

10k Training plans

10k runs are by far the most popular type of run. They are exceptionally versatile, with a huge variety of runners taking part. Runners who have never ran anything over a 5k join in to expand their distance, others use it as a social exercise, for some people it is the focus of their whole running season, a huge challenge. For others it could be part of training for longer distances, an attempt to improve on time or just a leg stretch. Unsurprisingly the training plans for 10k's are just as versatile. (Fartlek=Swedish name for continuous training with changes of pace)

2 WEEK PLANS

If you are short on time for training, or decide to enter a race at the last minute even if you are a total beginner here is a 2 week plan that should get you through one way or another.

3 day a week plan

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Week 1	Rest	2M warm-up, then 5-6 x 3 mins with 2-min recoveries, then 2M cool-down	Rest	Rest or 40-45 min fartlek with plenty of variety	Rest	2M easy; then either 2M fast or 6 x 400m with 90-sec recoveries; then 2M easy	70-75 mins easy
Week 2	Rest	2M warm-up, then 5-6 x 2 mins with 90-sec recoveries, then 2M cool-down	Rest	2M easy then 1M fast	Rest	Rest or 4M easy with a few strides	RACE

For more experienced or frequent runners with a 2 week training Schedule try the plan below

5 day a week plan

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Week 1	Rest or 4-6M easy	2M warm-up, then 8-12 x 400m with 200m jog recoveries, then 2M cool-down	40-50 mins relaxed, with strides	40-60 mins fartlek	Rest	2M easy, then 4 x 1M with 3-min recoveries, then 2M easy	70-90 mins easy
Week 2	Rest or 4-6M easy	2M warm-up, then 6-8 x 500m with 300m jog recoveries, then 2M cool-down	40-50 mins relaxed, with strides	35-50 mins short-effort, low-intensity fartlex	Rest	3-5M easy, with a few strides	RACE

4 WEEK PLANS

Four weeks is a decent enough time to train for a 10k enough time to improve your fitness and strengthen your legs.

Here are 3 training plans, they all assume you are already training a min of 3 times a week at roughly 16miles in total, not to worry if you are a beginner, simply try to put the focus on building the length of your runs and don't pay too much attention to the speed.

3 days a week plan

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Week 1	Rest	2M easy, then 8 x 400m or 80 secs fast, with 400m or 2-3 min jog recoveries, then 2M easy	Rest	Rest	Rest	5-7M easy, inc 10 x 100m strides	5M easy
Week 2	Rest	2M warm-up, then 6 x 600m or 2-mins, with 400m or 3-min jog recoveries, then 2M cool-down	Rest	Rest	Rest	5-7M steady, inc hills	6M easy
Week 3	Rest	2M warm-up, then 5 x 800m or 3-mins, with 400m or 3-4 min jog recoveries, then 2M cool-down	Rest	Rest	Rest	15 mins easy, 20 mins fartlek, 15 mins easy	7M easy
Week 4	Rest	2M warm-up, then 6 x 400m or 80 secs, with 400m or 2-3 min jog recoveries, then 2M cool-down	Rest	4-5M easy	Rest	Rest	RACE

5 days a week plan

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Week 1	Rest	2.5M warm-up, then 6 x 600m or 2 mins, with 400m or 2-3 min jog recoveries, then 2.5M cool-down	6M easy, inc 8 - 10 x 100m strides	3-4M fast but controlled	Rest	6-8M easy, inc hills	6-7M easy
Week 2	Rest	2-2.5M warm-up, then 5 x 800m or 3 mins, with 400m or 2.5-min recoveries, then 2-2.5M cool-down	5-7M easy, inc 8-12 strides	2M easy, 2M fast, 2M easy	Rest	6-8M fartlek, emphasis on pyramid efforts	7-8M easy
Week 3	Rest	2-2.5M warm-up, then 5 x 1000m or 3.5-4 mins, with 400m or 4-min recoveries, then 2-2.5M cool-down	Rest	6-8M steady, inc hills	Rest	2M easy, 1M fast, 1M easy, 1.5M fast, 2M easy	8-9M easy
Week 4	Rest	2-2.5M warm-up, then 4 x 800m or 3 mins, with 400m or 4-min recoveries, then 2.5M cool-down	5-7M easy	6M steady	Rest	3-5M easy, inc a few strides	RACE

6-7 days a week plan

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Week 1	5-6M at 80% max	2M warm-up, then 6 x 800m or 3 mins, with 400m jog recoveries, then 2M cool-down	5-7M easy, inc strides	2M easy, 2M fast, but not 100%	Rest	60 mins mixed fartlek	8M easy
Week	5-6M with	2M warm-up, then	5M easy, inc	7M easy	Rest	Warm up, then	9-10M

2	gradual acceleration	5 x 1000m or 3 mins, with 400m jog recoveries, then 2M cool-down	hills			pyramids: 2 x 2, 3, 4 mins at 80% with same recovery, then cool down	easy
Week 3	5M strides	2M warm-up, then 5 x 1200m or 3 mins, with 400m jog recoveries, then 2M cool-down	5M very easy, OR rest	30-40 mins light fartlek, with short efforts (30, 40, 50 secs)	Rest	Warm up, then 4 x 400m with 400m jog recoveries, then 10-min cool-down	10-12M easy
Week 4	4-5M easy	2M warm-up, then 4 x 800m or 3 mins, with 400m jog recoveries, then 2M cool-down	6-7M easy	6M steady	Rest	4-5M easy, inc a few strides	RACE

8 WEEK PLANS

8 weeks is enough time to see a real improvement in your fitness. As with the 4 week plans you can be flexible with the amount of days you wish to train. You don't have to stick steadfastly to when the training days are, adjust them to suit your schedule, just don't do two hard sessions back to back.

