

10K PROGRAM FOR BEGINNING COMPETITORS 12 WEEK CYCLE

10K races have become very popular in the past several years. The need to maintain a pace close to the lactate threshold level, for a long period of time, provides a great challenge to athletes of all levels and abilities.

12 Week training cycle

This is a 12-week cycle that is designed to prepare a beginning competitor to peak for a 10K race. The peak developed from this program may be maintained for approximately 1 to 3 weeks. After the completion of the 12-week cycle, there should be a short period of rest and reduced mileage, followed by the start of a new training cycle at a higher level.

A beginning competitor is an athlete that is relatively new to racing and competition. This type of runner is just beginning to follow a structured training program, but has the desire to improve race performance and is willing to commit to a consistent training regime, including some high intensity workouts.

Before beginning this program, you should have finished at least 2 races of at least 5K distance, and be prepared to follow a structured training program.

This program is general in nature. Feel free to make adjustments in order to accommodate scheduling conflicts and individual goals and rate of improvement.

The Workouts

This program contains rest days, easy runs, and long runs, speed training workouts, lactate threshold workouts, form drills and strength training. This is an introduction to a structured and planned training program. It is designed to begin to build speed, improve speed endurance and increase both general and functional strength.

Easy Runs

Easy runs should be run at a pace that feels fairly comfortable. You should be breathing hard, but should be able to carry on a conversation. If you are breathing so hard that you cannot talk, you are running too hard. If you can sing, you are running too easily.

Rest

Rest is a very important part of any training program. Without proper rest, your muscles and connective tissues will not have an opportunity to recover and strengthen properly. On the days calling for complete rest, do no strenuous activity. On the days calling for rest or cross training, you can rest totally or do some cross training. Cross training can be any activity other than running. You could go for a walk, swim, bicycle or do nothing. It is up to you.

Long Runs

Long runs are over distance runs or runs that are a bit longer than the goal distance. This type of run builds

strength, endurance and improves the confidence to complete long race distances.

Speed Training

Speed training is short to medium length repeats that are run at paces that range from race pace to an all out effort. The goal of this type of workout is to improve overall speed and the ability to maintain a quality pace for long distances.

Lactate Threshold Workouts

Lactic acid is a natural by-product of energy production. Normally, excess lactic acid is converted to energy. When the intensity of your running reaches a certain point, more lactic acid is produced than your body can process. This causes a decrease in the efficiency of your muscles. The point at which lactic acid begins to accumulate in your muscles is your lactate threshold. The goal of these workouts is to raise your lactate threshold level.

Strength Training

A proper strength training program will improve your speed, power, running economy and help prevent injuries. Strength training should be performed two or three times per week.

During the initial stages of your training cycle, you should perform a high number of repetitions and at a low level of intensity. As your running program progresses, so should your strength training. Gradually increase the intensity and lower the repetitions.

There are three types of strength training exercises that you should perform: General strength exercises; running specific exercises; and plyometric exercises. General strength exercises will build overall upper and lower body strength. [Running specific exercises](#) will strengthen the motions involved in running. [Plyometric exercises](#) are explosive strength exercises that will improve your running specific strength, power and economy.

Form Drills

[Form drills](#) are designed to improve your running form, technique and economy. Running economy is a measure of the efficiency of your running. The goal is to run efficiently with the least amount of effort.

Standard Warm Up

The following routine should be followed whenever a warm up is called for: Run easy for 10 minutes or until you feel loose, stretch, run 4 x 100 meter acceleration strides, perform 5 minutes of form drills.

Week 1

[Monday](#) – Rest.

Rest is not just a day off; it is an important and planned part of a training program. Rest allows your muscles to recover and strengthen.

[Tuesday](#) – 45-minute fartlek run. Fartlek is a Swedish word for speed play. This is a non-structured workout in which you run at a steady pace and add in short surges of faster running.

For this workout, alternate running for 5 minutes at an easy pace with 1 minute at 5K pace.

Wednesday – Run 3 miles easy. Avoid the temptation to increase your pace on these easy run days. You will have many opportunities to run hard. Run 3 acceleration strides.

Thursday – Standard warm up. Run 4 x 400 meters at 15 seconds per mile faster than your current 5K pace. Jog for 400 meters between repeats. Cool down with 800 meters of jogging.

Friday – Run 3 miles easy. Run 3 acceleration strides.

Saturday – Run 3 miles easy. Run 3 acceleration strides.

