

RUNNER'S WORLD

TRAINING PLAN

5K · Break 30 Minutes

This eight-week plan is designed for runners who want to finish a 5K in 30 minutes, or an average pace of 9:39 per mile. It features four days of running per week, including easy runs, interval runs, and tempo runs, plus long runs of four to seven miles. Weekly mileage starts at 13 miles per week and peaks at 20 miles per week two weeks before the race. Paces for each workout are prescribed.

WEEK	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
1	Day 1 Rest	Day 2 2 Miles Easy	Day 3 4 Miles Easy	Day 4 Rest	Day 5 3 Miles Easy	Day 6 Rest	Day 7 4 Miles LSD
2	Day 8 Rest	Day 9 2 Miles Easy	Day 10 4 Miles Easy	Day 11 Rest	Day 12 3 Miles Easy	Day 13 Rest	Day 14 5 Miles LSD
3	Day 15 Rest	Day 16 3 Miles Easy	Day 17 4 Miles with 2 Miles at Tempo	Day 18 Rest	Day 19 3 Miles Easy	Day 20 Rest	Day 21 4 Miles Easy
4	Day 22 Rest	Day 23 3 Miles Easy	Day 24 4 Miles with 2 Miles at Tempo	Day 25 Rest	Day 26 3 Miles Easy	Day 27 Rest	Day 28 6 Miles LSD
5	Day 29 Rest	Day 30 3 Miles Easy	Day 31 5 Miles with 3 Miles at Tempo	Day 32 Rest	Day 33 4 Miles Easy	Day 34 Rest	Day 35 4 Miles LSD
6	Day 36 Rest	Day 37 4 Miles Easy	Day 38 5 Miles with 3 Miles at Tempo	Day 39 Rest	Day 40 4 Miles Easy	Day 41 Rest	Day 42 7 Miles LSD
7	Day 43 Rest	Day 44 3 Miles Easy	Day 45 4 Miles with 2 Miles at Tempo	Day 46 Rest	Day 47 3 Miles Easy	Day 48 Rest	Day 49 4 Miles LSD

WEEK	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
8	Day 50 Rest	Day 51 4 Miles Easy	Day 52 3 Miles with 1 Mile at Tempo	Day 53 Rest	Day 54 2 Miles Easy	Day 55 Rest	Day 56 Race Day

WEEK 1

Day 1, Monday · Rest

Welcome to the Runner's World Break 30 Minutes 5K Plan. This eight-week plan is designed to help you cross the finish line of a 5K in 30 minutes.

Today, your training kicks off with a day of rest. This week you'll have two more rest days, three easy runs, and a longer run of four miles.

If you want to add miles, do it on an easy day. But don't extend any run by more than one or two miles, or add miles on Saturday (the day before your long run). Doing too much too soon is a recipe for injury.

Day 2, Tuesday · 2 Miles Easy

When you head out today, focus on maintaining a comfortable, conversational rhythm. These easy days are meant to strengthen muscles, build endurance, and burn fat, but the key is to keep the effort conservative so you're not worn out for the hard workouts ahead. You want to finish each run feeling like you have the energy to run longer. (Pace: 11:58/mile)

Day 3, Wednesday · 4 Miles Easy

Run at your relaxed pace today, or cross-train on a bike or an elliptical trainer. You may feel like the prescribed pace is too easy. But the key is to take the easy runs easy so you can build your fitness without getting injured. (Pace: 11:58/mile)

Day 4, Thursday · Rest

Ideally, on rest days you should do no exercise at all. But it's okay to cross-train with a no-impact activity like stretching, yoga, or swimming.

Day 5, Friday · 3 Miles Easy

On easy days, cross-training should involve a sustained aerobic effort with an activity like cycling or using an elliptical trainer for the same amount of time you'd spend on the day's mileage. If you plan to incorporate cross-training into your preparation and want to try a new activity, be sure to do it in this early base-building stage of training. In the weeks before the race, you'll want to avoid trying new activities because of the risk of injury so close to your goal event. (Pace: 11:58/mile)

Day 6, Saturday · Rest

When you first start training, it's easy to think that more is better. But whenever you run instead of resting, or go harder than you should, you raise your risk of exhaustion, burnout, and injury. Stay focused on your bigger objective of getting to the starting line healthy, and staying energized for your quality workouts. This will help keep your training more consistent and increase the chances that you'll reach your race-day goals.

