



Beginners 5k training plan

Reaching your personal best

Like any athlete, you can only reach your full potential if you train smart. Many people think, the harder the better. So they train too hard, then they end up feeling tired, they get ill or they injure themselves. The way to avoid this and perform at your best is

to train smart. Plan all your training sessions. Understand what each one is trying to achieve. And, when you get started, be mindful of how each should feel in its effort and intensity. Here's a guide for just that.

Is this plan suitable for me?

This plan is written for new runners. You'll have had very limited fitness training (or none at all), and now you want to run 5k for the first time. Ask yourself if the plan matches your current fitness level, and take care to see that

it fits your availability to train each week. Be honest. Think carefully about your work, family and social commitments. While you want to challenge yourself, your training should be enjoyable and stress free.

Type of session	Perceived effort level (1-10)*	Heart rate	How it should feel – the talk test
Recovery	6-6.5	60-65%	You can speak in complete sentences, totally conversational. You're relaxed and enjoying the session.
Easy	6.5-7	65-70%	You're in control and very much at a conversational level but you'll feel slightly flushed with a gradual build up of muscular fatigue.
Steady	7-8	70-80%	You can speak in short sentences but you have a slight pause in your breath.
Threshold	8-8.5	80-85%	You can speak 4-5 words. Your breathing is more laboured and you know you're working. We call this: controlled discomfort.
Hard	8.5-9	85-90%	You can say only 2-3 words maximum and you're out of breath, but you know you could still do more if you had to.

*Perceived effort =
1 represents no effort and
10 represents maximum effort

WC	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Week 1	Rest or Cross-training 30 mins cross-training Conditioning 15 mins strength and conditioning + stretch	Walk / Run 3 x (5 mins walk, 2 mins easy effort run) + stretch	Rest or Cross-training Rest or 45 mins cross-training + stretch (this can be part of a gym class)	Walk / Run 3 x (5 mins walk, 3 mins easy effort run) + stretch	Rest	Cross-training 45 mins cross-training + stretch	Walk 60 mins walk + stretch
Week 2	Rest or Cross-training 30 mins cross-training Conditioning 15 mins strength and conditioning + stretch	Walk / Run 3 x (5 mins walk, 2 mins easy effort run) + stretch	Rest or Cross-training Rest or 45 mins cross-training + stretch (this can be part of a gym class)	Walk / Run 3 x (5 mins walk, 3 mins easy effort run) + stretch	Rest	Cross-training 45 mins cross-training + stretch	Walk 60 mins walk + stretch
Week 3	Rest or Cross-training Rest or 30 mins cross-training Conditioning 15 mins strength and conditioning + stretch	Walk / Run 2 x (5 mins walk, 2 mins easy effort run) + stretch	Rest or Cross-training Rest or 45 mins cross-training + stretch (this can be part of a gym class)	Run 15 mins easy effort run + stretch	Rest	Cross-training 45 mins cross-training + stretch	Rest
Week 4	Rest or Cross-training 30 mins cross-training Conditioning 15 mins strength and conditioning + stretch	Walk / Run 3 x (5 mins walk, 2 mins easy effort run) + stretch	Rest or Cross-training Rest or 45 mins cross-training + stretch (this can be part of a gym class)	Walk / Run 3 x (3 mins walk, 5 mins easy effort run) + stretch	Rest	Cross-training 45 mins cross-training + stretch	Walk / Run 3 x (3 mins walk, 8 mins easy effort run) + stretch
Week 5	Rest or Cross-training 30 mins cross-training Conditioning 15 mins strength and conditioning + stretch	Run 15 mins easy effort run + stretch	Rest or Cross-training Rest or 45 mins cross-training + stretch (this can be part of a gym class)	Walk / Run 3 x (3 mins walk, 5 mins easy effort run) + stretch	Rest	Cross-training 45 mins cross-training + stretch	Walk / Run 3 x (3 mins walk, 8 mins easy effort run) + stretch
Week 6	Rest or Cross-training 40 mins cross-training Conditioning 15 mins strength and conditioning + stretch	Run 20 mins easy effort run + stretch	Rest or Cross-training Rest or 45 mins cross-training + stretch (this can be part of a gym class)	Walk / Run 4 x (3 mins walk, 6 mins easy effort run) + stretch	Rest	Cross-training 45 mins cross-training + stretch	Walk / Run 3 x (3 mins walk, 10 mins easy effort run) + stretch
Week 7	Rest or Cross-training 40 mins cross-training Conditioning 15 mins strength and conditioning + stretch	Run 25 mins easy effort run + stretch	Rest or Cross-training Rest or 45 mins cross-training + stretch (this can be part of a gym class)	Walk / Run 4 x (3 mins walk, 6 mins easy effort run) + stretch	Rest	Cross-training 45 mins cross-training + stretch	Walk / Run 2 x (5 mins walk, 15 mins easy effort run) + stretch
Week 8	Rest or Cross-training 30 mins cross-training Conditioning 15 mins strength and conditioning + stretch	Run 20 mins easy effort run + stretch	Rest	Cross-training 20 mins cross-training (easy effort) + stretch	Rest	5k race or park run 	Rest