



8-WEEK 5 KM TRAINING PLAN

PREPARED BY
**MIKE GRATTON, 1983 LONDON
MARATHON WINNER**

TRAINING NOTES

The 5km distance is the most sensible distance for beginners to target as it is psychologically in the realms of a 'manageable' distance and most people can get enough fitness to 'get around' in a short training period. Having said that it is also a great distance for faster runners to really get some serious speed preparation when aiming at 10km and marathon improvement.

All people have different levels of 'trainability' and natural potential. It is possible for complete beginners to make very rapid progress and move up the targets, while others find initially that they can't achieve the early training levels. There are two golden rules whichever level of improver you find yourself: a) Build-up very gradually, and b) You must rest and recover before training becomes beneficial.

Building-up: Even if you come from a good level of fitness, trying to build-up too quickly will certainly get you injured. Running is a repetitive activity that involves your foot hitting the floor repeatedly with considerable force being transmitted up through the legs and into the lower back. The reason that experienced runners can handle such high levels of training is because they have taken years to get there. Your body adapts slowly to new stresses and a product of regular running is that your bones will harden and become more resilient to the new forces over time – caution is therefore necessary in the early stages so as not to become injured.

Rest & Recover: The natural thought is that you get better when you train hard. While that is not altogether untrue, the reality is that your body actually gets fitter while you are resting. Here's how it works: during hard exercise your body gets tired, waste products build up and energy levels fall as you have used up fuel - you are technically less able than before you started training! If you continued the same level of activity over several days

you would become progressively more tired and eventually you will breakdown – either with injury or illness. However, when you stop and rest your body starts to repair the damage, which it will do to a higher level than before as the body recognises a need to adapt to the new stresses that you're subjecting it to.

Frequency: A regular training pattern is more important than any one session. There is a cumulative effect from training regularly which is not achieved by doing all your training on one or two days each week.

Going the Distance: For 5km races it is usual to train up to and over the race distance.

The amount of rest: Some leading athletes appear not to rest at all – to run at World class you have to achieve high quantities of training. These are the fittest and most economical movers in the World who can run for 30-40 mins without breathing, sweating or touching the ground. They are not like us; we expend enormous amounts of energy with each stride as the shock wave from each step knocks the wind out of your lungs – sensible training will make you more like the world beaters we see on the TV and there is proof that more running makes you adapt and become more efficient.

As mentioned, one of the apparent differences between you and world beaters is that they appear not to take rest days. In fact they do – but since they are so fit they are able to take active rest days which may

amount to a couple of 'easy' runs. In the early stages of training you need to make a near full recovery from each training run, which may mean more rest days than training days. As fitness improves you will be able to reduce the number of rest days to maybe one or two a week. For most it is important to keep a full rest day each week for both mental and physical recovery even when they have been running for a number of year as there is only a need to go up to 7 or more runs a week if you want to be truly competitive and take the added risk of injury that the sharp end of racing brings with it.

Your Health: Everyone should be aware that there is a risk involved with active sport – heart defects leading to death being the most serious. That scare out of the way – for the vast majority of people active sport will improve your health and wellbeing.

Before setting out on an exercise regime you are well advised to visit your doctor for a check-up. A good doctor will be pleased to see you and should give you some advice on setting out – particularly if you have had a health problem like asthma or suffer from carrying excess weight.

While sensible levels of exercise will improve your health, the levels needed to train for a competition can lead to your immune system being suppressed. You will notice that sleep can become more difficult, your legs don't recover from runs as quickly, your resting pulse rate may be slightly higher than normal (it should get slower as you get fitter) - all of which may result in sore throats, colds that won't go away or flu. If you've gone this far – you must stop and recuperate. When you start up again start at a lower level and feel your way back gradually to where you were – but beware – where you were before is what got you ill in the first place!

For most there is no need to be training so hard for a 5km that you

get into the over training problem that can occur when preparing for longer distances.

Food & Drink: A healthy diet and high fluid intake are essential. Your body burns carbohydrate for the energy you need to make the muscles move, it also needs protein to help it recover from the damage done by hard exercise and it needs vitamins and minerals to maintain its health. So what you need is a good balanced diet. Make sure you are taking in plenty of carbohydrate but make sure you are not surviving just on carbohydrate – a plate of just pasta isn't a balanced diet. If you are taking in a lot of fruit and veg, yet still get colds you may need to look at vitamin supplements – but they are not essential if your general health is good.

