

THE INJURY-FREE GUIDE TO RUNNING YOUR FIRST 5 KM



YOUR FIRST 5 KM RUN

	MON	TUE	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT	SUN
1	(1 min jog, 4 min walk) x 4	REST	(1 min jog, 4 min walk) x 4	REST	(1 min jog, 4 min walk) x 4	REST	(2 min jog, 3 min walk) x 4
2	(2 min jog, 3 min walk) x 4	REST	(2 min jog, 3 min walk) x 4	REST	(3 min jog, 2 min walk) x 4	REST	(3 min jog, 2 min walk) x 4
3	(3 min jog, 2 min walk) x 4	REST	(4 min jog, 1 min walk) x 4	REST	(4 min jog, 1 min walk) x 4	REST	(4 min jog, 1 min walk) x 4
4	(3 min jog, 2 min walk) x 4	REST	(3 min jog, 2 min walk) x 4	REST	(3 min jog, 2 min walk) x 4	REST	(5 min jog, 1 min walk) x 4
5	(6 min jog, 1 min walk) x 3	REST	(6 min jog, 1 min walk) x 3	REST	(6 min jog, 1 min walk) x 3	REST	(7 min jog, 1 min walk) x 3
6	(7 min jog, 1 min walk) x 3	REST	(7 min jog, 1 min walk) x 3	REST	(8 min jog, 1 min walk) x 3	REST	(8 min jog, 1 min walk) x 3
7	(8 min jog, 1 min walk) x 3	REST	(9 min jog, 1 min walk) x 3	REST	(9 min jog, 1 min walk) x 3	REST	(9 min jog, 1 min walk) x 3
8	(5 min jog, 1 min walk) x 4	REST	(5 min jog, 1 min walk) x 4	REST	(5 min jog, 1 min walk) x 4	REST	(10 min jog, 1 min walk) x 3
9	(11 min jog, 1 min walk) x 3	REST	(11 min jog, 1 min walk) x 3	REST	(11 min jog, 1 min walk) x 3	REST	(12 min jog, 1 min walk) x 3
10	(12 min jog, 1 min walk) x 3	REST	(12 min jog, 1 min walk) x 3	REST	(15 min jog, 1 min walk) x 2	REST	(15 min jog, 1 min walk) x 2
11	20 min easy jog	REST	20 min easy jog	REST	22 min easy jog	REST	25 min easy jog
12	20 min easy jog	REST	15 min easy jog	REST	15 min easy jog	REST	5 km run – walk as needed

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by Lindsey Parry, Head Coach at CoachParry.com, Official Coach to the Comrades Marathon Association and member of the Wits Sport and Health (WiSH) Running Interest Group

The number one stumbling block for beginners is patience. The longer you have been away from regular exercise, the longer it will take before you can build up to a reasonable fitness without risking injury.

STARTING OUT

What is your cardiovascular risk? If you answer yes to two or more of the following questions it is a good idea to have a medical before embarking on any exercise regime:

- Do you have a family history of cardiovascular disease (heart attacks, strokes, high blood pressure)?
- Have you been told you suffer from any cardiovascular disease?
- Have you been diagnosed with diabetes?
- Do you smoke?
- Do you experience bouts of dizziness or shortness of breath?
- Are you more than 10 kg overweight?
- Are you over the age of 50?
- Have you exercised irregularly for several years?

The next step is getting kitted out in the correct gear. There is a lot to choose from on the market. The rule of thumb for shorts, tights, tops and socks is to make sure that they are comfortable.

One of the most important aspects of your pre-training preparation is running shoes. Although only a small percentage of running injuries can be attributed to footwear, it is not uncommon for people to start training in poor footwear, leading to issues with feet and shins. So, make sure you start out in the best pair of running shoes for you. Head to your nearest running specialist store where the staff are trained to put you in the correct pair of shoes. If you have biomechanical movement issues, it is advisable to go and see a healthcare specialist to assist in the process.

One last point before getting started: the longer you have been sedentary, the more important it is to add strength training to your plan. Strength training will help to improve your muscles, ligaments, tendons and joints for the act of moving under stress. Aim for two to three strength sessions per week. While the focus of such training is on the legs, it is important to look after your wellbeing and longevity by also focusing on whole body training.

GUIDE TO USING THE PROGRAMME EFFECTIVELY:

Less is more.

This saying has never been truer than when dealing with novice runners. Fitness is about adaptation of every system in your body. By building up slowly and making sure you rest, you will allow your joints, muscles, tendons and ligaments to strengthen and adapt to the increasing demands being placed on them by training. This may be at a slower rate than your cardiovascular (heart and blood vessels) system. Even though there is plenty of rest built into the programme, listen to your body and, if you are sore, take an extra day's rest. This will allow you to come back stronger and enjoy your next workout more. Ultimately, managing the 'dose' of the exercise with recovery will be the difference between breaking down with an injury or not. Use the programme as a guide and do what you can when you feel your body is ready for it.

Walking is important, especially for novices, in the beginning you should walk more than you run. You will achieve far better short-term results if you force yourself to run as far as you can **if** you remain injury free. But for long-term, sustainable results and to enjoy the process, build up slowly

You will need to temper your enthusiasm initially. Although it is great taking minutes off your time every week, pushing too hard each week may lead to injury.

AS YOUR 5 KM RACE DAY APPROACHES

You will ask yourself all the typical questions: 'Why am I doing this?', 'Can I do this?', 'Did I do enough training?' The answers are numerous, but the important answers are: 'Yes, you can do it' and 'Yes, you did do enough.' You can always do more next time. But as a novice, less is more and you have done weeks of consistent training.

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