



FREE TRAINING PLAN

26 Minute 5k Training Plan

A 3-week build plus 1 recovery week for runners moving toward a 26-minute 5k.

TARGET

26:00

5k PB target

TARGET PACE

8:20/mile

5:12/km

CYCLE

4 weeks

3 build weeks + recovery

LEVEL

Intermediate

5k PB block

IS THIS PLAN RIGHT FOR YOU?

Best suited to runners who can already run around 8:20/mile for at least a mile and/or have a current 5k PB under around 28 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/26-minute-5k-training-plan/>

Week 1: Set the 26-minute rhythm

Introduce 1km and 800m work at target race pace.

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

Controlled aerobic running. Keep this deliberately comfortable. | Pace: No quicker than 10:20/mile

Tuesday**INTERVALS / BREAKTHROUGH****3 x 1km**

Run each rep at target 5k rhythm. | Pace: 5:12/km / 8:20/mile | Recovery: 90s jogged recovery

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

Controlled aerobic running. Keep this deliberately comfortable. | Pace: No quicker than 10:20/mile

Thursday**INTERVALS / BREAKTHROUGH****4 x 800m**

Controlled 800m reps at race rhythm. | Pace: 4:09 per 800m / 8:20/mile | Recovery: 200m jogged 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 strengthen

Use 400m repetitions and hills while keeping the rest of the week light.

Monday	REST / RECOVERY Rest or cross-train Low-impact cross-training only if it helps recovery.
Tuesday	INTERVALS / BREAKTHROUGH 10 x 400m Short controlled reps slightly faster than race pace. Pace: 2:02 per 400m / 8:10/mile Recovery: 60s standing recovery
Wednesday	EASY / BREAKEVEN 30 min easy Controlled aerobic running. Keep this deliberately comfortable. Pace: No quicker than 10:20/mile
Thursday	HILLS / BREAKTHROUGH 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	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.

Week 3: Specific strength

Return to 1km reps, add tempo and fartlek, then keep the long run easy.

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

Controlled aerobic running. Keep this deliberately comfortable. | Pace: No quicker than 10:20/mile

Tuesday**INTERVALS / BREAKTHROUGH****3 x 1km**

Practise calm target rhythm. | Pace: 5:12/km / 8:20/mile | Recovery: 90s jogged recovery

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

Controlled aerobic running. Keep this deliberately comfortable. | Pace: No quicker than 10:20/mile

Thursday**TEMPO / BREAKTHROUGH****Tempo run**

Controlled sustained running inserted into the week without turning it into a race. | Pace: Include 3 miles at around 8:35/mile

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

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

Saturday**FARTLEK / BREAKEVEN****Fartlek run**

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

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 load and keep just enough easy running to stay loose.

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	EASY / BREAKEVEN 30 min easy Controlled aerobic running. Keep this deliberately comfortable. Pace: Easy only
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

8:20/mile / 5:12/km

The pace you need to run close to 26 minutes.

TREADMILL EQUIVALENT

7.2 mph / 11.5 km/h

Useful for controlled indoor efforts.

400M SPLIT

2:04 at race pace

Use roughly 2:02 for the sharper 400m reps.

800M SPLIT

4:09

Target split for the 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 10:20/mile. Aim somewhere around 10:20-10:50/mile.

Long run

Keep the long run slow and steady, generally under an 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 2:02 per 400m at roughly 8:10/mile pace with 60 seconds standing recovery.

800m reps

Run 4:09 per 800m at about 8:20/mile pace with a 200m jogged recovery.

1km intervals

Hit 5:12/km at around 8:20/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 when you can already run at target pace for around a mile or have a PB under around 28 minutes.
2. Run the 3 build weeks, then take the recovery week seriously.

TRAINING PLAN

3. Repeat the 4-week cycle or tailor it toward a specific 5k event after the first block.
4. After 2-3 months using the plan, take a couple of low-key weeks with easier running and more recovery.

YOUR NEXT PB**24 Minute 5k Training Plan**

<https://www.runningfastr.com/5k-training-plan/24-minute-5k-training-plan/>

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.