



FREE TRAINING PLAN

16 Minute 5k Training Plan

A high-performance 3-week build plus 1 recovery week for serious runners chasing a 16-minute 5k.

TARGET

16:00

Elite amateur 5k target

TARGET PACE

5:10/mile

3:13/km

CYCLE

4 weeks

3 build weeks + recovery

LEVEL

Advanced

5k PB block

IS THIS PLAN RIGHT FOR YOU?

Best suited to highly trained runners who can already run around 5:10/mile for at least a mile and/or have a current 5k PB under around 17 minutes.



FOLLOW THE PLAN IN THE APP

Scan to get RunningFastr on iPhone

<https://apps.apple.com/gb/app/runningfastr/id6759058880>

<https://www.runningfastr.com/5k-training-plan/16-minute-5k-training-plan/>

Week 1: Introduce 16-minute rhythm

Use fast 1km work and hills while keeping easy running genuinely controlled.

Monday**EASY / BREAKEVEN****30 min easy**

Controlled aerobic running. Keep this deliberately comfortable. | Pace: No quicker than 7:10/mile

Tuesday**INTERVALS / BREAKTHROUGH****4 x 1km**

Run each rep at target 5k rhythm. | Pace: 3:13/km / 5:10/mile | Recovery: 90s jogged recovery

Wednesday**EASY / BREAKEVEN****30 min easy**

Controlled aerobic running. Keep this deliberately comfortable. | Pace: No quicker than 7:10/mile

Thursday**HILLS / BREAKTHROUGH****Hill sprints**

Use Kenyan hills or hill sprints to build power, form and running economy. | Pace: Hard but controlled effort | Recovery: Jog back / controlled recovery

Friday**REST / RECOVERY****Rest or cross-train**

Low-impact cross-training only if it helps recovery.

Saturday**EASY / BREAKEVEN****30 min easy**

Controlled aerobic running. Keep this deliberately comfortable. | Pace: Comfortable only

Sunday**LONG RUN / BREAKEVEN****Long run**

Slow and steady aerobic running, kept under an hour unless the plan notes otherwise. | Pace: Easy conversational pace

Week 2: Sharpen and sustain

Use sharp 400s, Kenyan hills, tempo and a long run.

Monday

EASY / BREAKEVEN

30 min easy

Controlled aerobic running. Keep this deliberately comfortable. | Pace: No quicker than 7:10/mile

Tuesday

INTERVALS / BREAKTHROUGH

10 x 400m

Fast controlled reps slightly quicker than race pace. | Pace: 74s per 400m / 5:00/mile | Recovery: 60s standing recovery

Wednesday

EASY / BREAKEVEN

30 min easy

Controlled aerobic running. Keep this deliberately comfortable. | Pace: No quicker than 7:10/mile

Thursday

HILLS / BREAKTHROUGH

Kenyan hills

Use Kenyan hills or hill sprints to build power, form and running economy. | Pace: Hard but controlled effort | Recovery: Jog back / controlled recovery

Friday

REST / RECOVERY

Rest or cross-train

Low-impact cross-training only if it helps recovery.

Saturday

TEMPO / BREAKTHROUGH

Tempo run

Controlled sustained running inserted into the week without turning it into a race. | Pace: Include 3 miles at around 5:30/mile

Sunday

LONG RUN / BREAKEVEN

Long run

Slow and steady aerobic running, kept under an hour unless the plan notes otherwise. | Pace: Easy conversational pace

Week 3: Specific strength

Combine tempo, larger 1km volume and fartlek before the recovery week.

Monday

TEMPO / BREAKTHROUGH

Tempo run

Controlled sustained running inserted into the week without turning it into a race. | Pace: Include 3 miles at around 5:30/mile

Tuesday

INTERVALS / BREAKTHROUGH

6 x 1km

Practise target rhythm across more volume. | Pace: 3:13/km / 5:10/mile | Recovery: 90s jogged recovery

Wednesday

EASY / BREAKEVEN

30 min easy

Controlled aerobic running. Keep this deliberately comfortable. | Pace: No quicker than 7:10/mile

Thursday

FARTLEK / BREAKEVEN

Fartlek run

Unstructured speed play. Vary the effort without chasing exact splits. | Pace: Mixed effort

Friday

REST / RECOVERY

Rest or cross-train

Low-impact cross-training only if it helps recovery.

Saturday

EASY / BREAKEVEN

30 min easy

Controlled aerobic running. Keep this deliberately comfortable. | Pace: Comfortable only

Sunday

LONG RUN / BREAKEVEN

Long run

Slow and steady aerobic running, kept under an hour unless the plan notes otherwise. | Pace: Easy conversational pace

Recovery Week: Absorb and reset

Reduce the load while keeping one controlled tempo insertion and one easy run.

Monday	REST / RECOVERY Rest or cross-train Low-impact cross-training only if it helps recovery.
Tuesday	REST / RECOVERY Rest or cross-train Low-impact cross-training only if it helps recovery.
Wednesday	TEMPO / BREAKTHROUGH Tempo run Controlled sustained running inserted into the week without turning it into a race. Pace: Include 3 miles at around 5:30/mile
Thursday	REST / RECOVERY Rest or cross-train Low-impact cross-training only if it helps recovery.
Friday	EASY / BREAKEVEN 30 min easy Controlled aerobic running. Keep this deliberately comfortable. Pace: Easy only
Saturday	REST / RECOVERY Rest or cross-train Low-impact cross-training only if it helps recovery.
Sunday	REST / RECOVERY Rest or cross-train Low-impact cross-training only if it helps recovery.

Paces and session guide

RACE PACE

5:10/mile / 3:13/km

The pace you need to run close to 16 minutes.

TREADMILL EQUIVALENT

11.6 mph / 18.5 km/h

Useful for controlled indoor efforts.

400M SPLIT

77s at race pace

Use roughly 74s for the sharper 400m reps.

800M SPLIT

2:34

Target split for 800m repetitions.

Breakeven sessions

These maintain fitness, support recovery and prepare you for the breakthrough sessions.

Steady / easy run

Easy running should be no quicker than 7:10/mile. Aim around 7:10-7:40/mile and stay relaxed.

Long run

Slow and steady, generally less than one hour.

Fartlek

Unstructured speed play. Use it to practise changing gears without obsessing over exact splits.

Breakthrough sessions

These are the hard sessions that move you toward the target. Treat them as mini-milestones, not ego tests.

400m reps

Run around 74 seconds per 400m at roughly 5:00/mile pace with 60 seconds standing recovery.

800m reps

Run around 2:34 per 800m at roughly 5:10/mile pace with a 200m jogged recovery.

1km intervals

Hit 3:13/km at around 5:10/mile pace with 90 seconds jogged recovery.

Hills

Alternate Kenyan hills and hill sprints to balance power and endurance.

How to use this plan

1. Start this plan only when you are already close to 16-17 minute 5k shape.
2. Take the recovery week seriously. This is too sharp a target to stack fatigue carelessly.

TRAINING PLAN

3. Repeat or tailor the 4-week cycle only if you are recovering well from the breakthrough sessions.
4. After around three months following the plan, reduce training for 1-2 weeks with more cross-training and a couple of easy runs.

Free plan. No subscription required. Pick your target, follow the plan, run faster.

Training guidance is general information, not personalised medical advice. Reduce or stop training if pain changes your stride or worsens.