Day 7, Sunday · 4 Miles LSD

Sundays will be reserved for long, slow distance (LSD) runs to build your endurance. Long runs improve aerobic capacity, develop your strength, and get you accustomed to spending a longer time on your feet. Don't worry too much about your pace on long runs; just focus on the distance you want to cover for the day. If you feel like taking short walk breaks, that's okay. The goal is to stay on your feet for a given distance. (Pace: 11:58/mile)

WEEK 2

Day 8, Monday · Rest

Welcome to week two of training. This week your training will be nearly identical to last week, with three short runs and three days of rest. Your long run will inch up to five miles.

At this stage, focus on establishing a running routine that blends well into the rhythm of your daily life. Figure out what times of day are most convenient to run, and find a variety of safe, traffic-free, and convenient routes that you can take on a regular basis.

Day 9, Tuesday · 2 Miles Easy

If you're an early morning runner, be sure to prep for your run the night before. Set your automatic coffeemaker to brew before you wake. Turn off the computer and TV at least 30 minutes before you hit the sack. And be sure to eat well: Have slow-digesting carbs like broccoli, beans, and lentils. If you skip dinner or eat fast-digesting carbs like rice, bread, or sugary desserts, your glycogen levels will be depleted, making it even harder to muster the energy to get up in the morning. (Pace: 11:58/mile)

Day 10, Wednesday · 4 Miles Easy

As much as possible, try to incorporate hills into the early stages of your training. Hills build leg and lung power. You won't feel fast going up hills, but you'll feel strong. Pick a variety of short and long hills to keep your mind and muscles engaged. Just focus on sustaining an even, steady effort. (Pace: 11:58/mile)

Day 11, Thursday · Rest

Worn-out or ill-fitting shoes can lead to injury. It's best to replace your shoes every 300 to 500 miles. Go to a specialty running store, where trained professionals will evaluate your gait, recommend the shoes that offer the fit and support that your feet need, and let you take them for a test run.

Day 12, Friday · 3 Miles Easy

As your training gets underway, invest in shirts, shorts, pants, underwear, jog bras, and socks that are made of technical, lightweight fabrics that wick away moisture. These fabrics, which go by names like Dri-Fit and CoolMax, help prevent blisters and chafing. (Pace: 11:58/mile)

Day 13, Saturday · Rest

Don't worry about losing your fitness on rest days. Rest builds strength, reduces fatigue, and prevents injuries. Since most running injuries come from overuse, a day off at least once a week can help prevent a three- or four-week forced layoff down the line due to a strain or a stress fracture.

Day 14, Sunday · 5 Miles LSD

You may have to dash from your run to the rest of your day, but it's important to make time for a postrun routine of stretching, icing, and refueling. Slow your pace the last mile of your run, and then walk for a few minutes before stopping. (If you come to an abrupt stop, you may feel weary and lightheaded.) After you cool down, try to stretch and ice trouble spots. Then, within an hour, consume a snack with healthy carbs to refill your glycogen stores, and protein to repair your muscles. (Pace: 11:58/mile)

Day 15, Monday · Rest

Welcome to week three of training. This week you'll have three short runs and three days of rest. On Sunday, your long run will drop to four miles. On Wednesday, you'll do your first tempo run, during which you'll practice holding a faster pace for a longer distance. This will help you develop the speed endurance you'll need for the race.

To keep cool on hot days, hit the trails instead of pounding the pavement. Hard surfaces can retain a lot of heat, and the shade from trees will help you keep down your core temperature.

Day 16, Tuesday · 3 Miles Easy

When you're hitting the road, don't forget the sunscreen, no matter the season. Use a product with an SPF of at least 30 that protects against UVA and UVB rays that says "broad spectrum." Apply it 20 minutes before heading out. (Pace: 11:58/mile)

Day 17, Wednesday · 4 Miles with 2 Miles at Tempo

1-mile warmup
2 miles at tempo pace (10:00/mile)
1-mile cooldown

Today you'll do a tempo run. After a one-mile warmup, run two miles at your tempo pace (10:00/mile), then cool down with one mile of easy running. Your tempo pace should feel hard but controlled. You won't be able to talk comfortably at your tempo pace, but it should not feel as if you're racing.

