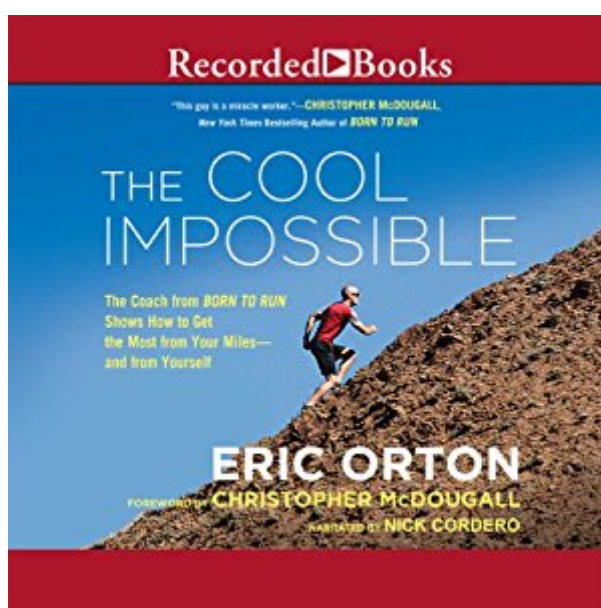


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# The Cool Impossible: The Coach From "Born To Run" Shows How To Get The Most From Your Miles - And From Yourself



## Synopsis

Featured in the best-selling book *Born to Run*, coach and performance guru Eric Orton has spent a lifetime learning and thinking about running and about the limitless possibilities of the human body and mind. In *The Cool Impossible*, Orton shares his wealth of knowledge in an inspiring step-by-step guide that will open up a new world of achievement for runners of all levels of ability and experience. The truth is: Athleticism is awareness. That simple phrase is at the core of *The Cool Impossible*. Athleticism requires awareness of form and technique, awareness of our effort level, and, most important, awareness of what we think (and don't think). And with that awareness comes the possibility of endless potential and improvement, progress and mastery - and, ultimately, achievement that you never before would have thought possible. With a program focused on proper running form, strength development, and cardiovascular training, Orton will help first-step beginners, prime-time competitors, and enduring veterans reach "the cool impossible" - the belief that any achievement, athletic or otherwise, is within our reach.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

This was the first book I ever pre-ordered through ; I was really excited about it. When it came, I set aside the books I was reading and dug in. With that in mind, I feel like I should write a review, there are a few things I would like to say.1. Eric Orton wrote the book as a narration of the experience of a week long one on one seminar with him. This is exceptionally irritating. There are phrases like, "We are driving out to my favorite trailhead, you see a bear cub off to your right. That's Grand Teton over there. Drink it in. This natural beauty is recharging your soul." This seems like a terrible format.

Maybe it was chosen to fluff up the book due to lack of content. It was fine when he was talking about the mental states of running, but in the last few chapters when he gets into some New Age mantra/visualization talk, it's really annoying. Really annoying. It comes off like football coach jock speak.<sup>2</sup> The exercises in the book for foot strength look very good and I will be implementing them. However, he advocates you get a slant board, something he sells on his website for almost \$80. On a break from reading the book, I made one out of wood scraps I had at home and some sandpaper, Took about 10 minutes. Don't buy one of those! Find a picture online and make one. For the wobble board, I'm going to cut a lacrosse ball in half and glue that to a board. For ski poles, I'm using 2 cross country skis my friend threw away. Free. That gear is free. Don't buy more gear.<sup>2a</sup> The layout for the exercises is kind of obtuse and it seems difficult to follow.<sup>3</sup> The training program for running is 5 months long. This is the focus of this book and it's a very regimented, watching your heart rate, keeping a journal kind of thing. Maybe someday, not now. Orton has a lot of experience and for some, this zone workout might be worth the price of admission.<sup>4</sup> The chapter on nutrition is a joke. It could be one sentence long...."Eat good stuff." Instead you have to read about going to the store with Eric. There is very little content and he is hedging his bets against pissing off the different tribes of eaters. Scott Jurek's a vegan, Mark Sisson's a caveman. Eric didn't want to tangle. I remember getting the same lesson in nutrition from watching an episode of Dallas Cowboy Cheerleaders. The trainer said "If it has more than five ingredients, don't eat it. If it doesn't look like food in it's original shape, don't eat it."<sup>5</sup> The chapter on running form, the reason I bought this book, is nothing more than what is on his youtube videos. If you want to hear his take on form, get those videos. Actually the dvd "Run Faster and Injury Free" is the best form tutorial I have seen. You have to ignore that it sounds like an infomercial, but that's a really sound video.<sup>6</sup> There isn't a lot of science in this book. He speaks anecdotally about the Tarahumara but doesn't tie it into other stuff.<sup>7</sup> I don't know what I got out of it. I will do the foot exercises, maybe if I want to get really serious I might consider the 5 month program, but I didn't feel like there was much in this book besides "Be aware of your body. Take note of how eating different things makes you feel. Have a forefoot strike." The philosophy was weak, pandering and awkward.<sup>8</sup> The title, and the catch phrase of the book "The Cool Impossible" are really weird. There is no explanation of it in the beginning. It keeps popping up and it's like he is trying to brand himself, or the idea that you should go out and strive for your dreams. It's weak. It's just more jock speak.<sup>9</sup> This book is about training your body for athleticism, not just running and that's good. I much prefer Mark Lauren's "You are Your Own Gym." Me and several of my friends have been using the courses in that for years and everyone is seeing great results.All and all, I feel like this book is what I feared it would be, the last