Sunday – Run 3 miles at an easy pace.

Week 2

Monday – Rest

Tuesday – Standard warm up, run 4 x 800 meter repeats at 5 seconds per mile faster than your 5K pace. Jog for 800 meters between repeats. Cool down with 800 meters of jogging.

Wednesday – Run 3 miles easy. Run 3 acceleration strides.

Thursday – Standard warm up. Run 6 x 400 meter repeats at 15 seconds per mile faster than your 5K pace. Jog for 400 meters between repeats. Cool down with 800 meters of jogging.

Friday – Run 4 miles easy. Run 3 acceleration strides.

Saturday – Run 4 miles easy. Run 3 acceleration strides.

Sunday – Run 4 miles at an easy pace.

Week 3

Monday – Rest

Tuesday – Standard warm up. Run 5 x 800 meter repeats at 5 seconds per mile faster than your 5K pace. Jog for 800 meters between repeats. Cool down with 800 meters of jogging.

Wednesday – Run 4 miles easy. Run 3 acceleration strides.

Thursday – Standard warm up. Run 6 x 400 meter repeats at 15 seconds per mile faster than your current 5K pace. Jog for 400 meters between repeats. Run 4 x 200 meters at full, but controlled pace. Jog for 100 meters between repeats. Jog for 800 meters between the two sets. Cool down with 800 meters of jogging.

Friday – Run 4 miles easy. Run 3 acceleration strides.

Saturday – Run 4 miles easy. Run 3 acceleration strides.

Sunday – Standard warm up. Run 5 miles at 30 seconds per mile slower than your 10K pace or 45 seconds per mile slower than your 5K pace.

Week 4

Monday – Rest

Tuesday – Standard warm up, run 6 x hill repeats. Find a hill that is fairly steep and at least 100 meters in length. Run up the hill at a pace that feels like 5K pace. Run 20 meters past the top of the hill and jog back down. Repeat this 6 times.

Wednesday – Run 5 miles easy. Run 3 acceleration strides.

Thursday – Standard warm up. Run 5 x 800 meter repeats at 5 seconds per mile faster than your 5K pace. Jog for 400 meters between repeats. Run 4 x 200 meter repeats at full but controlled pace. Jog for 100 meters between repeats. Jog for

800 meters between the two sets. Cool down with 800 meters of jogging.

Friday – Run 5 miles easy. Run 3 acceleration strides.

Saturday – Run 5 miles easy. Run 3 acceleration strides.

Sunday – Standard warm up. Run 5 miles at 30 seconds per mile slower than 10K pace or 45 seconds per mile slower than 5K pace.

Week 5

Monday – Rest

Tuesday – Standard warm up. Run 3 x 1200 meter repeats at 10K pace or 15 seconds per mile slower than 5K pace. Jog for 800 meters between repeats. Cool down with 800 meters of jogging.

Wednesday – Run 5 miles easy. Run 3 acceleration strides.

Thursday – Standard warm up. Run 6 x 800 meter repeats at 5 seconds per mile faster than 5K pace. Jog for 400 meters between repeats. Then run 1200 meters at 10K pace. Cool down with 800 meters of jogging.

Friday – Run 5 miles easy. Run 3 acceleration strides.

Saturday – Run 5 miles easy. Run 3 acceleration strides.

Sunday – Standard warm up. Run 6 miles. Run the first 5 miles at an easy pace and the last mile at 10K pace. Cool down with 800 meters at an easy pace.

Week 6

Monday – Rest

Tuesday – Standard warm up, run 8 x hill repeats. Run the repeats at what feels like 5K pace. Run 20 to 50 meters past the top of the hill. Jog back down.

Wednesday – Run 5 miles easy. Run 3 acceleration strides.

Thursday – Standard warm up. Run for 20 minutes alternating between 30 seconds at 20 seconds per mile faster than 5K pace and 30 seconds at an easy pace. Cool down with 5 minutes at an easy pace.

Friday – Run 5 miles easy. Run 3 acceleration strides.

Saturday – Run 5 miles easy. Run 3 acceleration strides.

Sunday – Standard warm up. Run 7 miles at 30 seconds per mile slower than 10K pace or 45 seconds per mile slower than 5K pace.

Week 7

Monday - Rest

Tuesday - Standard warm up, run 4 x 1200 meter repeats at 10K pace or 15 seconds per mile slower than your 5K pace. Jog 800 meters between repeats. Cool down with 800 meters of jogging.