Day 18, Thursday · Rest

Rest today to recover from yesterday's tempo run. If you need to recharge your training, map out a new route. Trying new courses will introduce your body to different elevations and can liven up your staid routine. Check out our routefinder at runnersworld.com/routes.

Day 19, Friday · 3 Miles Easy

Try these quick prerun snacks: a handful of low-fiber cereal, half a bagel with honey, graham crackers with a teaspoon of honey, one cup of fat free yogurt, and a banana with a handful of nuts. (Pace: 11:58/mile)

Day 20, Saturday · Rest

If you're looking for a good cross-training activity, jump in the pool. Swimming builds strength in the upper body and core, which will help you maintain good form during races and hard workouts. To keep the workout interesting, try changing strokes each lap, or do intervals, in which you swim hard for a lap, rest for 30 seconds, then sprint again and try to beat your time. If it's been awhile since you've been in the pool, sign up for a swim-fitness class to refine your technique.

Day 21, Sunday · 4 Miles Easy

Good running form can help prevent injuries and make running feel easier, especially on these longer runs. Try to run tall and avoid hunching over. Keep your chin up and look straight ahead. Relax your shoulders and shake out your arms to stay loose. (Pace: 11:58/mile)

Day 22, Monday · Rest

This is week four of training. This week will follow a similar pattern to last week with three days of rest, two short runs, and a tempo run. Your long run will extend to six miles.

If you're training in cold weather, dress as if it's 20 degrees warmer. You'll warm up quickly and start sweating once you get outside, and you don't want to risk overheating.

Day 23, Tuesday · 3 Miles Easy

If you're feeling energetic on an easy day, you may have a tough time holding back. Resist the temptation to speed up; it's better to save your energy for the hard workouts. To keep your easy runs relaxed, hook up with a friend who runs at a slower pace or take along the dog. You'll be more likely to take it easy and enjoy the run more. (Pace: 11:58/mile)

Day 24, Wednesday · 4 Miles with 2 Miles at Tempo

1-mile warmup
2 miles at tempo pace (10:00/mile)
1-mile cooldown

It's okay to listen to music on the run. Studies have shown that on top of helping athletes work harder, music also reduces perceived exertion and gives your mood a boost. Put on your running tunes before you go out, and you'll be more likely to lace up and get out the door. Runner's World has collected playlists from the nation's top runners, along with songs that scientists have proven will help you pick up the tempo. You can find the perfect sound track for your next run on the playlists page on runnersworld.com/music.

Day 25, Thursday · Rest

Deal with blisters before they become painful enough to throw off your gait. Covering your blister with a Band-Aid or moleskin is ideal. But if home is miles away, adjust your laces. Tightening them could stop heel slippage (a common cause of blisters); loosening them could take pressure off a hot spot.

Day 26, Friday · 3 Miles Easy

If you're trying to shed pounds as you train, consistency is key. Try to consume about the same number of calories on weekends as on weekdays. If you feast on whatever you want on Saturdays and Sundays, you'll cancel out five days' worth of healthy eating. (Pace: 11:58/mile)

Day 27, Saturday · Rest

Shin splints are common among beginners and seasoned runners alike, and that soreness and pain along the shinbone tends to come on after ramping up mileage or intensity too much without enough rest. Running on uneven road surfaces or wearing worn-out shoes can also bring them on. If you feel shin splints coming on, take it easy and check your log. You may need to back off a bit.

Day 28, Sunday · 6 Miles LSD

Hook up with a buddy or a running club when you're running longer than usual—you'll be surprised how easily the miles roll by when you're in good company. Don't know other runners? Log into our online community at runnersworld.com, where you'll find regional groups and forums. Or contact a running shop in your area. (Pace: 11:58/mile)

Day 29, Monday · Rest

This is week five of training. After this week you'll have three weeks until race day. This week you'll ratchet up the intensity of your runs. You'll have two short runs and a tempo run, which is slightly longer and a little faster than last week. Your long run will again drop back to four miles. The target pace of your easy runs will get a little faster, up to 11:51/mile.

