



## CHOOSING A HYDRATION PACK

1. Determine the size of pack that you need. Although a hydration pack may serve primarily to carry your water, you'll probably need to pack some other items in there. Packs range widely in their capacity, from no storage space at all to about 16L. Any larger than that and you'll be looking at a medium-sized backpack. Clarify what your mandatory gear for events would be and what you would take training with you, then purchase a pack that has enough room to store it all.
2. Consider how much water that you'd like to carry in your hydration pack. Standard sizes include 1L, 1.5L, 2L and some 3L. Consider purchasing a pack with the option for bottles or flasks on the front, this will make for convenient refills at aid stations and will also help you monitor how much you are drinking in a race.
3. Consider the compartments available. Organised compartments can help you to keep your belongings separated and easy to access, this is especially useful for gear checks mid-race. Also consider how easy it will be to access your nutrition whilst running.
4. Check the hydration bladder and system. A number of different filling systems are available including top seals and screw-on lids. Consider how easy the system will be to fill and look for a bite valve with a turn-off knob to prevent leaking.
5. Try the pack on. Make sure that it fits comfortably. For a more accurate feel, put a few kgs of gear in it to see how comfortable it feels when full. A sternum strap will keep the pack stable and prevent the shoulder straps from sliding off during use.
6. Ensure the clips that attach the pack are easy to use (many people lose dexterity in their fingers when running, particularly in the cold). It is also very important that the straps are all easy to tighten and loosen on the run as you drink and eat your pack fit will change and modifying this as you move will reduce your risk of chafing.