

How to Train to Run Your First 5K

Resource: www.running.about.com

Running a 5K is an excellent goal for new runners. You'll get lots of motivation, as well as enjoyment, from participating in a race, and 5K (3.1 miles) is the perfect distance for first-timers. Even if you're a couch potato, you can be ready for a 5K in a couple of months.

Below is an eight-week 5K training schedule to help get you to the finish line. It assumes you can already run at least a mile. If you've never run before, follow this step-by-step learn to run plan: [4 Weeks to Run a Mile](#). If you can only run for 5 minutes at a time, you may want to try this [Run/Walk 5K Training Schedule](#). If those 5K programs don't seem challenging enough for your running level, try this [advanced beginner 5K training schedule](#). All three plans can be found on www.running.about.com.

Notes about the 5K training schedule:

Mondays and Fridays: Mondays and Fridays are rest days. Rest is critical to your recovery and injury prevention efforts, so don't skip your rest days. You'll also get mentally burned out if you run every day with no breaks.

Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays: After you warm up, run at a comfortable pace for the designated mileage. Make sure you cool down and stretch after your run.

Each week, you'll increase your runs by a quarter mile, which is a lap on most outdoor tracks. If you usually run on roads and you're not sure how far you run, you can figure out the mileage by using MapMyRun.com. Or, you could drive your route in your car and measure the mileage using your car odometer.

Wednesdays: Do a cross-training (CT) activity (biking, swimming, elliptical trainer, or other cardio activity) at easy to moderate effort for 30 to 40 minutes. Strength-training is also very beneficial for runners. If you're feeling very sluggish or sore, take a rest day.

Sundays: This is an active recovery day. Your run should be at an easy, comfortable pace. Or, you can do a run/walk combination or cross-train (CT).

Note:

You can switch days to accommodate your schedule. So if you're busy on another day and prefer to workout on a Monday or Friday, it's fine to swap a rest day for a run day. Check with your doctor before starting any new exercise, especially if you have any preconditions.

5K Training Schedule for Beginners

Week	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
1	Rest	1 mi run	CT or Rest	1 mi run	Rest	1.5 mi run	20-30 min run or CT
2	Rest	1.5 mi run	CT or Rest	1.5 mi run	Rest	1.75 mi run	20-30 min run or CT
3	Rest	2 mi run	CT or Rest	1.5 mi run	Rest	2 mi run	20-30 min run or CT
4	Rest	2.25 mi run	CT or Rest	1.5 mi run	Rest	2.25 mi run	25-35 min run or CT
5	Rest	2.5 mi run	CT or Rest	2 mi run	Rest	2.5 mi run	25-35 min run or CT
6	Rest	2.75 mi run	CT	2 mi run	Rest	2.75 mi run	35-40 min run or CT
7	Rest	3 mi run	CT	2 mi run	Rest	3 mi run	35-40 min run or CT
8	Rest	3 mi run	CT or Rest	2 mi run	Rest	Rest	5K Race!