

## On Your Own Beginner 5k Training Plan

Starting your running journey is exciting, but it's important not to overdo it. Rushing into too much running too quickly can lead to setbacks. Take it slow and give your body time to adjust.

A 5k is an awesome goal for beginners. Aim to train for 10-15 weeks to build up your endurance. The best way to start is with the run/walk method. Begin by walking until you can consistently do so for 10-15 minutes. Then, mix in short running intervals with walking. You might only run a few minutes at first, and that's okay! Progress takes time. Stick to the run/walk pattern 3-4 days a week, and make sure to include rest days to let your body recover. Remember, building up to a 5k is a journey.

Always warm up with a brief walk before your run and cool down with a walk afterward. Enjoy the process and celebrate each milestone along the way!

Remember to hydrate with water and nutrient-rich foods post-run. This will assist in post-workout recovery. Avoid sugary energy drinks, they aren't necessary in a well-balanced diet.

When you are running you are running comfortably so you are never short of breath. You should be able to sing or carry on a conversation with a friend. Speaking of friends – running is a great activity to do together, and the social aspect increases the benefits of the activity – so grab a friend and get out there!

You can use the Gymboss Interval Timer app to keep track of the run/walk timing. There is also a physical device for ~\$20 you can buy if you do not want to carry your phone.

### **Things outside of running you need to focus on:**

**Sleep** It's the most important aspect of training after getting time on your feet. Target at least 8 hours every night.

**Hydration** Drink to thirst when you are awake and during your run, plan to drink every 20-30 minutes so you don't drink a lot at once and end up with a sloshy stomach. Don't drink simply because you are hot. Sports drinks like Gatorade are not necessary unless you are not doing back to back hour long workouts in a single day.

**Nutrition** You only need to eat during a run if it is over 60 minutes, which will be rare for a beginner. Regular, healthy meals, with a small snack like a banana or granola bar about 30 minutes prior to practice should be sufficient. A sweet snack, like fruit snacks or gummy bears, is appropriate just prior to a race. Seek help from a registered dietician if you have concerns about your diet.

**Shoes.** A pair of lightweight trainers is all you need. Carbon plates shoes are expensive and unnecessary. Seek input from the team at Fleet Feet in Lakeside Village if you have questions.

**Heat Illness** is detrimental to performance and your health, and heatstroke can result in permanent disability or death. You need to spend time outside to be prepared to run outside. The Road Runners Club of America has these tips for hot weather running:

- Understand heat index dangers: Avoid running outside if the heat is above 98.6 degrees and the humidity is above 70-80%. If the humidity in the air is so high that it prevents the process of evaporation of sweat from the skin, you can quickly overheat and literally cook your insides from an elevated body temperature.
- Know the signs of heat illness: If you become dizzy, nauseated, have the chills, or cease to sweat.... STOP RUNNING! Find shade, drink water, and if you do not feel better, get home or call for help.
- Know the signs of heat stroke: Symptoms of heatstroke include mental changes, such as confusion, delirium, or unconsciousness, and skin that is red, hot, and dry, even under the armpits.
- Get help immediately if you suffer heat stroke: Heatstroke is a life-threatening medical emergency, requiring emergency medical treatment. Call 911.
- Check with your doctor: If you have heart or respiratory problems or you are on any medications as these can impact your ability to tolerate heat while exercising.
- Dress for the weather: Wear light colored, breathable fabrics. Avoid long sleeves and long pants. Never wear a sweat suit in high heat in an effort to lose water weight...see above about the dangers of heat stroke.
- Apply sunscreen: 15spf or more can help protect your skin from sunburn. Having 5 or more sunburns doubles your risk for melanoma (skincancer.org)

**Aches/Pain/Injuries.** If you are new to running, it may take time to distinguish between being sore versus a pain that means you should STOP. Some soreness is normal if you are a newer runner, but it shouldn't stop you from doing normal daily activities. Most runners experience overuse setbacks from trying to do too much, in too little time, or at too fast a pace. Take things slow and unless you do something like twist an ankle or hurt something doing something other than running, you can usually continue if you slow down, reduce the time, and let the pain guide you on how much you should do while you rehab.