Liquid is essential. Even on a cold day you will lose a lot of liquid through sweating and breathing – if this does not get replaced your body cannot function properly. So make sure you drink regularly, before, during and after exercise – either water or an isotonic sport drink, the choice is down to taste although research does show that liquid is absorbed more quickly when taken as an isotonic drink (but don't treat them like soft drinks – during & immediately after exercise only is advisable).

Race Practice: For the beginner, taking part in a race is a nerve wracking experience; for the more experienced the 5km is an ideal race distance combining both pace and endurance. Racing is very different to running on your own: your perception of pace will alter and you will almost certainly run quicker in the first mile than you thought you were. You need to be aware of this and also of the difficulty of running in large groups with runners changing direction suddenly, stopping or treading on your heels.

Tapering Down: Training takes about 2 weeks to become effective – so there is little point in doing too much training in the last two weeks before the event. It is far better to be letting the body recuperate and build up its energy reserves. There is a balance to be found: ease back too much and you will start to lose training effect and start to feel a little bit sluggish. For a 5km reduce the quantity of training 3 or 4 days before the race, but maintain some running to keep you feeling 'sharp' and confident.



8 WEEK – 5K TRAINING SCHEDULES

IMPORTANT: WARM-UP JOG AND STRETCH BEFORE ALL SESSIONS + STRETCH GENTLY AFTER (BEFORE YOU GET COLD).

