

Novice Runners

Training for Your First 10K....

HOW MUCH DO YOU NEED TO TRAIN TO RUN YOUR FIRST 10K RACE? If you possess a good level of fitness you could probably run 6 miles on very little training. But if you've made the decision to run a 10K race for the first time you might as well do it right. Following is an eight-week training schedule to help get you to the finish line of your first 10K.

To do this 10K program, you should have no major health problems, should be in reasonably good shape, and should have done at least some jogging or walking. If running 2.5 miles for your first workout seems too difficult, you might want to begin by walking, rather than running.

Stretch: This is some easy stretching of your running muscles. This is good for any day, particularly after you finish your run.

Strength: Strength training could consist of push-ups, pull-ups, use of free weights or working out with various machines at a health club. If you're not a member of a gym you could easily do these at home. Runners generally benefit if they combine light weights with a high number of repetitions, rather than pumping very heavy iron.

Running Workouts: Don't worry about how fast you run; just cover the distance--or approximately the distance suggested. Ideally, you should be able to run at a pace that allows you to converse comfortably while you do so. This isn't always easy for beginners, so don't push too hard or too fast.

Cross-Training: This can be swimming, cycling, walking, elliptical trainer, or any other form of aerobic training. Feel free to throw in some jogging as well if you're feeling good. What cross-training you select depends on your personal preference. Cross-training days should be considered *easy* days that allow you to recover from the running you do the rest of the week.

Rest: The most important day in any running program is rest. Rest days are as important as training days. They give your muscles time to recover so you can run again. Actually, your muscles will build in strength as you rest. Without recovery days, you will not improve.

Long Runs: The longest runs of the 8-week schedule are planned for Sundays, since you probably have more time to do them on the weekends. If Sunday isn't a convenient day for your long runs, feel free to do them on Saturday--or any other day of the week for that matter. What pace should you run? Go slow. There is no advantage to going fast during your long runs, even for experienced runners.

Walking: Walking is an excellent exercise that a lot of runners overlook in their training. You can walk during your running workouts any time you feel tired or need a break, or alternate between the two by running for 5 minutes and walking for 5 minutes.

The following schedule is only a guide. If necessary, you can make minor modifications to suit your work and family schedule.

Training for a 10K

Beginners Program

Week	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat	Sun	Miles
1	Rest / Stretch	2.5m run	30 min cross train	2m run + strength	Rest	40 min cross train	3m run	7.5m
2	Rest / Stretch	2.5m run	30 min cross train	2m run + strength	Rest	40 min cross train	3.5m run	8m
3	Rest / Stretch	2.5m run	35 min cross train	2m run + strength	Rest	50 min cross train	4m run	8.5m
4	Rest / Stretch	3m run	35 min cross train	2m run + strength	Rest	50 min cross train	4m run	9m
5	Rest / Stretch	3m run	40 min cross train	2m run + strength	Rest	60 min cross train	4.5m run	9.5m
6	Rest / Stretch	3m run	40 min cross train	2m run + strength	Rest	60 min cross train	5m run	10m
7	Rest / Stretch	3m run	45 min cross train	2m run + strength	Rest	60 min cross train	5.5m run	10.5m
8	Rest / Stretch	3m run	30 min cross train	2m run	Rest	Rest	RACE	11m