3 days a week plan

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Week 1	Rest	2M easy, then 4 x 400m, with 400m or 3-min jog recoveries, then 2M easy	Rest	Rest	Rest	2-2.5M easy, 2M faster, jog to finish	2-3M easy
Week 2	Rest	2M easy, then 4 x 600m or 2 mins, with 400m or 3-min jog recoveries, then 2M easy	Rest	Rest	Rest	15 mins easy, 15 mins fast but controlled, jog to finish	3-4M easy
Week 3	Rest	2-2.5M easy, then 4 x 800m or 3 mins, with 400m or 3-4 min jog recoveries, then 2M easy	Rest	Rest	Rest	30-40 mins relaxed, inc hills	4-6M easy
Week 4	Rest	2M easy, then 8 x 400m or 70-80 secs, with 400m or 3-min recoveries, then 2M easy	Rest	Rest	Rest	5M, first half at 70%, second at 85%	5-7M easy
Week 5	Rest	2M easy, then 8 x 500m or 90-100 secs, with 400m or 3-min recoveries, then 2M easy	Rest	Rest	Rest	35-45 mins fartlek with varied efforts and recoveries	6-7M easy
Week 6	Rest	2-2.5M easy, then 5 x 800m or 3 mins, with 400m or 3-min jog recoveries, then 2-2.5M easy	Rest	Rest	Rest	6-7.5M gradual acceleration in 2.5M segments, ie 70%-80%-90%	7-8M easy
Week 7	Rest	2-3M easy, then 10 x 400m or 70-80 secs, then 400m or 2-3-min jog recoveries, then 2-3M easy	Rest	Rest	Rest	Warm up, then 4 x 1M or 5.5-6min, with 3-4 min recoveries, then cool down	7-9M easy

Week 8	Rest	2-3M easy, then 5-6x 500m or 90-100 secs, with 400m or 2-3 min jog recoveries, then 2-3M easy	Rest	4-5M easy	Rest	Rest	RACE
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5 days a week plan

Week 1	Rest	2M warm-up, then 8 x 400m or 75 secs, with 400m or 2-3 min recoveries, then 2M cool-down	4-7M slow	30-35 mins light fartlek	Rest	2M easy, then 3 x 1M or 6 mins at 80-85%, with 800m or 3-4 min recoveries, then 2M easy	5M easy
Week 2	Rest	2M warm-up, then 6 x 600m or 2mins, with 400m or 2-min recoveries, then 2M cool-down	4-7M slow	30-40 mins steady, inc hills	Rest	2M easy, then 3 x 2000m or 7-8 mins at 80-85%, with 1000m or 4-min recoveries, then 2M easy	6M easy
Week 3	Rest	2M warm-up, then 5 x 800m or 3 mins, with 1000m or 5-min recoveries, then 2M cool-down	4-8M slow	30-40 mins fartlek	Rest	Warm up, then 15-20 mins at 70%, then 15-20 mins at 85%-90%, then cool down	7M easy
Week 4	Rest	2M easy, then 3 sets of 3 x 500m or 90-100 secs, with 300m or 2-min recoveries and 800m or 6 mins between sets, then 2M cool-down	4-7M slow	20 mins tempo run	Rest	Warm up, then 4 x 1M or 6-8 mins, with 1200m or 4-min recoveries, then cool down	8M easy
Week 5	Rest	2-2.5M warm-up, then 10-12 x 400m or 80-90 secs, with 400m or 2-3 min recoveries, then 2.5M cool-down	Rest OR slow run	40-45 mins, inc hills	Rest	Pyramid session: 1K, 2K, 3K at slower than 10K pace, with half-length recoveries. Feel in control of the session and use good terrain	9M easy
Week 6	Rest	2-3M warm-up, then 3 sets of 3 x 600m or 3 mins, with 400m or 2-3 min recoveries and 1000m or 7 mins between sets, then 2-3M cool-down	5-8M slow	40-45 mins light fartlek	Rest	Warm up, then 5 x 1M or 6-8 mins, with 1000m or 4-min recoveries, then long, slow cool-down	9-10M easy
Week 7	Rest	2-3M warm-up, then 12-15 x 400m or 80 secs, with 400m or 2-3 min jog recoveries, then 2-3M cool-down	4-5M slow OR rest	20 mins tempo run	Rest	6-9M gradual acceleration, with last 2-3M at 10K pace	10+M easy
Week 8	Rest	2M warm-up, then 3 x 1200m or 4 mins, with 400m or 2-3 min recoveries, then 2M cool-down	4-7M slow	30-40 mins easy	Rest	3-5M easy, inc a few strides	RACE

