RW

BREAK 25 MINUTES · 5K TRAINING PLAN

This eight-week plan is designed for runners who want to finish a 5K in 25 minutes, which requires an average pace of 8:02 per mile.

It features fives days of running per week, including easy runs, tempo runs, and intervals, plus long runs of six to 11 miles. Weekly mileage starts at 20 miles per week and peaks at 30 miles per week, the week before the race. You'll find specific paces to hit for your workouts within the plan.

BREAK 25 MINUTES · 5K TRAINING PLAN

	DAY 1	DAY 2	DAY 3	DAY 4	DAY 5	DAY 6	DAY 7
WEEK 1	Rest or Cross-Train	3 miles Easy Run	5 miles with 3 miles at Tempo	3 miles Easy Run	3 miles Easy Run	Rest or Cross-Train	6 miles LSD

	DAY 8	DAY 9	DAY 10	DAY 11	DAY 12	DAY 13	DAY 14
WEEK 2	Rest or Cross-Train	3 miles Easy Run	5 miles with 3 miles at Tempo	3 miles Easy Run	3 miles Easy Run	Rest or Cross-Train	8 miles LSD

	DAY 15	DAY 16	DAY 17	DAY 18	DAY 19	DAY 20	DAY 21
WEEK 3	Rest or Cross-Train	4 miles Easy Run	6 miles with Intervals	3 miles Easy Run	4 miles Easy Run	Rest or Cross-Train	6 miles LSD

	DAY 22	DAY 23	DAY 24	DAY 25	DAY 26	DAY 27	DAY 28
WEEK 4	Rest or Cross-Train	4 miles Easy Run	6 miles with Intervals	3 miles Easy Run	5 miles Easy Run	Rest or Cross-Train	10 miles LSD

	DAY 29	DAY 30	DAY 31	DAY 32	DAY 33	DAY 34	DAY 35
WEEK 5	Rest or Cross-Train	4-5 miles Easy Run	Mile Repeats 5 miles	3 miles Easy Run	5 miles Easy Run	Rest or Cross-Train	6 miles LSD

	DAY 36	DAY 37	DAY 38	DAY 39	DAY 40	DAY 41	DAY 42
WEEK 6	Rest or Cross-Train	4-5 miles Easy Run	6 miles with Intervals	3 miles Easy Run	5 miles Easy Run	Rest or Cross-Train	10 miles LSD

	DAY 43	DAY 44	DAY 45	DAY 46	DAY 47	DAY 48	DAY 49
WEEK 7	Rest or Cross-Train	4-5 miles Easy Run	Mile Repeats 6 miles	3 miles Easy Run	5 miles Easy Run	Rest or Cross-Train	6 miles LSD

	DAY 50	DAY 51	DAY 52	DAY 53	DAY 54	DAY 55	DAY 56
WEEK 8	Rest or Cross-Train	4 miles Easy Run	4-5 miles with Intervals	3 miles Easy Run	Rest	2 miles Easy Run	**RACE DAY!**

THE WORKOUTS

▶ Rest

Take the day off! You can use this time to relax on the couch, do some meditation, or incorporate light mobility work or an easy yoga class. These days give your body a chance to recover from the hard work you put in, which allows you to progress, and they get you ready for the next run.

▶ Cross-Train

Cross-training can include strength workouts, cycling, swimming, yoga, exercise class, the elliptical trainer, rowing machine, or any physical activity you love that isn't running or walking. These workouts give the muscles you use in walking and running a chance to recover, while strengthening other parts of your body, boosting all-around fitness and preventing injuries. Plus, it helps prevent burnout to keep you running strong and injury-free.

▶ Easy Run

These workouts should feel just as they sound: easy. You want to run at an effort that allows you to have a conversation. If you're huffing and puffing, you're going too fast. Try to start them extra slow and light so you can finish strong. These allow you to increase your time on feet and weekly mileage, building endurance while lowering risk of injury. They'll also strengthen your lungs and your legs.

▶ Tempo

Tempo runs train your body to run faster for longer. After an easy warmup, run the prescribed miles at tempo pace (8:35/mile), then cool down with easy running. Your tempo pace should feel hard but controlled. You won't be able to talk comfortably, but it shouldn't feel as if you're racing. It's a tough pace to stick out, but you *can* keep going. On a rate of perceived exertion scale of 1 to 10, with 10 being all-out, tempo hits around 6 or 7.

