Beginner 5K Runner Training Schedule

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Week	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Week 1	30-60 min walk	Rest or run/walk	1.5 m run	Rest or run/walk	1.5 m run	Rest	1.5 m run
Week 2	35-60 min walk	Rest or run/walk	1.75 m run	Rest or run/walk	1.5 m run	Rest	1.75 m run
Week 3	40-60 min walk	Rest or run/walk	2 mi run	Rest or run/walk	1.5 m run	Rest	2 m run
Week 4	45-60 min walk	Rest or run/walk	2.25 m run	Rest or run/walk	1.5 m run	Rest	2.25 m run
Week 5	50-60 min walk	Rest or run/walk	2.5 m run	Rest or run/walk	2 m run	Rest	2.5 m run
Week 6	55-60 min walk	Rest or run/walk	2.75 m run	Rest or run/walk	2 m run	Rest	2.75 m run
Week 7	60 min walk	Rest or run/walk	3 m run	Rest or run/walk	2 m run	Rest	3 m run
Week 8	30-60 min walk	Rest or run/walk	3 m run	Rest or run/walk	2 m run	Rest	**5-K Race**

HOW MUCH DO YOU NEED TO TRAIN to be able to run your first 5-K race? Some individuals who possess a reasonably good level of fitness (because they bicycle or swim or participate in other sports) could probably go out and run 3 miles on very little training. They might be sore the week after the race, but they still could finish.

But if you've made the decision to run a 5-K race, you might as well do it right. Above is an eight-week training schedule to help get you to the finish line. It assumes that you have no major health problems, are in reasonably good shape, and have done at least some jogging or walking.

If running 1.5 miles for your first workout seems too difficult, you might want to begin with the Walking Program. If the Novice Program seems too easy, consider the Intermediate Program or even the Advanced Program. But be careful not to overdo it, particularly if this is your first time training for a 5-K.

The terms used in the training schedule are explained below:

Rest: The most important day in any beginning or intermediate running program is rest. Rest days are as vital as training days. They give your muscles time to recover so you can run again. Actually, your muscles will build in strength as you rest. Without recovery days, you will not improve.

Run: Put one foot in front of the other and run. It sounds pretty simple, and it is. Don't worry about how fast you run; just cover the distance--or approximately the distance suggested. Ideally, you should be able to run at a pace that allows you to converse comfortably while you do so. This isn't always easy for beginners, so don't push too hard or too fast.

Walk/Run: This is a combination of running and walking, suggested for those in-between days when you want to do some running, but only some. There's nothing in the rules that suggests you have to run continuously, either in training or in the 5-K race itself. Use your own judgment. Run until you begin to feel fatigued, then walk until recovered. Run. Walk. Run. Walk. Another option for in-between days is to do some cross-training: biking, swimming or just plain walking. You get a little exercise, but not so much that you are fatigued for the next day's running workout.

Walk: Walking is an excellent exercise that a lot of runners overlook in their training. In the training schedule below, we suggest that you go for an hour-long walk on the day after your longest run. Don't worry about how fast you walk, or how much distance you cover. Take time to stop and sniff the flowers or enjoy a scenic view. Not all training should be difficult. If a 60-minute walk seems too much at first, begin with about 30 minutes and add 5 minutes a week until you reach 60 minutes.