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Training Plan

5k

3 days/week

Intro

Our Plans

Our Training Plans are designed by Olympic finalist Andy Baddeley in collaboration with Andy Hobdell, who has coached runners to the last three Olympics at distances from 1,500m to the marathon. Andy also works with runners of all abilities to help them achieve their goals, whether that's completing the distance or dipping under a target time.

Your Current Training Level

It's really important that you don't jump straight into a new training plan without carefully assessing your current level of training. **This training plan is based on running three times per week.** Whilst the paces are adaptable to your target race goal, the overall volume of training should only be attempted if you've already built up sensibly to this frequency of running. Check out one of our other plans if you're looking for a larger time commitment (4 days/week or 5-6 days/week).

Flexibility

We've laid out our training plan to give you the optimum balance of different types of training and recovery. We know that life sometimes gets in the way and that you might not always be able to do exactly what is planned. If you have a tough day and can't face a planned interval workout, just getting out for an easy run is absolutely fine. You can move the days around to fit with your life and, similarly, if you need to miss a day, that's fine too. Don't panic and try to make up for lost time - **try to be sensible and remember that cramming lots of training into back-to-back days without any recovery could lead to injury or illness.**

Setting Pace Goals

Listen to your body. Choose an overall target for your 5k race that is realistic - you'll soon find out in sessions if the target pace you've picked is a stretch too far. Don't be afraid to adjust once you've done a few sessions; if you can't complete the workouts at the planned pace, then the pace is too hard at this stage.

Terminology (i)

Intervals

You're going to need to be able to run repeated efforts at your target race pace with relatively short recovery. Interval training workouts should be the hardest efforts of your week. We've given intervals as a set time or distance depending on the workout and also provided the recovery you should take after each interval. Think about an effort level, or Rate of Perceived Exertion (RPE) of 8 or 9 out of 10.

Long Runs

Yes, you're only racing for 5km, but you still need to include longer runs. Everyone has a different definition of what they think of as LONG, but in this context, we'll be aiming for at least 60 minutes.

Easy and Steady Runs

There's a distinction between steady and easy runs. Both of these are easier than threshold runs. On some days in the plan, you will see 'Easy to steady run'; this means you should listen to your body and run at a sensible intensity depending on whether you feel tired or fresh. For easy runs, aim for an RPE of 3-4 out of 10. For steady runs, you're looking for 5-6.

Terminology (ii)

Strides

If you're feeling okay, after an easier run can be a great time to do some strides. That's when you run around 100m at a faster pace (think about faster than your target 5km pace), then walk or jog slowly, then repeat. They're not all-out sprints, but should be controlled and are a fantastic opportunity to think about good running form when you're not too fatigued. Build into them gently, accelerating for the first 30m or so, then holding good form and coming to a gradual stop after you've run 100m.

Rest/Recovery

In the interval sessions in this plan, as well as some of the threshold runs, we've provided rest or recovery times. Where two times are given, the longer one will be the rest you take between sets and the shorter one is the rest after each interval. We'd always advocate jogging your recoveries if possible, or at the very least walking to keep yourself moving. Stay tall to get the air in, and resist the temptation to bend over with your hands on your knees.

Paces

Within interval and threshold sessions, we've provided guides for what pace to run, to help gauge your efforts. Your '5km pace' will be your target 5km pace that you're using this plan to work towards. You can use that pace or finish time to calculate your mile, 3km, 10km, half marathon and marathon paces using an online race predictor. Alternatively, you may already have run one or more of those distances in a race and can therefore use your actual times to set your paces.

The Plan

Warm Up

For easy and steady runs, start slower with shorter strides and an increased cadence until you feel like you're warmed up and are moving nicely. **For the interval sessions and threshold runs, make sure you do a thorough warm up before starting your hard efforts** - this should be a minimum of 5 minutes easy running and ideally would include some basic drills or dynamic stretches. Head to therunningchannel.com for videos to talk you through them if you need some tips!

Cool Down

We'd recommend some gentle stretching and activations after your runs whilst you're still warm. For the tougher workouts, we would also suggest a cool down jog (again aim for at least 5 minutes) before this.

Days Of The Week

We have labelled the three weekly runs as Day 1, 2 and 3 as opposed to assigning them to specific days of the week. We want this plan to fit into your life, and have left it up to you to find the time in your schedule. Do bear in mind that you may want to have recovery days between runs where possible.

Intensities

We've colour coded each day's training so that you can see at a glance when the easiest and hardest days are.

Easiest

Hardest

The Plan

Week

Day 1

Day 2

Day 3

1

Easy to steady run
30 mins
Easy/steady
Plus 8 x 100m strides

Intervals
10x 1min
Run at 5km pace
1min recovery

Long run
45-60 mins
Start easy
Finish steady

2

Easy to steady run
30 mins
Easy/steady
Plus 8 x 100m strides

Intervals
3x (3,2,1 min)
Start at 10km pace
Progress as you feel
1min & 3min recovery

Long run
45-60 mins
Start easy
Finish steady

3

Easy to steady run
30 mins
Easy/steady
Plus 8 x 100m strides

Intervals
5,4,3,2,1 min
Start at 10km pace
Progress as you feel
1min jog recovery

Long run
60 mins
Start easy
Finish steady

The Plan

Week

Day 1

Day 2

Day 3

4

Easy to steady run
8km
Easy/steady
Plus 8 x 100m strides

Intervals
5x 1km
Run @ 5km pace
2min recovery

Long run
60 mins
Start easy
Finish steady

5

Easy to steady run
8km
Easy/steady
Plus 8 x 100m strides

Intervals
4x 30s strides (60s recovery)
3min recovery
1 mile time trial
4min jog recovery
1 mile @ half marathon pace

Long run
60 mins
Easy

6

Easy to steady run
8km
Easy/steady
Plus 8 x 100m strides

Intervals
4x 800m @ Mile pace
With 2min recovery
3min recovery
6x 30s strides
With 30s recovery

Long run
60 mins
Easy/steady

The Plan

Week

Day 1

Day 2

Day 3

7

Easy to steady run
8km
Easy/steady
Plus 8 x 100m strides

Intervals
8 x 3mins
Alternate between 10km
and 5km pace
90s recovery

Long run
60 mins
Start easy
Finish steady

8

Easy to steady run
8km
Easy/steady
Plus 8 x 100m strides

Intervals
4x 100m strides
Walk back recovery
3mins recovery
3km time trial

Long run
60 mins
Easy/Steady

9

Easy to steady run
8km
Easy/steady
Plus 8 x 100m strides

Intervals
3x (1km, 400m)
1km @ 3km pace
400m @ Mile pace
200m jog after 1km
3min recovery after 400m

Long run
60 mins
Easy

The Plan

Week

Day 1

Day 2

Day 3

10

Easy run
8km
Easy

Plus 8 x 100m strides

Intervals*

6x 1min
Faster than 5km pace
1min jog recovery

* Ensure at least one rest day
after this before your race

RACE

Nothing New On Race Day

You've had ten weeks to practise your warm up routine, what you like to eat and drink and which shoes and clothing you feel most comfortable in - don't change anything on race day!

Pacing Is Everything

The workouts in our plan make sure you're comfortable running both faster and slower than your target race pace. They should also have given you a good idea of what each pace feels like, so don't be tempted to get carried away and go too hard too early!

Enjoy It

Training is hard work and races are where you get the chance to reap the rewards. Enjoy the experience and let us know how you get on, we'd love to hear from you!

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