▶ LSD: Long Slow Distance

Long, slow distance runs build your endurance, improve aerobic capacity, develop your strength, and get you accustomed to spending a longer time on your feet. While you'll see prescribed paces, don't stress about hitting that exact speed; focus more on the distance you want to cover for the day. Start at an effort that feels conservative (you should be able to have a conversation), so you have the energy to finish feeling good.

▶ Intervals

Intervals get your fast-twitch muscle fibers firing and your legs feeling race ready. After an easy run warmup, you'll run 400 or 800 meter repeats at a fast pace, recovering with a walk or jog between reps. Then cool down with easy running. You'll see prescribed paces for these intervals. Stick to them. These workouts get you used to running faster so you can hit your time goal. Do intervals on a track, flat stretch of road, or a treadmill.

▶ Mile Repeats

Mile repeats help build your speed endurance, or your ability to hold a faster pace over a longer distance. You'll run these right around your goal race pace, giving you confidence for race day. You'll warm up with an easy run, clock the mile repeats at the prescribed pace, and recover between reps with a walk or jog. Then you'll cool down. Do these workouts on a track if you can. Otherwise, go for a flat stretch of road or a treadmill.

WEEK 1	WEEK 2	WEEK 3	WEEK 4	WEEK 5	WEEK 6	WEEK 7	WEEK 8

Day 1: Rest or Cross-Train

Welcome to the Runner's World Break 25 5K training plan. This eight-week plan is designed to help you cross the finish line of a 5K in 25 minutes.

Today, your training kicks off with a day of rest. But it's okay to cross-train with a no-impact activity like stretching, yoga, or swimming.

Day 2: 3 miles Easy Run

When you head out today, focus on maintaining a comfortable, conversational rhythm. You want to finish feeling like you have the energy to run longer. (Pace: 11:58/mile)

Day 3: 5 miles with 3 miles at Tempo

- 1-mile warmup
- 3 miles at tempo pace (8:35/mile)
- 1-mile cooldown

Day 4: 3 miles Easy Run

Go for 3 miles at a truly conversational pace. (Pace: 10:10/mile)

Day 5: 3 miles Easy Run

Just like yesterday, you'll tackle 3 miles at a conversational pace. (Pace: 10:10/mile)

Day 6: Rest or Cross-Train

Today you have the choice of resting or cross-training. Don't worry about losing your fitness on rest days. Rest builds strength, reduces fatigue, and prevents injuries.

Day 7: 6 miles LSD

Your suggested pace today is 10:10/mile, but focus more on the effort. Go at a speed that feels easy enough for you to have a conversation. If you're huffing and puffing, you're going too fast.

| WEEK 1 | WEEK 2 | WEEK 3 | WEEK 4 | WEEK 5 | WEEK 6 | WEEK 7 | WEEK 8 |

Day 8:   Rest or Cross-Train

This is week two of training. Your training will be nearly identical to last week, with three short runs, a tempo run, and two days of rest. Your long run will inch up to eight miles.

Day 9:   3 miles Easy Run

Today's run involves 3 miles at a conversational effort. (Pace: 10:10/mile)

Day 10:   5 miles with 3 miles at Tempo

- 1-mile warmup
- 3 miles at tempo (8:35/mile)
- 1-mile cooldown

Day 11:   3 miles Easy Run

As much as possible, try to incorporate hills into the early stages of your training. Hills build leg and lung power. Pick a variety of short and long hills, and focus on sustaining an even, steady effort through the ups and downs. (Pace: 10:10/mile)

Day 12:   3 miles Easy Run

Like yesterday, run 3 miles at a conversational effort. If you added hills yesterday, go for flatter today, especially if you're feeling sore. (Pace: 10:10/mile)

Day 13:   Rest or Cross-Train

When you first start training, it's easy to think that more is better. But whenever you 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.

Day 14:   8 miles LSD

On any run of 75 minutes or less, you'll likely be fine with just water or sports drink. But any time you're running longer, you'll want to refuel while you're on the road. Aim for 30 to 60 grams of carbs per hour. You can get those carbs from sports drinks, energy gels, or other snacks. Experiment with different brands and flavors to figure out what gives you a boost without leaving you with an upset stomach. (Pace: 10:10/mile)

Day 15:   Rest or Cross-Train

Welcome to week three of training. This week you'll have three short runs, two days of rest, and an interval workout. On Sunday your long run will drop back to six miles. Today, cross train if you're feeling good; rest if you need it.