WEEK 1	GET YOU ROUND	SUB-35 MINS	SUB-25 MINS	SUB-18 MINS
SUNDAY	30 mins brisk walking	30 mins run	60 mins run	60 mins run
MONDAY	Rest	Rest	Rest	45 mins run
TUESDAY	15 min walk, jogging short distances and regaining breath as necessary.	30 min run	45 min run	8 x 2 mins at 5km pace with 2 mins jog recovery between efforts
WEDNESDAY	Rest	Rest	30 min run – last 10 mins at Half Marathon (Threshold) pace	45 min run
THURSDAY	15 min walk/jog as before	30 min run	45 min run	30 min run – last 10 mins at half marathon (Threshold) pace
FRIDAY	Rest	Rest	Rest	Rest
SATURDAY	15 mins walk/jog as before	Circuits of a park alternating 1 min at faster than normal pace / 1 min at slower than normal pace x 6 each	Circuits of a park alternating 1 min at faster than normal pace / 1 min at slower than normal pace x 10 each	Morning – 30 mins easy Afternoon – Circuits of a park alternating 1 min at faster than normal pace / 1 min at slower than normal pace x 10 each
TRAINING OBJECTIVE:	Getting over the inhibitions and mental preparation for a regular training pattern. The amount of running is irrelevant – it's more about being 'out there'.	Getting time on the feet and the start of a gradual build up of training.	Getting time on the feet and the start of a gradual build up of training. Beginnings of generating the pace necessary to run at 7 min mile pace.	runner probably already into full training for road or cross-country season. Introduction of 5km pace training.
WEEK 2	GET YOU ROUND	SUB-35 MINS	SUB-25 MINS	SUB-18 MINS
SUNDAY	30 mins walk/jog	40 mins steady	60 mins steady	60 mins steady
MONDAY	Rest	Rest	Rest	45 mins run
TUESDAY	15 min walk/jog	30 min run	45 min run	8 x 2 mins at 5km pace with 2 mins jog recovery between efforts
WEDNESDAY	Rest	Rest	30 min run – last 10 mins at 10km pace	45 min run
THURSDAY	15 min walk/jog	30 min run	45 min run	30 min run – last 10 mins at 10km pace
FRIDAY	Rest	Rest	Rest	Rest
SATURDAY	15 mins walk/jog	Circuits of a park alternating 1 min at faster than normal pace / 1 min at slower than normal pace x 10 each	Circuits of a park alternating 1 min at faster than normal pace / 1 min at slower than normal pace x 10 each	Morning – 30 mins easy Afternoon – Circuits of a park alternating 1 min at faster than normal pace / 1 min at slower than normal pace x 10 each
TRAINING OBJECTIVE:	As week 1	As week 1	As week 1	As week 1
WEEK 3	GET YOU ROUND	SUB-35 MINS	SUB-25 MINS	SUB-18 MINS
SUNDAY	30 mins walk/jog	50 mins steady	60 mins steady	75 mins steady
MONDAY	Rest	Rest	30 mins easy	Morning – 30 mins easy
TUESDAY	15/20 mins jog	45 mins easy	45 min continuous run including 10 faster pace efforts of between 1 & 3 mins with jog recovery (run as you please)	3 x 1 mile efforts at 5km pace.
WEDNESDAY	Rest	Rest	Rest	60 min run
THURSDAY	15/20 mins jog	45 mins easy	45 mins easy	Morning – 30 mins easy
FRIDAY	Rest	Rest	30 mins easy	30 mins easy
SATURDAY	Circuit in a park – run 1 min continuous then walk 1 min recovery x 10 each	10 x 1 min running up shallow hill – walk back down recovery	10 x 1 min running up shallow hill – walk back down recovery	10 x 1 min running up shallow hill – walk back down recovery.
TRAINING OBJECTIVES:	Starting to run short distances continuously.	Development of the long run and some hill work to build strength in the legs.	Develop long run & faster stretches within the normal steady pace run.	Develop long run & faster stretches within the normal steady pace run.
WEEK 4	GET YOU ROUND	SUB-35 MINS	SUB-25 MINS	SUB-18 MINS
SUNDAY	60 mins jog/walk	60 mins steady	75 min steady	75 min steady
MONDAY	Rest	Rest	30 mins easy	30 mins easy
TUESDAY	25 mins easy	45 min continuous run including 10 faster pace efforts of between 1 & 3 mins with jog recovery (run as you please)	45 min continuous run including 10 faster pace efforts of between 1 & 3 mins with jog recovery (run as you please)	5 x 1,000 m at 5km pace – 3 mins recovery between each
WEDNESDAY	Rest	Rest	30 mins easy	Morning – easy 30 mins
THURSDAY	25 mins easy	45 mins steady	60 mins easy	Morning – easy 30 mins Afternoon – steady 30 mins followed by 10 x 200m
FRIDAY	Rest	Rest	Rest	Rest
SATURDAY	Circuit in a park – run 1 min continuous then walk 1 min recovery x 10 each	10 x 1 min running up shallow hill – walk back down recovery	12 x 1 min running up shallow hill – walk back down recovery	14 x 1 min running up shallow hill – walk back down recovery
TRAINING OBJECTIVE:	Gradually increasing time of the feet – a mental strategy or run 5 mins/ walk 1 min for the long run will help you get through 60 mins.	Lengthening long run – the pace doesn't matter. Introduction of 'speed work' at race pace will accelerate fitness levels.	Building the speed necessary to run a 5km with some efforts faster than 5km pace.	Building the speed necessary to run a 5km with some efforts faster than 5km pace
WEEK 5	GET YOU ROUND	SUB-35 MINS	SUB-25 MINS	SUB-18 MINS
SUNDAY	60 mins run/walk	75 mins easy	90 mins steady	90 mins steady
MONDAY	Rest	Rest	30 mins easy	30 mins easy
TUESDAY	30 mins easy	45 min continuous run including 10 faster pace efforts of between 1 & 3 mins with jog recovery (run as you please)	45 min continuous run including 10 faster pace efforts of between 1 & 3 mins with jog recovery (run as you please)	On fairly straight uninterrupted route run 10 mins at 10km pace – 10 mins recovery – run 10 min back trying to get to pass your start point
WEDNESDAY	Rest	Rest	60 mins easy	Morning – 30 mins easy
THURSDAY	30 mins easy	60 mins easy	30 mins steady	Afternoon – steady 30 mins followed by 10 x 200m
FRIDAY	Rest	Rest	Rest	Rest
SATURDAY	Circuit in a park – run 1 min continuous then walk 1 min recovery x 10 each	10 x 1 min running up shallow hill – walk back down recovery	12 x 1 min running up shallow hill – walk back down recovery	16 x 1 min running up shallow hill – walk back down recovery
TRAINING OBJECTIVE:	Consolidation week – getting used to the balance between the long run and speed work.	Consolidation week – getting used to the balance between the long run and speed work.	Consolidation week – getting used to the balance between the long run and speed work.	Consolidation week – getting used to the balance between the long run and speed work.
WEEK 6	GET YOU ROUND	SUB-35 MINS	SUB-25 MINS	SUB-18 MINS
SUNDAY	75 mins run/walk	75 mins easy	90 mins steady	90 mins steady
MONDAY	Rest	Rest	30 mins easy	Morning – 30 mins easy
TUESDAY	40 mins easy	Up the clock – run 1 min fast/1 min slow, 2 mins fast/ 2 mins slow, 3 mins fast/3 mins slow/4 mins fast/4 mins slow, 5 mins fast.	Up the clock – run 1 min fast/1 min slow, 2 mins fast/ 2 mins slow, 3 mins fast/3 mins slow/4 mins fast/4 mins slow, 5 mins fast.	Up and down the clock – run 1 min fast/1 min slow, 2 mins fast/ 2 mins slow, 3 mins fast/3 mins slow/4 mins fast/4 mins slow, 5 mins fast/5 mins slow, the 4, 3, 2, 1 min back down.