6-7 days a week plan

Week 1	5M easy, inc strides	2-3M warm-up, then 8 x 400m or 70-80 secs, with 400m or 2-min recoveries, then 2-3M cool-down	5-7M slow	35-40 mins light fartlek	Rest	Warm up, then 20 mins fast tempo run, but not flat out	7-8M easy
Week 2	5M easy, inc strides	2-3M warm-up, then 6 x 800m or 3 mins, with 400m or 2-min recoveries, then 2-3M cool-down	4-6M slow	Out and back run: 15-18 mins out; faster back	Rest	Warm up, then 30 mins hard work on hills, then cool down	8-9M easy
Week 3	5-6M with gradual acceleration	2-3M warm-up, then 5 x 1000m or 4 mins, with 400m or 3-min recoveries, then 2-3M cool-down	Rest OR 5-7M easy	40 mins steady, inc hills	Rest	Warm up, then 2 sets of 4, 5, and 6 mins at 10M pace, with half-length recoveries and 6 mins between sets, then cool down	9-10M easy
Week 4	5-6M easy, inc strides	2-3 warm-up, then 2 sets of 7 x 400m, with 400m jog recoveries	5-8M slow	25-30 mins tempo run	Rest	2-4M easy, then 3 x 1M at 10K pace, then 2-3M easy	9-11M easy

		and 5-6 mins between sets, then 2-3M cool-down					
Week 5	5M steady, inc strides	2-3M warm-up, then 5 x 1200m or 4 mins, with 400m or 2-min recoveries, then 2-3M cool-down	5-7M easy	45-50 mins fartlek	Rest	2-4M easy, then 4 x 400m or 80-90 secs, with 400m or 2-min recoveries, then 2-3M easy	10-12M easy
Week 6	Rest OR 5-6M easy	2-3M warm-up, then 2 sets of 8 x 400m, with 400m jog recoveries and 5-6 mins between sets, then 2-3M cool-down	6-8M slow	Out and back run: 20-22 mins out; faster back	Rest	7-8M tempo run	10-12M easy
Week 7	4-5M steady, inc strides	2-3M warm-up, then 5 x 1500m or 5 mins, with 600m or 3-min recoveries, then 2-3M cool-down	6-7M easy, inc strides	60 mins relaxed running, inc hills	Rest	3M easy, 3M fast, 3M easy	12+M easy
Week 8	5-6M steady, inc strides	2-3M warm-up, then 3 x 1000m or 3 mins at 10K pace, then 2-3M cool-down	5-8M easy	6M steady	Rest	4-5M easy, inc a few strides	RACE

Frequent 10k problems solved

How often can I run a 10k race – Don't race too often is the short answer. Once you are well trained you can run a 10k race once every 3 weeks. Always leave 2 days of easy running before an event and 3 days after, increase this vastly for beginners.

Should I use the drinks stations during a 10k race – If you are a beginner then yes, it is important to stay hydrated and it will allow you to slow the pace to a walk for a few moments. However try to regain your stride asap after you are done. For a sub 40 min runner there would most likely be no need but it all depends on the weather and how hydrated the runners is.

Can I run 5k's in the meantime? – Most definitely. These could be an important component to your 10k training. By running 5k's at a faster pace than you would a 10k you are training your legs to go faster and you will feel more controlled over the 10k distance.

What time should I aim for? – It depends on your level. If you are a complete beginner measure how far you run in 20 min at a reasonable but sustainable pace (retrace your route in car if needs be) Divide the time (20 min) by your distance (say for example 2 miles) then multiply this figure by 6.2 (so in this example 62 minutes) and you should get a rough idea of how long it will take you.

If you have recently done a 5k multiply your time by 2.1 so if it took you 35 min to complete a 5k it will take you 73.5 min to finish a 10k. If you have completed a ½ marathon divide your time by 2.22.

What if I don't complete my training or can't stick to it all? – Try your best to train as often as possible, with sensible rest days, however if you fail in your targets or fall short, or simply don't see the type of improvement you had hoped for don't give up. Worst case scenario you walk the 10k! It is better to keep going at a lower level than to give up completely, it is still great for your health and fitness as well as your mind.

What if I have never ran far before at all? – Again, you can walk it. If you know you can walk the 10k (around 6 miles) there is nothing to be afraid of. You can build up to jogging as much as possible by following the 10k guides, or even just jogging as long as you can (even if it is only 30 sec's) then walking until you recover and repeating and building up the times slowly. If possible try a 5k before you do the 10k. If you don't feel you could walk 10k then building up your general fitness is necessary before you attempt to train for a 10k. Try power walking and joining in long walking events first.

If you have any other questions regarding training for a 10k do not hesitate to contact us for further information

(All plans have been based on expert trainers tips from Runners world)

