	10 minutes (base line)	Easy
Day 5	None	Feeling pretty good
Day 6	12 minutes	Just adding a bit
Day 7	None	And on the 7 th day...
Day 8	15 minutes	
Day 10	18 minutes	
Day 12	20 minutes	
Day 13	20 minutes	Testing out back to back days with 20 minutes
Day 14	None	Just a touch of soreness, getting stronger!
Day 15	23 minutes	
Day 17	25 minutes	
Day 19	27 minutes	
Day 21	½ hour	½ hour in 3 weeks, woohoo!