WEDNESDAY	Rest	Rest	30 mins easy	Morning – 30 mins easy
THURSDAY	40 mins easy	60 mins easy	75 mins easy	Afternoon - 10 min warm-up – 20 min Tempo run (10 km race pace) – 10 mins warm-down
FRIDAY	Rest	Rest	30 min easy	30 min easy
SATURDAY	10 x 1 min running up shallow hill – walk back down recovery	12 x 1 min running up shallow hill – walk back down recovery	Rest	Rest
TRAINING OBJECTIVES	Consolidation week – slight increase in the mid week runs.	Development of ability to run faster than race pace and hold the pace for an increasing amount of time.	Development of ability to run faster than race pace and hold the pace for an increasing amount of time. At same time long run is increased to the magic 2-hrs.	Up and down the clock develops strength and speed. The Tempo run enables you to hold a fast pace for a long time.
WEEK 7	GET YOU ROUND	SUB-35 MINS	SUB-25 MINS	SUB-18 MINS
SUNDAY	75 mins run/walk	75 min run	75 min run	75 min run
MONDAY	Rest	Rest	30 mins easy	Morning – 30 mins easy
TUESDAY	45 mins steady	10 mins warm up – 20 mins at 10km pace – 10 min warm down.	10 mins warm up – 20 mins at 10km pace – 10 min warm down.	3 sets of 4 x 300m at 3 km pace with 100 m jog recovery between efforts/3 mins standing recovery between sets.
WEDNESDAY	Rest	Rest	60 mins steady	60 mins steady
THURSDAY	40 mins steady	60 mins steady	Morning – 30 mins easy Afternoon – 30 mins easy	Morning – 30 mins easy Afternoon – 30 mins easy
FRIDAY	Rest	Rest	Rest	Rest
SATURDAY	10 x 1 min running up shallow hill – walk back down recovery	12 x 1 min running up shallow hill – walk back down recovery	15 x 1 min running up shallow hill – walk back down recovery	20 x 1 min running up shallow hill – walk back down recovery
TRAINING OBJECTIVE:	The long runs are going to start to get you tired – refuelling after the long Sunday run & mid week hour run is essential – it's tough but it will start to build the endurance you'll need for the race.	Race pace running is important so that your body gets the 'feel' of the speed you want to race at.	Race pace running is important so that your body gets the 'feel' of the speed you want to race at. Twice a day training on some days gives a boost to your endurance, and the afternoon run can sometimes be better because you have 'warmed-up' in the morning.	Big 'interval sessions' develop the heart & lungs, build strength and develop the speed necessary to run 6 min per mile comfortably.
WEEK 8	GET YOU ROUND	SUB-35 MINS	SUB-25 MINS	SUB-18 MINS
SUNDAY	45 mins run/walk	45 mins run/walk	45 mins run/walk	45 mins run/walk
MONDAY	Rest	Rest	30 mins easy	45 mins run
TUESDAY	30 mins run	10 mins warm up – 10 x 200m with 200m walk/ jog recovery– 10 min warm down.	10 mins warm up – 10 x 200m with 200m walk/ jog recovery– 10 min warm down.	10 mins warm up – 10 x 200m with 200m walk/ jog recovery– 10 min warm down.
WEDNESDAY	Rest	Rest	Rest	Rest
THURSDAY	20 mins easy	30 mins steady	30 mins steady	30 mins easy
FRIDAY	10 mins easy	30 mins easy	30 mins easy	30 mins easy
SATURDAY	Rest	Rest	Rest	Rest
TRAINING OBJECTIVE:	Taper down for race.	Taper down for race.	Taper down for race.	Taper down for race.
WEEK 9	RACE DAY	RACE DAY	RACE DAY	RACE DAY