Day 16:   4 miles Easy Run

Get out there for 4 miles at a conversational effort. (Pace: 10:10/mile)

Day 17:   6 miles with Intervals

- 1-mile warmup
- 8-10 x 400 meters at 1:56 with 200 meters easy run recovery
- 1-mile cooldown

Run one mile easy, and then (on a track or measured path) run 400 meters (0.25 miles) in one minute and 56 seconds (about 7:50/mile pace) followed by a very easy jog for 200 meters (0.12 miles). Repeat that sequence 7 to 9 more times before you cool down with an easy mile.

Day 18:   3 miles Easy Run

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 as you run these easy 3 miles. (Pace: 10:10/mile)

Day 19:   4 miles Easy Run

Run easy today for 4 total miles. (Pace: 10:10/mile)

Day 20:   Rest or Cross-Train

Assess how you're feeling today to decide if you should rest or cross-train.

Day 21:   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. Today, keep it easy. (Pace: 10:10/mile)

| WEEK 1 | WEEK 2 | WEEK 3 | **WEEK 4** | WEEK 5 | WEEK 6 | WEEK 7 | WEEK 8 |

Day 22: Rest or Cross-Train

This week will follow a similar pattern as last week with two days of rest, three short runs, and intervals. Your long run will increase to 10 miles.

Day 23: 4 miles Easy Run

Keep the effort light for 4 miles. (Pace: 10:10/mile)

Day 24: 6 miles with Intervals

- 1-mile warmup
- 1x400 meters at 1:56 with 200-meter easy run recovery
- 3x800 meters at 3:52 with 400-meter easy run recovery
- 1x400 meters at 1:56 with 200-meter easy run recovery
- 1-mile cooldown

Run one mile easy, and then (on a track or measured path) run 400 meters (0.25 miles) in one minute and 56 seconds (about 7:50/mile pace), followed by a very easy jog for 200 meters (0.12 miles). Then run 800 meters (0.5 miles) in 3 minutes and 52 seconds (about 7:50/mile pace), followed by a very easy jog for 400 meters (0.25 miles). Do two more 800-meter intervals and then one more 400-meter interval before you cool down with one mile easy.

Day 25: 3 miles Easy Run

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. (Pace: 10:10/mile)

▶ For more ways to keep the effort easy, <u>check out our list of tips.</u>

Day 26: 5 miles Easy Run

Remember to hold back and keep the effort easy for 5 miles today. (Pace: 10:10/mile)

Day 27: Rest or Cross-Train

Take a rest day today to prepare for tomorrow's long run or do your favorite cross-training activity.

Day 28: 10 miles LSD

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. (Pace: 10:10/mile)

▶ For ideas on how to switch up your route, <u>check out our favorite apps and tips.</u>

| WEEK 1 | WEEK 2 | WEEK 3 | WEEK 4 | **WEEK 5** | WEEK 6 | WEEK 7 | WEEK 8 |

Day 29: Rest or Cross-Train

This is week five of training. This week you'll ratchet up the intensity of your runs. You'll have three short runs, and your long run will return to six miles. The target pace of your easy runs will get a little faster, up to 10:04/mile.

What you do when you're off the road has a big effect on your running, especially during weeks like these, when you're pushing your body farther and faster than it has gone before. Get plenty of sleep, and make sure to fuel and hydrate.

▶ For what to eat before a run, check out our guide to prerun nutrition.

Day 30: 4-5 miles Easy Run

Don't avoid the hills—run for them. 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. As you approach an incline, shorten your stride while maintaining the same cadence. (Pace: 10:04/mile)

Day 31: Mile Repeats 5 miles

- 1-mile warmup
- 3 x 1 mile at 8:00/mile with 800-meter recovery jog
- 1-mile cooldown

Run one mile easy to warm up, then run one mile at an 8:00/mile pace. Jog easy to recover for 800 meters (two laps around the track, or 0.5 miles). Repeat this cycle two more times. Cool down with one mile of easy running.

Day 32: 3 miles Easy Run

Keep the effort light today to help you recover from the intervals yesterday. (Pace: 10:04/mile)

Day 33: 5 miles Easy Run

Make sure you're breathing easy during today's 5-miler. (Pace: 10:04/mile)

Day 34: Rest or Cross-Train

Check in with your body to determine if you want to rest or cross-train today.

Day 35: 6 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. Try to do some runs that simulate the same pattern of elevation change that you'll face in the race. (Pace: 10:04/mile)

WEEK 1	WEEK 2	WEEK 3	WEEK 4	WEEK 5	**WEEK 6**	WEEK 7	WEEK 8

Day 36:   Rest or Cross-Train

Welcome to week six of training. This week you'll have three short runs and head back to the track for intervals. Your long run will move up to 10 miles.

