GoalTodo

10K training plan: 10 weeks from 5K, 19 from scratch

10K

16 weeks · Mon, Nov 30 → Sun, Mar 21

Week by week

Dates	What to do
Nov 30–Dec 6	**Run-walk: Short runs, longer walks** Run-walk · run 1 min, walk 90 sec, 7 rounds · 3× Done when: You finish all three sessions Sticking point: The first week is the hardest to start. Put the three days in your calendar now.
Dec 7–13	**Run-walk: A little more running** Run-walk · run 90 sec, walk 2 min, 6 rounds · 3× Done when: You finish all three sessions
Dec 14–20	**Run-walk: Three-minute runs** Run-walk · run 3 min, walk 2 min, 4 rounds · 3× Done when: You finish all three sessions
Dec 21–27	**Run-walk: Five-minute runs** Run-walk · run 5 min, walk 2 min, 4 rounds · 3× Done when: You finish all three sessions
Dec 28–Jan 3	**Run-walk: Eight-minute runs** Run-walk · run 8 min, walk 2 min, 3 rounds · 3× Done when: You finish all three sessions
Jan 4–10	**Run-walk: Twelve-minute runs** Run-walk · run 12 min, walk 2 min, 2 rounds · 3× Done when: You finish all three sessions Sticking point: Breathing hard? Run slower. At this stage pace doesn't matter, only time on your feet.
Jan 11–17	**Running: Twenty minutes without stopping** Run without stopping · 20 min · 3× Done when: You run 20 minutes without a walking break at least once this week
Jan 18–24	**Running: A first long run** Easy run · 25 min · 2× Long run · 30 min Done when: You run all three sessions at a pace where you can talk in full sentences
Jan 25–31	**Running: Five kilometres** Easy run · 25 min · 2× Long run · 5 km Done when: You run 5 km, walking breaks allowed Sticking point: 5 km is a real milestone. A local 5K event is a friendly place to run it.
Feb 1–7	**Build: Six kilometres** Easy run · 30 min · 2× Long run · 6 km Done when: You run 6 km at a pace where you can talk

Dates	What to do
Feb 8–14	**Lighter week: Ease off and recover** Easy run · 25 min · 2× Long run · 5 km Done when: You run all three sessions, with a long run of 5 km Sticking point: Lighter weeks feel too easy. Run them anyway: this is when your body catches up with the training.
Feb 15–21	**Build: Seven kilometres** Easy run · 30 min · 2× Long run · 7 km Done when: You run 7 km at a pace where you can talk
Feb 22–28	**Build: Eight kilometres** Easy run · 30 min · 2× Long run · 8 km Done when: You run 8 km at a pace where you can talk Sticking point: If something hurts or doesn't feel right, stop. Take an extra rest day rather than run through it.
Mar 1–7	**Peak: The longest run: 9 km** Easy run · 35 min · 2× Long run · 9 km Done when: You run 9 km at a pace where you can talk, walking breaks allowed Sticking point: Practise race morning on this run: the same breakfast, kit and shoes you'll race in.
Mar 8–14	**Taper: Less running, same easy pace** Easy run · 25 min · 2× Long run · 6 km Done when: You run all three sessions, with a long run of 6 km at a pace where you can talk Sticking point: Less running can feel like losing fitness. It isn't: your legs are recovering for race day.
Mar 15–21	**Race week: Two short runs, then the race** Easy run · 20 min · 2× 10K · 10 km Done when: You cross the finish line Sticking point: Nerves make people start too fast. Run the first 2 km slower than feels right.

How the plan works

You run three times a week: two easy runs on Tuesday and Thursday, and a long run on Sunday. Keep a rest day between runs. You can move the days, as long as the long run stays on its own day with rest either side.

Easy means you can talk. Run every session, the long run too, at a pace where you could hold a conversation. Walking for a minute is always allowed.

The long run grows by a kilometre at a time, to a longest run of 9 km. You don't need to run 10 km before race day: the rested legs and the crowd do the rest.

Once you're running 5 km, this plan builds in easier weeks: a lighter week or a repeat week every few weeks. The runs get shorter or stay the same so your body can catch up. Don't skip these weeks or turn them into hard ones.

