



FREE TRAINING PLAN

Couch to 5K Training Plan

A complete 9-week Couch to 5K training plan for beginners, with three run-walk sessions per week, rest-day guidance, pacing advice and a clear next step after graduation.

GOAL

30 min continuous

Build the habit before chasing speed.

TRAINING WEEK

3 runs

Leave a rest or easy day between runs.

TRAINING PERIOD

9 weeks

Repeat a week whenever you need more time.

LEVEL

Beginner

A gradual run-walk progression.

IS THIS PLAN RIGHT FOR YOU?

Absolute beginners and returning runners building from run-walk intervals to 30 minutes of continuous easy running.



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/couch-to-5k-training-plan/>

Week 1: Start moving

Keep every run gentle. The goal is to finish feeling like you could have done a little more.

Run 1

RUN / WALK / BREAKEVEN

1 min run / 90 sec walk x 8

Start with a 5-minute brisk walk. Alternate 1 minute of easy running with 90 seconds walking for 8 rounds, then walk 5 minutes to cool down. | Pace: Easy conversation effort | Recovery: Rest day after

Run 2

RUN / WALK / BREAKEVEN

Repeat the pattern

Use the same 1 minute run / 90 second walk structure. Let familiarity, not speed, make it easier. | Pace: Easy conversation effort | Recovery: Rest day after

Run 3

RUN / WALK / BREAKEVEN

Finish week one calmly

Repeat the same session. If it still feels hard, that is normal - you are building the habit before you build endurance. | Pace: Easy conversation effort | Recovery: At least 1 easy day

Week 2: Add a little time

Run a touch longer, but keep the effort relaxed enough that breathing settles quickly in the walk breaks.

Run 1

RUN / WALK / BREAKEVEN

90 sec run / 2 min walk x 6

Warm up with 5 minutes brisk walking, then alternate 90 seconds easy running with 2 minutes walking for 6 rounds. | Pace: Easy, not fast | Recovery: Rest day after

Run 2

RUN / WALK / BREAKEVEN

Repeat and relax

Repeat the same session. Focus on short relaxed steps and keeping your shoulders loose. | Pace: Easy, not fast | Recovery: Rest day after

Run 3

RUN / WALK / BREAKEVEN

Build confidence

Repeat again. Your job is consistency, not beating the previous run. | Pace: Easy, not fast | Recovery: At least 1 easy day

Week 3: First longer reps

Introduce 3-minute runs while keeping generous walking recoveries.

Run 1

RUN / WALK / BREAKEVEN

90 sec + 3 min blocks

After a 5-minute walk: run 90 sec, walk 90 sec, run 3 min, walk 3 min. Repeat the whole sequence once. | Pace: Comfortable jog | Recovery: Rest day after

Run 2

RUN / WALK / BREAKEVEN

Repeat the blocks

Same session. Keep the 3-minute efforts controlled - if you are gasping, slow down. | Pace: Comfortable jog | Recovery: Rest day after

Run 3

RUN / WALK / BREAKEVEN

Own the rhythm

Repeat once more. Aim to finish steadier, not faster. | Pace: Comfortable jog | Recovery: At least 1 easy day

Week 4: Stretch the running

Longer 3- and 5-minute efforts start to feel more like running sessions than intervals.

Run 1

RUN / WALK / BREAKTHROUGH

3 min + 5 min blocks

After a 5-minute walk: run 3 min, walk 90 sec, run 5 min, walk 2 min, run 3 min, walk 90 sec, run 5 min. Cool down with 5 minutes walking. | Pace: Steady and relaxed | Recovery: Rest day after

Run 2

RUN / WALK / BREAKTHROUGH

Repeat the progression

Use the same pattern. Let the longer runs feel patient rather than heroic. | Pace: Steady and relaxed | Recovery: Rest day after

Run 3

RUN / WALK / BREAKTHROUGH

Finish the week strong

Repeat once more. If the final 5 minutes feel tough, reduce pace before you add walk breaks. | Pace: Steady and relaxed | Recovery: At least 1 easy day

Week 5: First continuous run

This is the confidence week: three different sessions ending with your first longer continuous run.