Day 30, Tuesday · 3 Miles Easy

Don't avoid the hills—run for them. Running hills develops efficiency, endurance, and power. Ascending an incline uses more muscle fibers than running on level terrain, and climbing longer hills makes the body recruit muscles when they're fatigued, which helps develop your finishing speed. If you have no hills nearby, run on highway overpasses, bridges, or in parking structures. As you approach an incline, shorten your stride while maintaining the same cadence. Small, quick steps will help reduce the effort. (Pace: 11:51/mile)

Day 31, Wednesday · 5 Miles with 3 Miles at Tempo

1-mile warmup
3 miles at tempo pace (9:50/mile)
1-mile cooldown

Icing an injury or a sore area can reduce inflammation and speed recovery. To maximize the benefits, ice for 10 to 20 minutes at a time, five times a day. This keeps tissue temperature low to minimize inflammation.

Day 32, Thursday · Rest

Don't underestimate the impact that the stress of work, deadlines, chores, bills, kids, and lack of sleep can have on your runs. All those factors can impact your ability to recover properly.

Day 33, Friday · 4 Miles Easy

Be sure to run on a variety of surfaces like soft trails, not just concrete. Varying the surfaces will help you prevent injuries by giving certain muscles and joints a rest while strengthening other muscles and joints. (Pace: 11:51/mile)

Day 34, Saturday · Rest

If there's a chance that it could be hot on race day, gradually get your body used to the heat during training. Start with a 15- to 20-minute easy run and add five to 10 minutes over the course of two weeks. Allow even more time to adjust to humid environments, and replace fluids lost through sweating with sports drinks. When you gradually expose yourself to warm environments, your body responds with more efficient bloodflow, which helps you maintain an even effort without overheating.

Day 35, Sunday · 4 Miles LSD

If at all possible, do some of your training on the racecourse. Previewing the hills, turns, and narrow spaces will help you feel more confident and relaxed going into your big goal event. If you're not able to run on the course, look at the course map and elevation chart, which should be posted on the event website. Try to do some runs that simulate the same pattern of elevation change that you'll face in the race. (Pace: 11:51/mile)

WEEK 6

Day 36, Monday · Rest

Welcome to week six of training. This week you'll have two short runs and a tempo run, which will be the same distance as last week. Your long run will move up to seven miles.

Have a black toenail? It's caused by pooling of blood under the nail, which is caused by the toe rubbing or hitting the top of your shoe. It's best to leave it alone; the black nail will grow out in a few weeks or months. If it hurts, best to see a doctor.

Day 37, Tuesday · 4 Miles Easy

Be sure to watch out for cars, and don't expect drivers to watch out for you. Always run facing traffic so you can see cars approaching. When crossing an intersection, make sure you establish eye contact with the driver before proceeding. If it's dark out, wear reflective clothing, a headlamp, and/or carry a flashlight. (Pace: 11:51/mile)

Day 38, Wednesday · 5 Miles with 3 Miles at Tempo

1-mile warmup
3 miles at tempo pace (9:50/mile)
1-mile cooldown

Day 39, Thursday · Rest

Make your racing plans public. Tell your friends and family exactly what you plan to do. You'll think twice about skimping on your training if it's not a secret.

Day 40, Friday · 4 Miles Easy

Most experts attribute cramps in the calf or other leg muscles to dehydration or fatigue. If you get a cramp, massage the area, and resume running at a slower pace. (Pace: 11:51/mile)

Day 41, Saturday · Rest

Now's a good time to make sure you're all set with gear for the race. If your favorite shorts are getting threadbare, replace them now and get plenty of practice running in the new ones before race day.

Day 42, Sunday · 7 Miles LSD

When you're tired, especially on long runs, the natural tendency is to tighten up in the arms and hunch up the shoulders. When you notice this, drop your arms to your sides and gently shake them out as you exhale. (Pace: 11:51/mile)

WEEK 7

Day 43, Monday · Rest

This is week seven of training. After this week the race will be one week away. You'll reduce your mileage this week so you can recover from all the hard work you've done and get refreshed for the race. You'll have two shorter runs and a shorter tempo run. Your long run will drop back to four miles.

