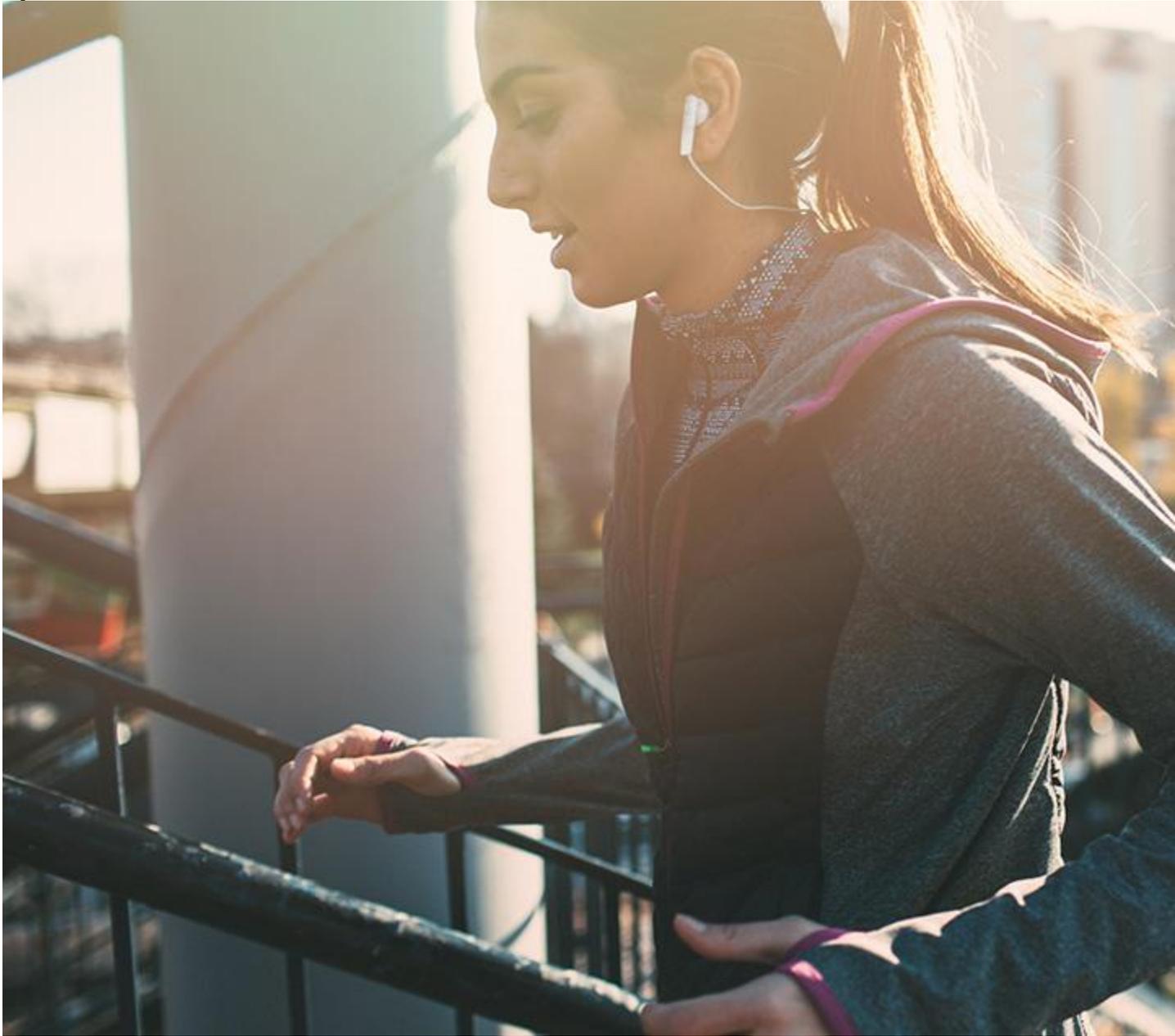


The Best Podcasts of 2016

8 great shows that you can add to your long run or commute.

By **The Runner's World Editors**



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In 2016, *Runner's World* entered the podcast game with two shows to reach readers in a new way with The Runner's World Show and Human Race. And while members of the RW staff have loved contributing to both shows, we still sneak in other podcasts during

runs or while finishing up stories for the magazine or the website. Below are some editor picks for podcasts you should check out in 2017—all shows perfect for a long training run to make you laugh, think, or feel inspired. (And if you need to catch up on past *Runner's World* podcasts, click here to find every episode.)

OUTSIDE/IN

A podcast from New Hampshire Public Radio that focuses on the outdoor world and science in a fun, engaging way. Host Sam Evans-Brown is a heck of an athlete—he once won Argentina's national cross-country ski championships. He's also the station's environmental reporter, and the show hopes to use "long-form narrative storytelling to bring the outdoors to you wherever you are."

Suggested Episode: The show has devoted episodes to both Vibrams (and the visceral reaction they bring out in people) as well as one about Ari Ofsevit, the Boston Marathoner who this year collapsed short of the finish line and was carried across by two other runners only to be accused of cheating.