Wednesday - Run 6 miles easy. Run 3 acceleration strides.

Thursday - Standard warm up. Run 2 x 800/1200 meter supersets. Run 800 meters at 5K pace, then slow down to 10K pace for 1200 meters. Do not rest between the distances. Recover between the two sets with 800 meters at an easy pace. Cool down with 800 meters at an easy pace.

Friday - Run 6 miles easy. Run 3 acceleration strides.

Saturday - Run 6 miles easy.

Sunday - Standard warm up. Run 7 miles. Run the first 6 miles at an easy pace and the last mile at 10K pace. Cool down with 800 meters at an easy pace.

Week 8

Monday - Rest

Tuesday - Standard warm up, run 2 x 2400 meter repeats at 10K pace. Run 800 meters at an easy pace between the repeats. Cool down with 800 meters at an easy pace.

Wednesday - Run 6 miles easy. Run 3 acceleration strides.

Thursday - Standard warm up. Run 1 x 200/800/1600 meter supersets. Run 200 meters at nearly full pace, 800 meters at 5K pace and 1600 meters at 10K pace. Take no rest between the three distances. Cool down with 800 meters at an easy pace.

Friday - Run 6 miles easy. Run 3 acceleration strides.

Saturday - Run 6 miles easy. Run 3 acceleration strides.

Sunday - Standard warm up. 8 miles at 30 seconds per mile slower than 10K pace.

Week 9

Monday - Rest

Tuesday - Standard warm up, run 3 x 1600 meter repeats at 10K pace or 15 seconds per mile slower than 5K pace. Jog for 800 meters between repeats. Cool down with 800 meters of jogging. If you are having trouble maintaining your pace, increase the distance of your recovery jogs.

Wednesday - Run 6 miles easy. Run 3 acceleration strides.

Thursday - Standard warm up. Run 8 x 2 minute repeats at 20 seconds per mile faster than 5K pace. Recover between the repeats with 2 minutes of easy running. Cool down with 5 minutes at an easy pace.

Friday - Run 7 miles easy. Run 3 acceleration strides.

Saturday - Run 6 miles easy.

Sunday - Standard warm up. Run 5000 meters at 10K pace or 15 seconds per mile slower than 5K pace.

Week 10

Monday - Rest

Tuesday - Standard warm up. Run 4 x 1600 meter repeats at 10K pace. Run at an easy pace for 800 meters between the repeats. Cool down with 800 meters at an easy pace.

Wednesday - Run 7 miles easy. Run 3 acceleration strides.

Thursday - Standard warm up. Run 2 x 800 meter repeats at 5K pace with 400 meter recovery jogs between the repeats, 3 x 800 meter repeats at 10K pace with 400 meter recovery jogs between the repeats and 2400 meters at 10K pace. Cool down with 800 meters at an easy pace.

Friday - Run 7 miles easy. Run 3 acceleration strides.

Saturday - Run 6 miles easy.

Sunday - Standard warm up. Run 8 miles. Run the first 6 miles at an easy pace and the last 2 miles at 10K pace. Cool down with 800 meters at an easy pace.

Week 11

Monday - Rest

Tuesday - Standard warm up. Run 4 x 1600 meter repeats at 10K pace or 15 seconds per mile slower than 5K pace. Jog for 400 meters between repeats. Jog for 800 meters to cool down.

Wednesday - Run 7 miles easy. Run 3 acceleration strides.

Thursday - Standard warm up. Run 20 minutes alternating between 30 seconds at 20 seconds per mile faster than 5K pace and 30 seconds at 15 seconds per mile slower than 10K pace.

Friday - Run 7 miles easy. Run 3 acceleration strides.

Saturday - Run 7 miles easy. Run 3 acceleration strides.

Sunday - Standard warm up. Run 8 miles at an easy pace.

Week 12

Monday - Rest

Tuesday - Standard warm up. Run 2 x 800/1600 meter superset. Run 800 meters at 5K pace and then slow down to 10K pace for 1600 meters, with no rest between distances. Recover between the two sets with 800 meters at an easy pace. Cool down with 800 meters at an easy pace.

Wednesday - Run 7 miles easy. Run 3 acceleration strides.

Thursday - Standard warm up. Run 2 x 1600 meter repeats at 10K pace. Cool down with 800 meters at an easy pace.

Friday - Run 3 miles easy. Run 3 acceleration strides.

Saturday - Rest

Sunday - RACE DAY!