

6 Tips to Get Ready for an Obstacle Race

By [Fara Rosenzweig](#) • Active.com

From wall climbs and hurdle jumps to mud pits and tire swings, obstacle races are popping up in numerous cities. Many may think obstacle courses are for the elite athlete, but that's not the case; many events accommodate all fitness levels. [Obstacle races](#) are supposed to challenge you while encouraging the combination of fun and fitness.

Doug Balzarini, personal trainer and strength coach for the Alliance MMA Fighting Team, encourages his clients to take part in obstacle races. "Obstacle races are great because you don't have to be an athlete or an elite runner to participate. These races are meant to be fun while challenging your body and mind."

Whether you're running in your first or hundredth obstacle race, Doug Balzarini gives a few tips to help you get ready for [your next obstacle event](#).

Q: Does a participant need to train for an obstacle race?

DB: While it's not required, I would suggest "preparing" for an event if possible. The more preparation you do in advance means less stress and more fun to be had when it's time to participate.

Q: How does one even begin to train for a race?

DB: I have helped a number of clients get ready for obstacle course events. While we were not able to replicate the course exactly, we were able to set up a similar layout and mimic many of the stations during our sessions. Putting their bodies through a workout similar to what they will experience better prepares them for the actual event. Do a little research ahead of time. Most of these events post the race layout on their website so you can see what's in store. Then try to mimic the movements in your workouts. If there are hurdle jumps, [try jumping](#) over a bunch. If there is a crawling portion, crawl across the room.

Q: What are some common exercises one can do at home?

DB: Obstacle races typically involve running to stations and performing a variety of body-weight exercises. An individual can perform a circuit of running a certain distance followed by body-weight exercises. Common exercises would include burpees, jumping, [pushups](#), pull-ups, crawling, and climbing. In between each set run for a minute or two.

Q: Is it more physical or mental training to be successful in an obstacle race?

DB: Honestly, I think it's a bit of both. Like most physical activity, you need to have a proper, positive mindset when you are about to begin any exercise routine (or race in this case). I think the better prepared you are, the more confidence you will have during your race. In other words, you can achieve mental training as a by-product of your hard work.

Q: What advice do you have for a first-timer?

DB: [Get your friends or family involved](#). Most of these events allow for groups or teams to participate together as a unit. A team environment is a great alternative for first timers or people who are a bit apprehensive.

Q: What other advice do you have?

DB: Have fun! There isn't a large money prize for winning these events; go out there to compete, get some exercise, and have some laughs. Obstacle races are all about fun, fitness, and hilarious memories.