—*Jeff Dengate, shoes and gear editor*

REPLY ALL

I didn't think I could become a regular listener to a tech-based podcast (I'm not really a techie). But hosts Alex Goldman and PJ Vogt put together really, really cool stories, and I love their banter. I've even missed an exit while listening to them! They bring to light really cool, out-there topics that appeal to almost anyone once you start to listen.

Suggested Episode: Episode #57: Milk Wanted, explores the world of breast milk markets. For a deep dive, check out episode #64: On the Inside, which is a four-part series about Paul Modrowski and his blog from inside a maximum security prison.

—*Heather Mayer Irvine, nutrition editor*

ON BEING WITH KRISTA TIPPETT

How do you want to live your life? Each week Krista Tippett, a Peabody Award-winning broadcaster and *New York Times* best-selling author of *Becoming Wise: An Inquiry into the Mystery and Art of Living*, helps answer the "big questions of meaning" about human life with scientists, theologians, artists, and teachers.

Suggested Episode: In the episode "Running as Spiritual Practice," the interviews with Billy Mills, Christina Torres, and Ashley Hicks woven together with Tippett's observations makes for great meditative long-run listening.

—*Tish Hamilton, executive editor*

SONG EXPLODER

I love listening to all kinds of music, but because I never played an instrument or created any music of my own, I never really put much thought into how my favorite songs are pieced together. Host and creator Hrishikesh Hirway does an amazing job by bringing on artists—some I know, some I’ve never heard of—to explore how their songs were made—bit by bit.

Suggested Episode: I’m biased because they are currently my favorite binge-band, but The Lumineers episode breaking down the first single (“Ophelia”) from their second album, *Cleopatra*, is a good entry point to the show. I was also turned on to the artist Grimes via the podcast, and a recent episode featuring Emma Stone’s song from *La La Land*, (“The Fools Who Dream”) was fantastic.

—*Brian Dalek, digital editor*

HEAVYWEIGHT

From writer Jonathan Goldstein, each episode profiles a different person and a moment in their past where their life changed. Yes, this is a vague description, but that’s because each episode is slightly different. All you need to know is that Goldstein is a talented storyteller with a meditative voice, which makes the podcast relaxing and perfect for long runs. It mixes humor with deeper emotional moments, so you can start an episode laughing and end it with a few tears—something that has happened to me on 20 milers already.

Suggested Episode: The second of the series, *Gregor*, is an excellent introduction to both the concept of the podcast and Goldstein’s style. *Gregor*, a friend of Goldstein’s, is a mildly successful filmmaker and video editor trying to come to grips with the larger success of his friends—one in particular. Goldstein and *Gregor* meet up with this very famous (I won’t give away who it is) friend to reminisce about a moment from *Gregor* and the friend’s past.

—*Kit Fox, reporter*

IN THE DARK

It’s an investigative 10-part series into the disappearance 27 years ago of Jacob Wetterling. It’s fascinating, disturbing, revealing, and sad—an incredible true story. Fans of non-fiction especially will appreciate the depth the reporters go to uncover and unravel this mystery.

Suggested episode: You’ve got to start at the beginning with Episode 1: The Crime.

—*Christine Fennessy, multimedia features editor*

SURPRISINGLY AWESOME

The title of this show says it all: The hosts take a topic you thought was boring (or even lame) and explain why it's actually amazing. If you're the kind of person who values useless trivia—did you know that pigeons mate for life?—you'll enjoy this show.

Suggested Episode: #4, Tubthumping. This 1997 earworm by Chumbawamba, a group most people in the U.S. would consider a one-hit wonder, is apparently about so much more than drinking a whiskey drink and/or a vodka drink. (For example: Did you know that the woman singing in that song was previously in a band called Ow, My Hair's on Fire?) Listen to the episode to learn more about its deeper meaning and about the band's 32-year run.

—*Meghan Kita, senior editor*

HOW TO DO EVERYTHING

I loved this show because it was so funny, original, and slyly irreverent—and you still learned stuff by listening, often stuff you didn't think you wanted to know. I use the past tense here because after nearly six years and 265 episodes, the show has come to an end. Cohosts Ian Chillag (who's a runner and 2:40 marathoner, by the way) and Mike Danforth are both producers on "Wait, Wait...Don't Tell Me," which is one of the best radio shows/podcasts out there. They're pros, and this was their playground.

Suggested Episode: Pick any episode that interests you or go all the way back to the beginning and appreciate how the show evolves.

—*David Willey, editor-in-chief*

Bonus: While I'm obviously biased, I also want to mention The Runner's World Show and Human Race, the two podcasts we launched earlier this year. Tough to pick just one episode of each show, but out of nostalgia for our early (pre-Panoply) days, I suggest Episode 3, which features an interview with Boston Marathon Race Director and storyteller extraordinaire Dave McGillivray, as well as RW editor Meghan Kita's Guinness World Record attempt to run the fastest marathon while dressed as a hot dog.

"Close to Home" (Episode 9) isn't merely my favorite episode of Human Race, it's one of the best pieces of audio storytelling I've ever heard. It's about how running helps people cope with the affects of Alzheimer's. Producer Christine Fennessy tells the story of Greg O'Brien, a 66-year-old on Cape Cod who uses running to combat his mental decline—but it's Fennessy's own fears and family history, and how her reporting forced her to confront them, that really elevate the story.