character from Born to Run writing a book because everyone else is making money on theirs. Orton ties into that story early on because it gives him a place in the fitness book world. He definitely has cred as a trainer, and we need those, but he can't carry it across to everyone. I don't think I could hang with the guy. The book is confused, it's not just about running, ultras, nutrition or athleticism; it tries to tie all of these together as pathways towards achieving your mysterious "Cool Impossible" fantasy. But the concept is weak and I didn't find it very motivating. If you want to stampede towards your goals, you have to start ingesting the heavy stuff, books with deep teachings, this book is pretty light.

Form is the most important but overlooked aspect of running, and Eric covers it. Running is like a musical instrument - you need to learn how to do it. How good would a trumpet player be if she could not read music nor was taught how the trumpet works and how to use it. Its natural, just pick it up each day and play it. Sound stupid, yet, that is how we learn how to run, buy some crappy over-padded and too-narrow sneakers and go out and hit the road or "Just do it" The true joy in running is learning how to play your body, and Eric teaches that. Change your lean and stride as needed. Check periodically that your cadence, tall posture, pronated mid-foot landing, etc. is constant. Doing anything goofy with your arms, bending at the waist or toe outs? There is so much (too much) of your body to monitor and play with when running that who could even think of listening thru ear buds to songs heard hundreds of times over. Eric teaches to listen to your body, and once you begin to learn this skill it is the greatest joy in running. Barefoot training, as Eric states, is a periodic must. You WILL do stupid things when landing in marshmallow sneaks with your toes so scrunched together that they overlap (your foot is immobile!), but barefoot will set you straight. Thanks Eric!

The main idea here is master running technique like a martial artist. Then Eric goes about being the coach explaining that awareness is fundamental. You get the whole program: drills, nutrition tips and how to develop the mindset to achieve your cool impossible.

The book could have used some more editing. The concept of going through a first week of coaching to illustrate the training philosophy did not work for me. The run around a lake and the visit to the produce section in a grocery store contained very obvious statements with little cohesion. I scanned and then skipped sections like this. That being said: The book managed to convince me to try the transition, but it could have been done using about 1/3 - 1/2 of the pages. Also, I am missing

references to well established trainers and authors on the experience of whom Orton is clearly building. Training aids on website clearly overpriced but I bought them anyway out of convenience....I recommend with caution....

Everyone should read this ! It is about running and being the best you can be as a person, friend, parent or whatever you desire to be better at.

The story line is a little distracting, but the content of this book is tremendous. The approach to running, training and mental preparation is great and I highly recommend it. It is a better way to run and avoid knee related injuries.

Clear approach to good running technique, as well as simple philosophies towards a running lifestyle.

The foundation of great running. Learn the techniques and equipment featured to make you run light, easy and fast. Reminders of what you should eat to enrich your athlete within

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