Day 44, Tuesday · 3 Miles Easy

It's easy to mindlessly run the same routes, at the same speed, every day. Before long, you can get stuck in a training rut and become unmotivated. You'll also increase your injury risk by taxing muscles in the same way every day and not allowing for recovery. Mix things up by changing your running routes regularly, even if it's just running the same route in the opposite direction. Run with different partners throughout the week. Meet a slower friend on an easy run one day, a faster friend for a tempo run, and recruit your dog to accompany you for a third workout. (Pace: 11:51/mile)

Day 45, Wednesday · 4 Miles with 2 Miles at Tempo

1-mile warmup
2 miles at tempo pace (9:40/mile)
1-mile cooldown

Day 46, Thursday · Rest

If you have aches and pains during a run, it's best to go to a doctor who specializes in sports medicine. While a general doctor might tell you to simply stop running, a sports-medicine specialist can figure out if your injury is something you can and should run through, or whether you should take a step back and focus on another race down the road.

Day 47, Friday · 3 Miles Easy

When you're shopping for new running shoes, be sure to take the pair you currently wear with you. The sales staff can tell a lot about your foot type and biomechanics from the wear patterns on the soles of your shoes. If you wear inserts or orthotics, bring those along, too. (Pace: 11:51/mile)

Day 48, Saturday · Rest

Normally, runners should make sure to eat lots of fiber from beans, vegetables, and whole grains. But the night before a hard workout or a race, high-fiber foods can cause uncomfortable gas. Cut back on fiber three days before a major workout like a long run or your race.

Day 49, Sunday · 4 Miles LSD

A glass of chocolate milk makes for the perfect postrun treat. It's got bone-building vitamin D and calcium, and the ideal amounts of carbohydrates and proteins that tired muscles need for recovery. Research has proven that milk beats water and sports drinks at restoring fluid levels after bouts of exercise in the heat. (Pace: 11:51/mile)

WEEK 8

Day 50, Monday · Rest

This is the final week of training. Your race is this weekend!

Your hard-core training may be done, but there's still plenty you can do to increase your chances of being your best on race day. Be sure to get plenty of sleep, and iron out all your race-day logistics as soon as possible so you can enjoy your big weekend.

You'll have two short runs and three days of rest. On Wednesday you'll do a short tempo run just to get the fast-twitch muscle fibers firing. You may feel tempted to run farther or faster than the training plan prescribes: Resist it. Now is the time to recover from all the hard work you've put in over the past two months, and rest up for the race.

Don't try anything new this week. From now until the race, stick to the foods that you digest well and that keep you energized for your runs.

Day 51, Tuesday · 4 Miles Easy

You've put in all the hard work of training, but have you made a goal for the race? To avoid getting too attached to a number on the clock, pick three goals: one you're confident you can accomplish, one you think you'll probably reach, and a best-of-all-possible-worlds finishing time that may be a stretch. This will ensure that you walk away from the finish line with a sense of accomplishment. (Pace: 11:51/mile)

Day 52, Wednesday · 3 Miles with 1 Mile at Tempo

1-mile warmup
1 mile at tempo pace (9:40/mile)
1-mile cooldown

For a lot of runners, the taper is the toughest part of the training cycle. Phantom pains crop up during the final weeks before the race, and it's hard to know whether they're real or just the result of shaky nerves. A massage can help relieve any prerace discomfort while helping you relax.

Day 53, Thursday · Rest

You're close enough to race day to start checking the weather forecast and thinking about what to wear. Whatever the conditions are, you've probably run in them before. If you need help choosing proper attire, check out the "What to Wear" tool at runnersworld.com/what-to-wear.

Day 54, Friday · 2 Miles Easy

It's a good time to double-check all your race-day logistics. Do you know when you'll get your bib number? When you need to get to the starting line and where you're going to park? These may seem like little details, but if you leave them up in the air, they can cause a lot of unneeded stress just before the race, when you feel least equipped to handle it. (Pace: 11:51/mile)

Day 55, Saturday · Rest

You may be nervous that you've rested too much, but relax—you've done enough. Just rest up for tomorrow's race. Eat light meals throughout the day, eat an early dinner, and get plenty of sleep.

Day 56, Sunday · Race Day

It's race day. Good luck! It's best to start at the back and run more slowly than you think you should in the first few hundred meters. The biggest mistake runners make is going out too fast. Stop at aid stations as you need to.

After you cross the finish line, be sure to walk and stretch immediately to reduce soreness and stiffness in the days ahead. And congratulations! The race lasts less than an hour, but the pride of knowing you've completed the training and the race endures for much longer.

After you've recovered, think about training with Runner's World again. Check out the other training plans we've designed for 5Ks, 10Ks, half marathons, and marathons.