8-WEEK COUCH TO 5K PLAN

Beginner Run/Walk Progression • Miles & Kilometers

Program Goal

Safely guide complete beginners from zero running experience to completing a full 5K (3.1 miles / 5 km) continuously without injury or burnout.

Weekly Structure

3 Run/Walk interval workouts per week with rest days in between. Every session begins with a mandatory 5-minute brisk walk warm-up and 5-minute cool-down.

Brisk Walk	Easy Jog	Rest / Active	5K Goal
Purposeful stride	Conversational pace	Recovery or gentle walk	3.1 mi [5 km]

PHASE 1: BUILDING THE HABIT & AEROBIC BASE

Weeks 1 – 4

Focus on controlled breathing, comfortable paces, and allowing muscles and joints to adapt smoothly.

WEEK	MON	WORKOUT 1 (TUE)	WED	WORKOUT 2 (THU)	SAT (WORKOUT 3)
Wk 1	*Rest*	Run 60s, Walk 90s (Repeat 8x • ~1.5 mi [2.4 km])	*Rest / Walk*	Run 60s, Walk 90s (Repeat 8x • ~1.5 mi [2.4 km])	**Run 60s, Walk 90s (Repeat 8x)**
Wk 2	*Rest*	Run 90s, Walk 2 min (Repeat 6x • ~1.8 mi [2.9 km])	*Rest / Walk*	Run 90s, Walk 2 min (Repeat 6x • ~1.8 mi [2.9 km])	**Run 90s, Walk 2 min (Repeat 6x)**
Wk 3	*Rest*	2x (Run 90s, Walk 90s, Run 3m, Walk 3m) (~2 mi [3.2 km])	*Rest / Walk*	2x (Run 90s, Walk 90s, Run 3m, Walk 3m) (~2 mi [3.2 km])	**2x (Run 90s, Walk 90s, Run 3m, Walk 3m)**
Wk 4	*Rest*	Run 3m, Walk 90s, Run 5m, Walk 2.5m, Run 3m, Walk 90s, Run 5m (~2.2 mi [3.5 km])	*Rest / Walk*	Repeat Wk 4 Workout 1 (~2.2 mi [3.5 km])	**Repeat Wk 4 Workout 1 (~2.2 mi [3.5 km])**

Golden Rule of C25K: Keep Your Jog Slow!

The most common beginner mistake is running too fast during the jog intervals. You should be running at a speed where you could easily hold a conversation without gasping for breath.

PHASE 2: ENDURANCE & CONTINUOUS RUNNING

Weeks 5 – 8

Transitions from walk intervals into sustained continuous runs up to 3.1 miles (5 km).

WEEK	MON	WORKOUT 1 (TUE)	WED	WORKOUT 2 (THU)	SAT (WORKOUT 3)
Wk 5	*Rest*	Run 5m, Walk 3m, Run 5m, Walk 3m, Run 5m	*Rest*	Run 8m, Walk 5m, Run 8m	**Milestone Run: Run 20m Continuously!**
Wk 6	*Rest*	Run 5m, Walk 3m, Run 8m, Walk 3m, Run 5m	*Rest*	Run 10m, Walk 3m, Run 10m	**Run 22m Continuously** (~2.3 mi [3.7 km])
Wk 7	*Rest*	Run 25m Continuously (~2.5 mi [4.0 km])	*Rest*	Run 25m Continuously (~2.5 mi [4.0 km])	**Run 25m Continuously** (~2.5 mi [4.0 km])
Wk 8	*Rest*	Run 28m Continuously (~2.8 mi [4.5 km])	*Rest*	Run 30m Continuously (~3.0 mi [4.8 km])	**5K RACE DAY! Run 3.1 mi** 5 km

BEGINNER RUNNER SUCCESS TIPS

Key Advice

Proper Footwear

Visit a local running specialty shop to get fitted for shoes that match your arch type and stride. Wearing proper shoes prevents shin splints and knee discomfort.

Cadence & Posture

Keep your steps short and light. Avoid overstriding (landing far in front of your body). Maintain an upright posture with arms swinging comfortably at 90 degrees.

What If I Need Extra Time?

It is completely normal to repeat any week before moving to the next. Listen to your body and prioritize consistency over speed!