Day 37:   4-5 miles Easy Run

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: 10:04/mile)

Day 38:   6 miles with Intervals

- 1-mile warmup
- 6 x 800 meters at 4:00 with 400 meter recovery
- 1-mile cooldown

Run one mile easy to warm up, then run 800 meters (two laps around the track or 0.5 miles) in 4 minutes (8:00/mile pace). Jog easy to recover for 400 meters (one lap around the track, or 0.25 miles). Repeat this cycle five more times. Cool down with one mile of easy running.

Day 39:   3 miles Easy Run

Make today's 3 miles slow and steady to recover from yesterday's intervals. (Pace: 10:04/mile)

Day 40:   5 miles Easy Run

Like yesterday, keep today's run easy, but stretch it to 5 miles. (Pace: 10:04/mile)

Day 41:   Rest or Cross-Train

Take the day off or opt for your favorite cross-training activity, depending on how you're feeling.

Day 42:   10 miles LSD

Keep the pace conversational for your double-digit miles today. 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: 10:04/mile)

WEEK 1	WEEK 2	WEEK 3	WEEK 4	WEEK 5	WEEK 6	WEEK 7	WEEK 8

Day 43: Rest or Cross-Train

This is week seven of training. You'll have three shorter runs and a slightly longer session of mile repeats. Your long run on Sunday will start your taper week with six miles.

Day 44: 4-5 miles Easy Run

Mix things up by changing your running routes regularly, even if it's just running the same route in the opposite direction. To maintain motivation, you can also 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: 10:04/mile)

Day 45: Miles Repeats 5 miles

- 1-mile warmup
- 4 x 1 mile at 8:00/mile with 800-meter recovery
- 1-mile cooldown

Run one mile easy to warm up, then run one mile at an 8:00/mile pace. Jog easy to recover for 800 meters (two laps around the track, or 0.5 miles). Repeat this cycle three more times. Cool down with one mile of easy running.

Day 46: 3 miles Easy Run

Like previous weeks, today is all about an easy effort to recover from your intervals. (Pace: 10:04/mile)

Day 47: 5 miles Easy Run

Keep today easy. It's also a good time to make sure you're all set with gear for the race, making sure you're comfortable with the chosen shorts, tops, and shoes. (Pace: 10:04/mile)

Day 48: Rest or Cross-Train

Take today as a rest day or go for your go-to cross-training workout if you're feeling good.

Day 49: 6 miles LSD

Today is your last long run before race day. Use it as a dress rehearsal. Try out the gear and shoes you plan to wear for the race. Practice the mantras and mental strategies to stay focused and calm even when you start to feel fatigue. Visualize yourself giving the event all that you have, and finishing feeling strong. (Pace: 10:04/mile)

WEEK 1	WEEK 2	WEEK 3	WEEK 4	WEEK 5	WEEK 6	WEEK 7	**WEEK 8**

Day 50:   Rest or Cross-Train

This is the final week of training! 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 three short runs and two days of rest. You'll have a short session of intervals to get the fast-twitch muscle fibers firing and your legs feeling race ready. Resist the temptation to run farther or faster this week. Save your energy for the race.

Day 51:   4 miles Easy Run

To avoid getting too attached to a number on the clock, pick three goals for race day: one you're confident you can accomplish, one you think you'll probably reach, and a best-possible finishing time that may be a stretch. Having multiple goals will ensure that you walk away from the finish line with a sense of accomplishment. (Pace: 10:04/mile)

Day 52:   4-5 miles with Intervals

- 1-mile warmup
- 6 x 400 meters at 1:56 with 200 easy run recovery
- 1-mile cooldown

Run one mile easy, and then run 400 meters (0.25 miles) in one minute and 56 seconds (about 7:50/mile pace) followed by a very easy jog for 200 meters (0.12 miles). Repeat that sequence 5 more times before you cool down with an easy mile.

Day 53:   3 miles Easy Run

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. (Pace: 10:04/mile)

▶ If you need help choosing proper attire, underline check out our What to Wear tool.

Day 54:   Rest

You may be nervous that you've rested too much, but relax—you've done enough. Just rest up for the weekend's race.

Day 55:   2 miles Easy Run

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: 10:04/mile)

Day 56:   Race Day

It's race day. Good luck! Run slower than you think you should in the first few hundred meters. The biggest mistake runners make is going out too fast.

After you cross the finish line, walk around to reduce soreness and stiffness in the days ahead.

And congratulations! The race lasts only a few minutes, but the pride of knowing you've completed the training and the race endures for much longer.

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