

From the Couch to a 5K Race (3.1 miles)

Here is an 8-week program to get you from the couch to the finish line of a 5K race. This program will ease you into running gradually until you can jog for 30 consecutive minutes. You should have a fairly good fitness base to start – be able to walk briskly for 30 minutes at a time. You may feel tempted to skip ahead in the program, or do more than is listed each week. Try to resist this temptation, as it could lead to burn out or injury. On the other hand, if you feel the workouts are too strenuous, just stretch it out. Don't progress faster than you think you are able - repeat weeks if necessary and move ahead to the next week only when you feel ready. Finally, don't worry about how fast you are running. For now, focus on gradually increasing the time that you run.

Remember that a little soreness is normal, pain is not. Be sure to check with your doctor first if you have any concerns or pre-existing medical conditions. Start each session with a brisk 5 minute warm up walk and remember to cool down after each training session.

Schedule your workouts (3-4 per week) with one day of rest in between.

Week 1: Warm up; walk for 6 minutes then jog for 1 minute. Repeat the interval 3 times. Cool down. Do a total of 3 workouts this week.

Week 2: Warm up; walk for 5 minutes then jog for 2 minutes. Repeat the interval 3 times. Cool down. Do a total of 3 workouts this week.

Week 3: Warm up; walk for 3 minutes then jog for 4 minutes. Repeat the interval 4 times. Cool down. Do a total of 4 workouts this week.

Week 4: Warm up; walk for 2 minutes then jog for 5 minutes. Repeat the interval 4 times. Cool down. Do a total of 4 workouts this week.

Week 5: Warm up; walk for 2 minutes then jog for 8 minutes. Repeat the interval 3 times. Cool down. Do a total of 4 workouts this week.

Week 6: Warm up; walk for 2 minutes then jog for 9 minutes. Repeat the interval 3 times. Do a total of 4 workouts this week.

Week 7: Warm up; walk for 1 minute then jog for 11 minutes. Repeat the interval 3 times. Do a total of 4 workouts this week.

Week 8: For your first run, walk for 5 minutes, then jog for 20 minutes and cool down. For your second run, walk for 5 minutes, then jog for 25 minutes and cool down. For your third run, walk for 5 minutes, jog for 30 minutes and cool down.

Congratulations!

