

# Five Weeks to Your First 5K

---

Are you ready to conquer the 5K? This popular race of 3.1 miles is a great way to get your racing legs warmed up, challenge yourself, and have some fun in the process. Almost every community has at least one 5k race during the year and there are nearly 8,000 races yearly in the United States. Go find your race, prepare, and lets go.

First, honestly assess your running level. Training could be a frustrating experience if you try to do too much too soon. The days of these 5k programs can be changed to fit your schedule. Don't run on consecutive days and consider cross training on days when you don't run (cycling, elliptical trainer, swimming, yoga, weight training, exercise video). Start each run/walk session with 5 minutes of walking to warm up and end each run with 5 minutes of walking to cool down.

Sample Schedule:

Sunday- rest

Monday- cycling 30 minutes

Tuesday- run

Wednesday- weight training 45 minutes

Thursday- run

Friday- swimming 1 hour

Saturday- run

Level 1: Brand new to running or returning to running after a long break. Your goal will be to finish the race using a combination of running and walking.

	Tuesday	Thursday	Saturday
Week 1	Run 1 min, walk 1 min, total of 8x	Run 1 min, walk 1 min, total of 10x	Run 1 min, walk 1 min, total of 15x
Week 2	Run 2 min, walk 1 min, total of 6x	Run 2 min, walk 1 min, total of 8x	Run 2 min, walk 1 min, total of 10x
Week 3	Run 3 min, walk 1 min, total of 5x	Run 3 min, walk 1 min, total of 6x	Run 3 min, walk 1 min, total of 8x
Week 4	Run 4 min, walk 1 min, total of 5x	Run 4 min, walk 1 min, total of 6x	Run 4 min, walk 1 min, total of 8x
Week 5	Run 5 min, walk 1 min, total of 5x	Run 5 min, walk 1 min, total of 6x	Race day: 3.1 miles run/walk

Level 2: You've been running 1-2 times per week covering distances from 1-3 miles each time.

	Tuesday	Thursday	Saturday
--	---------	----------	----------

Week 1	run 15 min. easy	run 20 min. easy	run 2 miles
Week 2	run 20 min. easy	run 15 min. easy	run 2.5 miles
Week 3	run 25 min. easy	run 20 min. easy	run 3 miles
Week 4	run 25 min. easy	run 30 min. easy	run 3.5 miles
Week 5	run 25 min. easy	run 20 min. easy	Race day: 3.1 miles

Level 3: You've been running 3 times per week covering 2-5 miles each time.

	Tuesday	Thursday	Saturday
Week 1	30 min. easy	30 min. tempo	3 miles
Week 2	35 min. easy	30 min. hills	4 miles
Week 3	30 min. easy	35 min. tempo	3 miles
Week 4	35 min. easy	40 min. hills	5 miles
Week 5	35 min easy	30 min. tempo	Race day: 3.1 miles

### Terms

Easy: conversational pace, 60-75% maximum heart rate

Tempo: run at an easy pace for .25 miles, pick up pace to moderately hard for .25 miles, run easy .25 miles, repeat

Hills: find hills along your running route or use the incline on treadmill, run at an easy pace

### 5k race day tips:

- 1) Don't eat a huge meal the night before. This is not the time to carbo load or you may find yourself feeling sick. Eat a small, easily digestible meal 1-2 hours before the race (granola; yogurt and fruit; peanut butter and banana).
- 2) Most race t-shirts are cotton, so avoid wearing it unless you don't mind a sweat-soaked shirt.
- 3) If you haven't pre-registered, arrive an hour early.
- 4) Find a bathroom close to the start line.
- 5) Warm up by walking or jogging slowly for 5-10 minutes before the race starts.

6) Don't be afraid to tell others that this is your first race. You'll be surprised at how many first-timers you'll meet.

7) Line up in the back, leave the front to the competitive people.

8) Start slowly and then speed up your pace if you feel good halfway through.

9) Don't be embarrassed to stop and walk, others will be walking too.

10) Don't worry about being last, you probably won't be the last one and you'll still be ahead of everyone still at home in bed.

11) Have fun and enjoy the experience.