Once you can comfortably walk for 15 minutes then follow this plan to build your endurance.

You will run for total time. There is a 5 minute walking warm up and cooldown and a 30 minute run/walk/run ‘workout’. If you find a run/walk/run interval that you like – you can continue to use it! It’s up to you if your build on this plan, and continue to progress to the longer duration runs on the following pages.

**Remember – run does not mean sprint! Your run pace is unique to you, and is a different pace than your walk.**

Week	Days per Week	Run Walk Interval
1	2	warmup up walk for 5 minutes run 1 minute, walk 4 minutes for 30 minutes cooldown walk for 5 minutes
2	2	warmup up walk for 5 minutes run 1.5 minutes, walk 3.5 minutes for 30 minutes cooldown walk for 5 minutes
3	2	warmup up walk for 5 minutes run 2 minutes, walk 3 minutes for 30 minutes cooldown walk for 5 minutes
4	3	warmup up walk for 5 minutes run 2.5 minutes, walk 2.5 minutes for 30 minutes cooldown walk for 5 minutes
5	3	warmup up walk for 5 minutes run 3 minutes, walk 2 minutes for 30 minutes cooldown walk for 5 minutes
6	3	warmup up walk for 5 minutes run 4 minutes, walk 1 minute for 30 minutes cooldown walk for 5 minutes
7	3	warmup up walk for 5 minutes run 5 minutes, walk 1 minute for 30 minutes cooldown walk for 5 minutes
8	4	warmup up walk for 5 minutes run 7 minutes, walk 1 minute for 30 minutes cooldown walk for 5 minutes
9	4	warmup up walk for 5 minutes run 9 minutes, walk 1 minute for 30 minutes cooldown walk for 5 minutes
10	4	warmup up walk for 5 minutes run for 30 minutes cooldown walk for 5 minutes

If you can comfortably run or run/walk/run for 30 minutes, then follow this plan to continue to build your endurance.

You can continue to use run/walk/run intervals, or you can run straight. Your pace should be comfortable. Do not add any faster running until you have been running for six months. This gives your muscles and tendons time to adapt to the sport and you are less likely to suffer an injury or setback.

Repeat this 11 week cycle, keeping the effort comfortable. You may notice that you can run faster at the same effort. This is the compounding result of consistency and your body adapting to the training.

<b>Week</b>	<b>Monday</b>	<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>Thursday</b>	<b>Saturday long run (minutes)</b>
1	rest, walk or 20 minute EASY run	20-30 minute EASY run	20-30 minute EASY run	30
2	rest, walk or 20 minute EASY run	20-30 minute EASY run	20-30 minute EASY run	35
3	rest, walk or 20 minute EASY run	20-30 minute EASY run	20-30 minute EASY run	40
4	rest, walk or 20 minute EASY run	30-40 minute EASY run	30-40 minute EASY run	45
5	rest, walk or 20 minute EASY run	30-40 minute EASY run	30-40 minute EASY run	35
6	rest, walk or 20 minute EASY run	30-40 minute EASY run	30-40 minute EASY run	45
7	rest, walk or 20 minute EASY run	40-50 minute EASY run	40-50 minute EASY run	50
8	rest, walk or 20 minute EASY run	40-50 minute EASY run	40-50 minute EASY run	55
9	rest, walk or 20 minute EASY run	40-50 minute EASY run	40-50 minute EASY run	60
10	rest, walk or 20 minute EASY run	50-60 minute EASY run	50-60 minute EASY run	30
11	rest, walk or 20 minute EASY run	20-30 minute EASY run	20-30 minute EASY run	5k

Once you have been running for six months you can add some spice to your runs by including some faster intervals. Explanations for the Tuesday runs are on the following pages.

