

Beginner 10km programme

This programme is designed for a beginner runner who would like to train for a 10km run. It will focus on completing the distance comfortably, without a particular emphasis on speed.

The programme sets out a schedule of running three times a week on the following days: Tuesday, Thursday and Sunday. You can train on different days depending on when you have time, but you should keep the recommended rest days between training.

To make the most of this programme, you should be able to run/walk 5km in less than 40 minutes, and you may have already completed the beginner 5km programme.

Beginner 10km programme								
	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4	Week 5	Week 6	Week 7	Week 8 (taper week)
Mon	Rest day	Rest day	Rest day	Rest day	Rest day	Rest day	Rest day	Rest day
Tues	Run 15 minutes, walk 1 to 2 minutes, run 15 minutes	Run 18 minutes, walk 1 to 3 minutes, run 18 minutes	Run 30 minutes continuously	Run 30 minutes continuously	Run 30 minutes continuously	Run 30 minutes continuously	Run 45 minutes continuously	Run 45 minutes continuously
Wed	Rest day	Rest day	Rest day	Rest day	Rest day	Rest day	Rest day	Rest day
Thur	Run 15 minutes, walk 1 to 2 minutes, run 15 minutes	Run 18 minutes, walk 1 to 3 minutes, run 18 minutes	Run 30 minutes continuously	Run 30 minutes continuously	Run 40 minutes continuously	Run 40 minutes continuously	Run 45 minutes continuously	Run 30 minutes continuously
Fri	Rest day	Rest day	Rest day	Rest day	Rest day	Rest day	Rest day	Rest day
Sat	Rest day	Rest day	Rest day	Rest day	Rest day	Rest day	Rest day	Rest day
Sun	Run 2 miles continuously. Record your time here:	Run 5km (or 3 miles) continuously. Record your time here:	Run 3 miles continuously. Record your time here:	Run 40 to 45 minutes continuously	Run 4 miles continuously. Record your time here:	Run 50 minutes continuously	Run 10km (approximately 6 miles) continuously. Record your time here:	10km race. Record your time here:

Training aims

Weeks one and two

The first two weeks of this programme are designed to get you into the swing of running. The key to improving your fitness is continuous movement. These two weeks aim to get you to a level where you can run efficiently and continuously, as it's important that you reach this level before you increase your distance.

Running flat-out won't allow you to develop your fitness in the aerobic way this programme is designed for. You should be aiming to run at a [perceived effort level](#) of around six to seven

Running your first measured mile will probably be easier than you think. Start with five minutes of brisk walking to warm up before you get to your start point. Then, when you are ready, start your watch and set off round the course. Note your time at the end of the course. Don't forget to do at least five minutes of walking to warm down before having a good stretch.

As your fitness improves, you will get faster over the one to two mile distances and this is an excellent way to chart your progress. Don't worry if your mile times over longer distances don't show the same improvement. This is because your body will tire over longer distances, so your overall running pace slows to allow you to keep going.

During these first few weeks your fitness level may be increasing rapidly and you might still be losing excess body fat. Because of this, you may find that you are getting faster - but don't push yourself too hard. If you

are hitting 10 to 11 minutes per mile over the 5km (three miles) distance, that is a good achievement. You should aim to keep to this pace in training while you build up your mileage by running longer distances. This will bring you over the finishing line in just over one hour - a very respectable time for your first 10km event.

Weeks three and four

Now that you have completed the first two weeks, you should be able to maintain a comfortable steady run at effort level six to seven. At this effort level, your breathing is controlled and you shouldn't feel any discomfort. You are also burning off excess fat. The rest of the programme is about building up your distance and increasing your body's endurance.

In week four, you are building up your continuous running distance, while making sure that your effort remains aerobic and comfortable. Keep an eye on your running pace and use a measured mile course to chart your progress. The long run on Sunday may be a challenge, so be mentally prepared for it and don't start out too fast. Pacing yourself and setting achievable goals are the keys to enjoying running longer distances.

Weeks five and six

In weeks five and six you are starting to push your training to more than 40 minutes per run. These are classed as "long runs". They will probably feel like a bit of a slog at first, but you will be surprised how quickly you get used to it.

Because you are running for longer, you will be tapping more and more into your energy stores. It's essential to take on enough fuel if you want to be able to train again in the next session. You should aim to time your runs so you can take in some complex carbohydrates - found in foods such as pasta and bananas - within the first hour after your exercise session. Your body will then be stimulated to store these complex carbohydrates as glycogen and not as fat.

- [More information about nutrition and hydration](#)

You may become dehydrated when running longer distances, so remember to drink enough water. Longer distances also put extra demands on your muscles and you will be more prone to stiffening up and small muscle tears. You should [stretch](#) thoroughly before and after each run, as this will help you to recover and make the most of your training. If you don't do enough stretching, you will really feel the discomfort the next day. Not stretching enough could also reduce your performance during the next session and this will slow down your progress.

Weeks seven and eight

As with most training programmes, you will have done the majority of the work by the last week, which in this programme is week eight. The hard work comes in week seven with two 45 minute endurance runs and the long run of 10km (six miles) on Sunday. The aim of the two 45 minute runs is to test your limits and make sure you are pacing yourself correctly. If you are running too fast, you will be starving your muscles of oxygen and depleting your glycogen stores. You may have noticed this on the previous 50 minute run at the end of week six - you may have felt sudden discomfort and tiredness, causing you to slow down. Your body will have improved from this, but if you are still running too fast, you may start to tire again at about 40 to 45 minutes into your run.

It's a good idea to set off at the pace you have calculated for your 10km race (for example 10 to 11 minutes per mile). Can you sustain this 10km race pace for the full 45 minutes? If you find it easy, you could increase the pace slightly for the last five minutes. Make a rough note of your distance - running four miles or more in 45 minutes is about right. Do the same again on the Thursday, but try to increase the pace in the last eight to 10 minutes. If you find that you are still feeling good, for the 10km (six mile) run you can run at your 10km

race pace for the whole distance. When you hit 45 minutes you should have plenty of energy left to cruise on for the last two miles. Don't forget to stretch at the end.

It's this level of performance that you are aiming to take with you on the day of the race. If it was a bit of a challenge or you finished feeling tired, don't worry. Week eight will allow you to recover ready for a good performance on the day. If you started training early, you may even have time to repeat this week for extra preparation.

Week eight is a "taper" week, meaning that you ease off the training so that your body can recover and be rested for the race. The 40 minute run on Tuesday should be an easy recovery run at a [perceived effort level](#) of five (less than race pace). This is designed to help you recover from the six mile run from the week before. The 30 minute run on Thursday should be short and brisk - try to run faster than your race pace. However, don't sprint and move into anaerobic training - this run should be invigorating but not exhausting. You should stretch, drink plenty of water and eat plenty of carbohydrates for the next two days to prepare you for the race.

Race day

You have already covered all but 400 metres of the race distance and you should be familiar with the race pace you are going to use. So, on the race day itself just tie up your laces, start your stopwatch and go. Don't get dragged into running too fast by the rest of the crowd - run your own race and at your own pace. If you do, you may find that you save enough energy for a strong finish.