




Washington DC / HEALTH & WELLNESS



The Best Running Routes in Washington, D.C.



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Exercise is a proven way to relieve stress and release endorphins. So it's no coincidence that Washington, D.C. has recently held the title of both Most Stressed City in America and Fittest City in America (which it lost to Minneapolis last year). Still, running is a great way to escape traffic and de-stress. Explore the capital with these seven great running trails.

[EDIT ARTICLE](#)



Park



National Arboretum Columns | © Nicolas Raymond / Flickr

Get away from the traffic and politics with a run at the National Arboretum. You can traverse the 446 acres of park with 10 miles of winding trails. Pause for a stretch at the [National Capital Columns](#) in the Ellipse Meadow and take in the picturesque views.

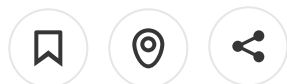
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FREE TRAIN AT THE SMITHSONIAN NATIONAL ZOOLOGICAL PARK

Park, Zoo



Mei and her popsicle at the National Zoo | © [Brian Gatwicke / Flickr](#)

The expansive and free [National Zoo](#) is a fantastic place to knock out a quick morning jog. The walkways measure 2.5 miles. It's so popular with locals that in 2015, zoo officials cut hours to prevent traffic accidents, so it now opens at 8 a.m. on weekdays. If you need a breather, there's nothing quite like stopping in front of exotic animals while you catch your breath.

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The National Mall

This is possibly the most iconic route in [D.C.](#) The loop connects the Lincoln and Capitol Building, covering four miles. You will pass the [Washington Monument](#), Smithsonian museums and many, many tourists taking selfies. There is the added benefit of plenty of water fountains so you don't need to carry a water bottle.

GREAT FALLS

Park



The Great Falls | © [click-see](#) / [Flickr](#)

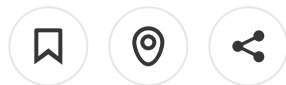
culture trip

absolutely worth it. You will leave the city noise far behind as you run along beautiful cascading falls. Great Falls State Park has multiple trails to choose from, so you can go again and again to explore new paths.

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HAINS POINT

Park



Hains Point offers sweeping river views and shaded pavement for runners | © [abull017 / Flickr](#)

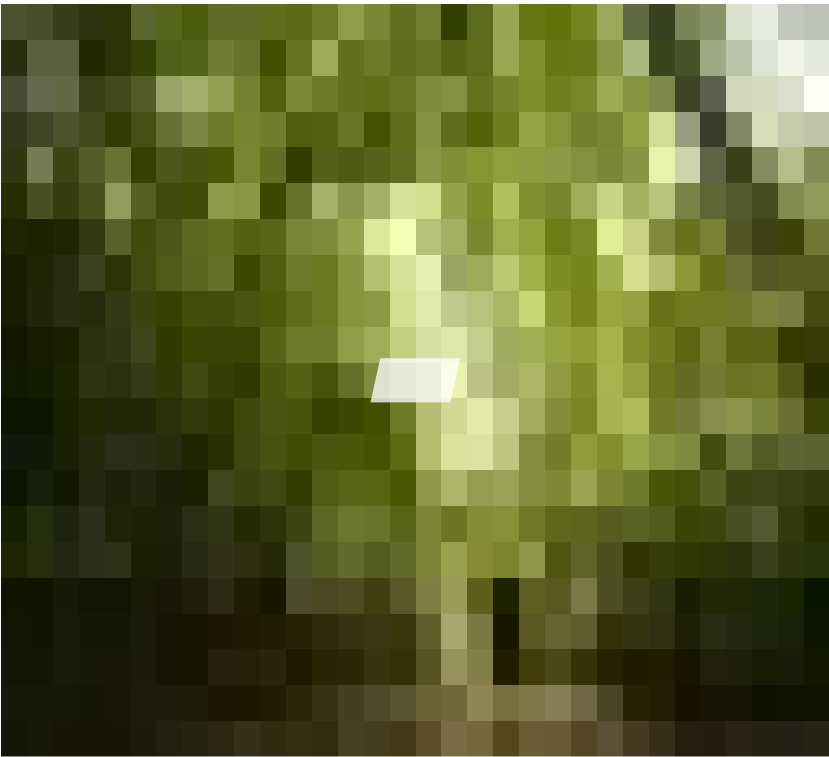


by the water. Along the course, enjoy watching planes take off and land across the river at Reagan National Airport.

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ROCK CREEK PARK

Park



Rock Creek Park | © Rock Creek Park

Tired of the city life? Check out [Rock Creek Park](#). It has multiple trails from four to 10 miles, and that’s before you count the horse trails. Jog along scenic

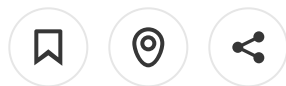




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C&O CANAL

Park



This trail parallels waterways that used to be used for importing and exporting goods to D.C. | © [Reading Tom / Flickr](#)

Looking for the perfect route for a long run? Look no further. The Chesapeake & Ohio Canal offers 184 miles of open trail, taking you from Washington, D.C. to Cumberland, Maryland. Give your knees a break as you pass gravel, dirt, and even grassy patches. For you crazy ultra-runners who want to do it in one



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