<b>Week</b>	<b>Monday</b>	<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>Thursday</b>	<b>Saturday long run (minutes)</b>
1	rest, walk or 30 minute EASY run	30-40 minute EASY run	30-40 minute EASY run	30
2	rest, walk or 30 minute EASY run	Hill Repeats 1	30-40 minute EASY run	35
3	rest, walk or 30 minute EASY run	Hill Repeats 2	40-50 minute EASY run	40
4	rest, walk or 30 minute EASY run	Hill Repeats 3	40-50 minute EASY run	45
5	rest, walk or 30 minute EASY run	30-40 minute EASY run	40-50 minute EASY run	35
6	rest, walk or 30 minute EASY run	Intervals 1	50-60 minute EASY run	45
7	rest, walk or 30 minute EASY run	Intervals 2	50-60 minute EASY run	50
8	rest, walk or 30 minute EASY run	Intervals 3	50-60 minute EASY run	55
9	rest, walk or 30 minute EASY run	Intervals 4	50-60 minute EASY run	60
10	rest, walk or 30 minute EASY run	Intervals 5	40-60 minute EASY run	30
11	rest, walk or 30 minute EASY run	Intervals 6	20-30 minute EASY run	5k

**HILL REPEATS** - There is less impact running uphill so it's easier on your joints and connective tissues. Hills "force" you to run with better form, reinforcing a more efficient stride. Running up steep grades builds power more safely than running fast on flat terrain.

Hill repeats are different than incorporating hills into your easy runs (you should incorporate rolling terrain as much as possible).

**Warning!** Because they are a strength session in disguise, like speed work on a track, hill repeats are an injury risk. Monitor your mechanics and you start to feel sloppy, stop.

Don't want to use time? Use the same hill and drop a rock or use some other marker (mailbox, light pole, house) over the four weeks. The hills running from Lake Hollingsworth to S. Florida Ave used for the LRC Thursday Hill Run are about 4.5% grade and are a good choice for hill repeat workouts.

Hill Repeats 1	10 - 20 minute warm up 3 x 45 seconds uphill, walk down 3 x 30 seconds uphill, walk down 3 x 15 seconds uphill, walk down 5 - 20 minute cool down
Hill Repeats 2	10 - 20 minute warm up 3 x 60 seconds uphill, walk down (stand until you are fully recovered) 3 x 45 seconds uphill, walk down 3 x 30 seconds uphill, walk down 5 - 20 minute cool down
Hill Repeats 3	10 - 20 minute warm up 3 x 30 seconds uphill, walk down 3 x 45 seconds uphill, walk down 3 x 60 seconds uphill, walk down (stand until you are fully recovered) 5 - 20 minute cool down
Hill Repeats 4	10 - 20 minute warm up 6 x 60 seconds uphill, walk down (stand until you are fully recovered) 5 - 20 minute cool down

**INTERVALS** - this six week training block will focus on race pace specific work. This comes at the end of endurance and strength work to fine tune your effort toward a race or time trial.

Intervals 1	10 - 20 minute warm up 4 to 6 x (2 minutes at moderately hard effort, 2 minute jog or walk) 5 - 20 minute cool down
Intervals 2	10 - 20 minute warm up 6 to 8 x (2 minutes at moderately hard effort, 2 minute jog or walk) 5 - 20 minute cool down
Intervals 3	10 - 20 minute warm up 8 to 10 x (2 minutes at moderately hard effort, 2 minute jog or walk) 5 - 20 minute cool down
Intervals 4	10 - 20 minute warm up 6 x (2 minutes at moderately hard effort, 2 minute jog or walk) 4 x (1 minute at moderately hard effort, 1 minute jog or walk) 5 - 20 minute cool down
Intervals 5	5-10 minute warm up 8 x (1 minute at moderately hard effort, 1 minute jog or walk) 5 - 10 minute cool down
Intervals 6	5-10 minute warm up 4 x (1 minute at moderately hard effort, 1 minute jog or walk) 5 - 10 minute cool down