Run 1

RUN / WALK / BREAKTHROUGH

5 min run x 3

After warming up, run 5 minutes, walk 3 minutes, and repeat until you have completed three 5-minute runs. | Pace: Comfortable, patient | Recovery: Rest day after

Run 2

RUN / WALK / BREAKTHROUGH

8 min run x 2

Run 8 minutes, walk 5 minutes, then run another 8 minutes. Slow is absolutely fine. | Pace: Comfortable, patient | Recovery: Rest day after

Run 3

CONTINUOUS / BREAKTHROUGH

20 minutes continuous

After a 5-minute brisk walk, run continuously for 20 minutes. Start slower than you think you need to. | Pace: Very easy continuous run | Recovery: At least 1 easy day

Week 6: Make continuous running normal

Use two mixed sessions, then finish with a longer continuous run.

Run 1

RUN / WALK / BREAKEVEN

5 + 8 + 5 minutes

Run 5 minutes, walk 3, run 8, walk 3, then run 5. Keep the whole session controlled. |
Pace: Easy aerobic effort | Recovery: Rest day after

Run 2

RUN / WALK / BREAKEVEN

10 min run x 2

Run 10 minutes, walk 3 minutes, then run another 10 minutes. | Pace: Easy aerobic effort |
Recovery: Rest day after

Run 3

CONTINUOUS / BREAKTHROUGH

25 minutes continuous

Run continuously for 25 minutes after your warm-up walk. Ignore pace and settle into a repeatable rhythm. | Pace: Easy continuous run | Recovery: At least 1 easy day

Week 7: Three steady runs

No more planned walk breaks. Keep all three runs easy and repeatable.

Run 1

CONTINUOUS / BREAK EVEN

25 minutes easy

Warm up with 5 minutes brisk walking, then run 25 minutes continuously and cool down afterwards. | Pace: Easy conversation effort | Recovery: Rest day after

Run 2

CONTINUOUS / BREAK EVEN

25 minutes easy

Repeat the same run. Resist the temptation to turn it into a time trial. | Pace: Easy conversation effort | Recovery: Rest day after

Run 3

CONTINUOUS / BREAK EVEN

25 minutes easy

One more steady run. Consistency now matters more than progression. | Pace: Easy conversation effort | Recovery: At least 1 easy day

Week 8: Extend the rhythm

Add a few minutes and keep the effort calm.

Run 1

CONTINUOUS / BREAKEVEN

28 minutes easy

Warm up, run 28 minutes continuously, then cool down. Keep it relaxed enough to finish with control. | Pace: Easy conversation effort | Recovery: Rest day after

Run 2

CONTINUOUS / BREAKEVEN

28 minutes easy

Repeat the run. Use a flat familiar route if that helps you relax into the duration. | Pace: Easy conversation effort | Recovery: Rest day after

Run 3

CONTINUOUS / BREAKEVEN

28 minutes easy

Finish the week with another steady 28-minute run. No sprint finish required. | Pace: Easy conversation effort | Recovery: At least 1 easy day

Week 9: Graduate

Three 30-minute runs. The goal is sustainable running, not proving how fast you can go.

Run 1

CONTINUOUS / BREAKTHROUGH

30 minutes easy

Warm up for 5 minutes, run 30 minutes continuously, then walk to cool down. | Pace: Easy conversation effort | Recovery: Rest day after

Run 2

CONTINUOUS / BREAKTHROUGH

30 minutes easy

Repeat the run and notice how different it feels from week one. | Pace: Easy conversation effort | Recovery: Rest day after

Run 3

CONTINUOUS / BREAKTHROUGH

30 minutes - graduation run

Run for 30 relaxed minutes. If that covers 5K, brilliant. If not, you have still completed the real goal: becoming someone who can run continuously. | Pace: Easy and proud | Recovery: Celebrate, then recover

Paces and session guide

TRAINING EFFORT

Comfortable

Run slowly enough to speak in short sentences.

How to use this plan

1. Run three times each week and leave a rest or very easy day between runs.
2. Start every session with around 5 minutes of brisk walking and finish with an easy walk to cool down.
3. Run slowly enough that you could speak in short sentences. Pace is irrelevant at this stage.
4. If a week feels too hard, repeat it. Progress is not cancelled because you need more time.
5. If pain changes your stride, gets worse as you continue, or persists beyond normal post-exercise soreness, stop and get appropriate advice.

YOUR NEXT PB

30 Minute 5k Training Plan

<https://www.runningfastr.com/5k-training-plan/sub-30-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.