

Running Training Plan

Absolute Beginner — 5k or 3 mile running training plan

Goal

From zero running to a continuous run of 5k or 3 miles.

Additional, optional goal

Your first 5k race

Plan duration

8 weeks

This training schedule assumes that you are completely new to running, or returning to running after a long layoff (please see the notes on page 3 before starting).

The aim of this first two weeks is to give you time to get used to running and into the habit of exercising regularly for 30 minutes at a time. This is important, so don't be tempted to skip these weeks, even if they seem easy.

Running flat out won't give you the **aerobic** base you are aiming for so aim for a pace where you can continue to talk or hold a conversation.

By all means adapt the programme to fit your other commitments, but try to keep the runs in the order they appear on the schedule, and keep to the recommended number of rest days in between.

You'll see that each session is followed by a **post-session stretch**. Stretching after a session should be easy on the muscles, be kind to them after your running and if you do full stretch exercises then make that a separate session.

At the end of week two you should be into the routine of running and be able to keep up a good 30 minutes of effort at a time.

Weeks one and two

Day	Warm up	Session	Duration	Notes
Monday		Rest		
Tuesday	5 min brisk walk	jog 1 min / walk 2 mins (repeat x 5)	0.20	post-session stretch
Wednesday		Rest		
Thursday	5 min brisk walk	jog 1 min / walk 2 mins (repeat x 6)	0.23	post-session stretch
Friday		Rest or brisk 20 min walk		
Saturday		Rest		
Sunday	5 min brisk walk	jog 1 min / walk 1 min (repeat x 10)	0.25	post-session stretch
Monday		Rest		
Tuesday	5 min brisk walk	jog 2 mins / walk 2 mins (repeat x 5)	0.25	post-session stretch
Wednesday		rest		
Thursday	5 min brisk walk	jog 2 mins / walk 2 mins (repeat x 6)	0.29	post-session stretch
Friday		Rest or brisk 20 min walk		
Saturday				
Sunday	5 min brisk walk	jog 3 mins / walk 2 mins (repeat x 5)	0.29	post-session stretch

Total exercise time for 14 days 2.31

In the next 2 weeks our aim is to consolidate the exercise habit, build up the time spent running, and reduce the amount of walking. We are continuing to build an [aerobic](#) base.

Weeks three and four

Day	Warm up	Session	Duration	Notes
Monday		Rest		
Tuesday	5 min brisk walk	jog 3 min / walk 2 mins (repeat x 4)	0.25	post-session stretch
Wednesday		Rest		
Thursday	5 min brisk walk	jog 3 min / walk 2 mins (repeat x 5)	0.30	post-session stretch
Friday		Rest or brisk 20 min walk		
Saturday		Rest		
Sunday	5 min brisk walk	jog 4 min / walk 2 mins (repeat x 5)	0.35	post-session stretch
Monday		Rest		
Tuesday	5 min brisk walk	jog 5 mins / walk 2 mins (repeat x 3)	0.26	post-session stretch
Wednesday		Rest		
Thursday	5 min brisk walk	jog 5 mins / walk 2 mins (repeat x 4)	0.33	post-session stretch
Friday		Rest or brisk 20 min walk		
Saturday		Rest		
Sunday	5 min brisk walk	jog 7 mins / walk 2 mins (repeat x 3)	0.32	post-session stretch
Total exercise time for 14 days			3.01	

Weeks 5 and 6 of your schedule focus on more sustained running. You should be starting to feel good about yourself — and so you should! Sustained periods of running 3 or 4 times a week is a great way to stay in shape and look after your health. By the end of week 6 our aim is to have you

running continuously for 1 mile. Remember to run aerobically — at a pace where you can still speak without gasping between every word.

NB: if you are unable to measure out a mile aim to run continuously for 12 – 13 mins

Weeks five and six

Day	Warm up	Session	Duration	Notes
Monday		Rest		
Tuesday	5 min brisk walk	jog 7 min / walk 2 mins (repeat x 3)	0.32	post-session stretch
Wednesday		Rest		
Thursday	5 min brisk walk	jog 7 min / walk 1 mins (repeat x 3)	0.29	post-session stretch
Friday		Rest or brisk 25 min walk		
Saturday		Rest		
Sunday	5 min brisk walk	jog 8 min / walk 2 mins (repeat x 3)	0.35	post-session stretch
Monday		Rest		
Tuesday	5 min brisk walk	jog 8 mins / walk 2 mins (repeat x 3)	0.35	post-session stretch
Wednesday		Rest		
Thursday	5 min brisk walk	jog 10 mins / walk 2 mins (repeat x 3)	0.41	post-session stretch
Friday		Rest or brisk 30 min walk		
Saturday				
Sunday	5 min brisk walk	jog 1 mile / walk 2 mins (repeat x 2)	0.33	post-session stretch
Total exercise time for 14 days			3.25	

If you have reached this stage CONGRATULATIONS! You will have already made big improvements to your fitness level by the time you get to the end of week 6. Weeks 7 and 8 will aim to progress you

to the point where you can run 2 miles and then 3 miles continuously. With a tiny bit more effort you could extend this to 5km, and could think about entering your first event.

Weeks seven and eight

Day	Warm up	Session	Duration	Notes
Monday		Rest		
Tuesday	5 min brisk walk	jog 12 min / walk 2 mins (repeat x 3)	0.47	post-session stretch
Wednesday		Rest		
Thursday	5 min brisk walk	jog 12 min / walk 1 min (repeat x 3)	0.44	post-session stretch
Friday		Rest or brisk 20 min walk		
Saturday		Rest		
Sunday	5 min brisk walk	jog 2 miles / walk 5 mins to cool down	0.34	post-session stretch
Monday		Rest		
Tuesday	5 min brisk walk	jog 15 mins / walk 2 mins (repeat x 2)	0.39	post-session stretch
Wednesday		Rest		
Thursday	5 min brisk walk	jog 15 mins / walk 1 mins (repeat x 2)	0.37	post-session stretch
Friday		Rest or brisk 30 min walk		
Saturday		Rest		
Sunday	5 min brisk walk	jog 3 miles / walk 2 mins	0.43	post-session stretch
Total exercise time for 14 days			4.04	

WELL DONE! You did it!

Now what? Well — you could now enter a 5k event and be confident of going the distance (you could repeat weeks 7 & 8 just to make sure if you wish).

When and if you are ready you could consider experimenting with speed and /or distance. You might want to try a 10k for example, or you might want to run your 5k a bit quicker.

Special Notes

This training plan is for beginners, but it is not for everyone new to running. Some people should speak to their doctor before undertaking any form of physical exercise, in particular, those who are (or have):

- More than 20% over their ideal weight
- More than 40 years old
- A smoker or ex-smoker
- Pregnant
- Personal or family history of heart trouble
- High blood pressure, diabetes or other medical condition