

## HOW TO GO PLOGGING

### Part 1

#### • Dressing for Plogging

1. Dress suitably for the environment in which you are running. This will vary depending on the weather and terrain where you live, but the basics are comfortable running clothes and closed-toe running shoes. If you're unsure about suitable gear for running in, see suggestions here or talk to your local sports retailer for advice.

2. Consider wearing suitable gloves. While gloves are not necessary, they are a wise and useful addition to the plogger's inventory, as picking up litter can be hazardous in some situations. At the bare minimum, a pair of disposable gloves can be carried for the icky stuff like used tampons and condoms (just be sure to dispose of the gloves properly too). For greater protection and durability, choose gloves that are resilient, of the sort you'd do heavy gardening work with, to protect your hands from potential sharp edges and filthy litter.

If it is uncomfortable to wear gloves while plogging, such as in hotter weather, the gloves can be tucked into a pocket or belt, and only put on as needed. If wearing cold weather gloves, these can certainly work but be prepared to wash them each time after collecting litter.

You might find a litter claw to be handy if you're happy to carry it. This can avoid any need to physically touch the litter but still allows you to pick it up and bag it. It also makes quite an obvious statement as to what you're doing!





3. Find a suitable carry bag for collecting the litter in. This might be a standard trash bag, a reusable shopping bag, a bespoke litter collecting bag or any bag salvaged from your cupboard or the thrift or recycling store. The bag needs to be easy to carry, capable of containing litter that might have sharp edges, be dirty or moist, etc. Depending on how much trash you're collecting, you might find wearing a backpack to place full bags into can be helpful, but by this stage you're plogging hardcore!

Being an inventive species, people have taken to carrying found litter in all sorts of innovative ways include sliding it into exercise gear, using litter to carry litter or placing it inside your cap, etc. Check out social media images for more inventive ways to tote litter.

## Part 2

### • [Organizing Your Plogging Group](#)

1. Consider people you normally run with first. If you already have a jogging group or companion(s), explain to them what plogging is and see if they'd like to vary the jogging repertoire to include some plogging. It's likely you'll need to be the prime motivator to begin with but given this activity is fast gaining momentum, there are sure to be others who have heard of it and are keen to try it out. Focus on the dual benefits of fitness and a cleaner environment when promoting it to your companion runners.

2. Advertise locally to create a group. If you don't already have a group to go plogging with, create one. Use social media, meeting apps, notices on bulletin boards, and/or place signs in the windows of sports stores to find fellow ploggers. Start a Facebook plogging page for your local area.

Contact local environment groups to let them know you're starting a plogging group. With some simple advertising effort, you are likely to connect with a few interested people who can, in turn, invite others they know along as well.

Be prepared to be an ongoing organizer and motivator to begin with. If you're doing the work of creating a plogging group, you'll need to remain at the helm for a while until the group gains its own momentum, to keep the group going and enthused.

3. Join an existing plogging group. If you're not so keen on being the instigator and caretaker of a plogging group, and you're lucky enough to have ploggers already in your area, seek them out. Join up and make new friends with a shared interest. Check out such meeting groups at Meetup or ask at a local sports store to find out what plogging opportunities exist where you live.

4. Go plogging alone if you cannot find others to plog with. There is no need to forgo the enjoyment and utility of plogging if you can't find others to join up with for now. Do your bit anyway, as an individual plogger. In time, you may find others interested in joining you; be an evangelist for your plogging and get people enthused enough to want to come along and see what it's all about!



## Part 3

### • Plogging in Action

1. Go plogging when you can see what you are doing. This is a daytime activity because you need to be able to see the litter with ease. Choose times of day that fit in with your availability and the local climate; for example, if it gets too hot during the day, consider early morning or evening for plogging times. If you are plogging at times when it's a little darker, consider wearing headlamps as your hands need to be free to carry the litter bag and collect litter.

2. Go plogging wherever you like. You can use your usual running route or vary it to go to places you would like to run in. It doesn't really matter where you go, as long as it's a place you find suitable for running. If you're stuck for ideas though, good places to go plogging include the beach (stop that plastic getting into the ocean!), waterfronts, the woods or a forest, plains or fields, hillsides and your local neighborhood. If you know of a natural area with a litter problem, this might be a good new place to go plogging.

3. Keep an eye out for litter as you jog. No piece of plastic is too small to be picked up and removed from the environment, so if you're detail-oriented, feel free to collect the small along with the big pieces of litter. There are no rules about how much or how little to collect, that's totally up to you. With experience, you'll develop a sense of how much litter you like to collect when plogging.

Every bit of litter picked up matters. Even if you don't have a bag but see one piece of litter needing to be removed, collect it and carry it or stuff it in a pocket for proper disposal later. Consider that five pieces of litter collected each day for five days amounts to 35 pieces a week; for each individual, that soon adds up to a lot of litter removed from the environment.





4. Collect safely. Only pick up that which you consider is safe to pick up. Along with reading the Warnings below, one key suggestion for staying safe while collecting litter is to avoid picking up broken glass or sharp items. If you must collect such an item, only do so when you can find a very safe way to collect it without harming yourself. If in doubt, leave it and either get better gear to remove it (such as a litter claw and strong container for carrying) or ask for assistance from the local authorities or other suitable persons.

If an item of litter presents a potential safety hazard to other persons, try to mark the item clearly in some way, to encourage people to avoid it.

This might involve placing a ring of pebbles or sticks around it or drawing a circle in the surrounding dirt or sand, etc. Be inventive with whatever is at hand.

5. Consider your method. Some people like to go plogging in one direction and continue to carry all that they've collected as they go. Others like to create piles of litter, keep jogging, then backtrack with the litter bag and collect the amassed piles on the way home. If you don't want your exercise to be interrupted, consider plogging while warming up and cooling down, leaving the middle section for the serious running.

If you like to combine personal analytics with exercise, wear your fitness tracker and keep note of how many steps or how much distance you've covered with each plogging outing. By trying to outdo your last effort each new plogging session, your fitness levels will improve a great deal—and more litter gets collected.



6. Make a mental note of items that are too large to be picked up but need to be removed. You might spot things that are too large to take, such as containers, rusting cars, piles of dumped trash, etc. In such cases, make a mental note of where these things are and contact the relevant authorities to alert them that these things need collecting. If this isn't going to bear fruit, organize a team of neighbors, friends and family to collect the larger items as a team, coming back at a specific time, with the right equipment.

## Part 4

### • Back Home with Your Trash Haul

1. Do your best to recycle what you've collected. As much as possible recycle the trash that can be recycled, including plastics, metals and paper. For items that cannot be recycled, dispose of them appropriately so that they can be dealt with by the landfill process instead of ending up back in the environment.

2. Keep a record of what you've collected. If you're into social media, consider taking photos and uploading them to share with your friends and fans, to encourage them to take up plogging and to keep a check on your progress. This is a "selfie worthy" fitness event! Even if it encourages more litter collecting without the jogging, that's achieved something good. For you, keeping a record can be a good way to remind yourself of the benefit of cleaning up your local patch in the world, helping to keep our environment cleaner and safer for all living beings. There are lots of creative things you could do with recording your plogging efforts; for example, consider a community photo exhibition that demonstrates how your group's plogging has made a local area litter-free over time. This could be a fantastic opportunity to show people that individual action makes a big difference.

3. Feel good about what you're doing. Plogging is a great way to feel motivated about your exercise as it has more than one benefit; it is a way of combining individual achievement via exercise with community and environmental care. You're part of the growing movement of people who are giving back to the world at the same time as honoring self care, a sustainable and healthy way to balance your life.