The last two weeks are easier. You run less, at the same easy pace, so you start the race rested.

If you don't run yet, the plan starts with run-walk sessions, building up to 20 minutes without stopping. The full plan repeats a few of these weeks so each step feels smaller; a shorter plan leaves the repeats out.

On a rest day you can walk, cycle or swim if you like. Keep it easy: rest days are for recovering.

Before you start

If you have a health condition, or you're worried about your health, speak to a GP before you start.

Start every run with a 5-minute warm-up walk, and end it with a 5-minute cool-down walk.

Listen to your body. Take things at your own pace, and stop if something doesn't feel right.

Pick the level that matches what you can do today. If you can't yet run 5 km comfortably, start from "I don't run yet" or follow a 5K plan first.

If you need to repeat a week, repeat it. The NHS Couch to 5K plan (https://www.nhs.uk/better-health/get-active/get-running-with-couch-to-5k/couch-to-5k-running-plan/) says the same for its run-walk weeks.

Gear

- Running shoes that support your feet. A running shop can help you choose. Wear them in on easy runs, and don't race in a new pair.
- Clothes you can move in, and a supportive sports bra if you need one.
- A watch or phone to time your runs and walks.
- Water after every run, and on warm days take some with you.
- Something reflective if you run in the dark, and routes that are well lit.

Common mistakes

- Running the easy runs too fast. If you can't talk, you're running too fast. Slow down, or walk.
- Catching up on missed runs. Don't squeeze two runs into one day or add the missed kilometres to the long run. See "If you fall behind" below.
- Skipping the lighter weeks. They are part of the plan, not a break from it.
- Adding more. Building up gradually is what keeps you running. Extra runs and faster long runs make injury more likely, not the race easier.
- Trying something new on race day: new shoes, new kit or a new breakfast. Try everything on a long run first.

Race week

- Run the two short easy runs and nothing else. No long run this week.
- Sleep well all week, not only the night before.
- The night before, lay out your kit, pin on your number and charge your watch.
- Eat a light breakfast you've tried before, early enough that it has settled before the start.
- Start slower than you think you should. Run the first 2 km at your easy pace, then decide.
- Walking breaks are fine. Many first-time 10K runners take them.

If you fall behind

Missed 1 week: If you're still in the run-walk or timed weeks, repeat the last week you finished. Otherwise carry on with the current week, keeping the long run at the distance of the last one you finished. Don't add the missed runs on top.

Missed 2 weeks: Repeat the last week you finished in full, then carry on from there. If that runs past race day, leave out a week before the longest run, never the last two weeks.

Missed 3 weeks: Go back three weeks from where you stopped and build up again. If there are no longer enough weeks, enter your race date on the plan page to see if it's still realistic, or pick a later race.

Missed 4 or more weeks: Your fitness has dropped. Choose the level that matches what you can run today, and enter a new race date on the plan page to see if it's realistic.

Sources

Hal Higdon
`https://www.halhigdon.com/training-programs/10k-training/novice-10k/`
“To participate in this 10K program, you should have no major health problems, and perhaps have done at least some jogging or walking.”

Nuffield Health
`https://www.nuffieldhealth.com/articles/fitness/8-week-10km-training-plan`
“Eight weeks is enough time to build up to running a 10k if you’re fresh off of completing a 5k”

Great Run
`https://www.greatrun.org/train-and-prepare/training-plans/10k/`
“Our 16-week Beginner 10k training plan starts with just three sessions in Week One.”

Great Run
`https://www.greatrun.org/training/how-long-does-it-take-to-run-a-10k/`
“Beginner? 8-12 weeks, depending on whether you’re starting from zero or already have a little running experience.”

NHS Better Health
`https://www.nhs.uk/better-health/get-active/get-running-with-couch-to-5k/couch-to-5k-running-plan/`
“Whichever way you follow the plan, speak to a GP first if you’re worried about your health before getting started.”

Checked on `2026-11-26`

This plan online	`https://goaltodo.com/run-a-10k?weeks=16`
Reach it with others on Welang	`https://welang.com/goals`
Reach it on your own in HourLife	`https://www.hourlife.com`

This plan is a guide, not medical advice. See a doctor before starting if you have a health condition, are pregnant, or haven't exercised in a long time.