5K RUN PLAN WITH LMF: A BEGINNER'S GUIDE TO RUNNING YOUR FIRST 5 KILOMETRES

Step-by-step training to start running confidently

ORIGINS AND POPULARITY OF THE PROGRAM

Program Purpose

Designed by Dave Marshall from Leading Military Fitness to help inactive people start running gradually, building fitness step by step.

Approachable Structure

The program's simple, easy-to-follow design makes it accessible to beginners.

Proven Effectiveness

Its success in building endurance motivates many to adopt a healthier lifestyle.

CORE PRINCIPLES AND GOALS

Gradual Progression

The program emphasizes gradual progression to improve fitness safely and effectively over time.

Combination of Walking and Running

Combining walking and running helps build stamina while reducing injury risks during training.

5K Completion Goal

The ultimate goal is to enable participants to complete a 5K run continuously without stopping.

WHO THE PLAN IS DESIGNED FOR

Beginners Welcome

The program is perfect for beginners who want to start running safely and build endurance gradually.

Returning to Exercise

Ideal for people returning to fitness after a break, easing back into regular physical activity safely.

Structured Running Plan

Provides a structured plan to improve running fitness while minimizing the risk of injury.

STRUCTURING THE 5K RUN PLAN

Weeks 1–4: Build the Habit			
3x per week	**Workout A**	**Workout B**	**Workout C**
1	Alternate 1 min run / 2 min walk x 5	Alternate 2 min run / 2 min walk x 5	Alternate 1 min run / 2 min walk x 5
2	Alternate 90 sec run / 2 min walk x 5	Alternate 90 sec run / 2 min walk x 5	Alternate 3 min run / 2 min walk x4
3	Alternate 2 min run / 2 min walk x 5	Alternate 2 min run / 2 min walk x 5	Alternate 2 min run / 2 min walk x 5
4	Alternate 3 min run / 90 sec walk x3	Alternate 3 min run / 90 sec walk x3	Alternate 3 min run / 90 sec walk x3
Weeks 5–8: Increase Running Time			
3x per week	**Workout A**	**Workout B**	**Workout C**
5	Alternate 5 min run / 2 min walk x 2	Alternate 7 min run / 2 min walk x 2	Alternate 9 min run / 2 min walk x 2
6	8 min run / 2 min walk x 2	8 min run / 2 min walk x 2	8 min run / 2 min walk x 2
7	10 min run / 2 min walk, then 5 min run	12 min run / 2 min walk	15 min continuous run
8	18 min continuous run	20 min continuous run	22 min continuous run
Weeks 9–12: Toward 5K			
3x per week	**Workout A**	**Workout B**	**Workout C**
9	25 min continuous run	20 min easy run	28 min continuous run
10	30 min continuous run	22 min easy run	32 min continuous run
11	35 min continuous run	25 min easy run	35 min continuous run
12	30 min easy run	20 min easy run	5K run attempt

TYPICAL WEEKLY BREAKDOWN AND TIMELINE

Program Duration

The program typically lasts between 8 to 12 weeks, providing a structured timeline for progression.

Workout Frequency

Participants engage in 3 workouts per week to build endurance gradually and consistently.

Interval Progression

Running intervals increase while walking intervals decrease to improve stamina steadily over time.

WHY HYDRATION MATTERS DURING RUNNING

Why?

When you run your body loses fluid through sweat, even a small amount of dehydration(2% of your body weight) can lead to

- Reduced endurance
- Higher Heart rate
- Feeling fatigued earlier.

Regulates Body Temperature

Water helps your body cool itself through sweating, without enough fluids:

- Your core temperature rises
- At a higher risk of over heating or of heat exhaustion

Supports Muscle Function

Electrolytes (sodium & Potassium) are lost in sweat. Without proper hydration:

- Muscles may cramp
- Coordination can drop
- Risk of injury increases.

Aids Recovery

- Transports nutrients to muscles
- Reduces soreness
- Speed up recovery time

GRADUAL PROGRESSION FROM WALKING TO RUNNING

Progressive Running Intervals

Weekly plans gradually increase running time while decreasing walking breaks to build endurance safely.

Endurance Development

Consistent progression enhances cardiovascular endurance and overall stamina for running.

Injury Risk Reduction

Gradual increase in running reduces injury risk by allowing the body to adapt over time.

IMPORTANCE OF REST AND RECOVERY DAYS

Muscle Recovery

Rest days allow muscles to repair and grow, enhancing strength and performance in future runs.

Injury Prevention

Taking rest reduces the risk of overuse injuries by preventing muscle fatigue and strain.

Performance Improvement

Adequate recovery ensures runners come back stronger and more prepared for the next training session.

ESSENTIAL PREPARATION FOR SUCCESS

CHOOSING APPROPRIATE FOOTWEAR AND GEAR

Proper Running Shoes

Wearing running shoes that fit well is essential to reduce the risk of injuries during exercise.

Comfortable Clothing

Choosing breathable and weather-appropriate clothing enhances comfort and performance while running.

BASIC WARM-UP AND COOL-DOWN ROUTINES

Purpose of Warm-Ups

Warm-ups increase blood flow and prepare muscles for physical activity, reducing injury risk.

Purpose of Cool-Downs

Cool-downs help reduce muscle stiffness and promote recovery after exercise.

SETTING ACHIEVABLE GOALS AND TRACKING PROGRESS

Importance of Realistic Goals

Setting realistic goals helps maintain motivation and prevents discouragement.

Tracking Progress

Using apps or journals to track progress supports consistent improvement and commitment.

OVERCOMING COMMON CHALLENGES

STAYING MOTIVATED THROUGH SETBACKS

Facing Challenges Normally

Encountering setbacks is a common part of any journey. Accepting this helps build resilience and persistence.

Support Networks

Relying on friends, family, or mentors provides emotional strength and encouragement during difficult times.

Celebrating Small Wins

Acknowledging minor achievements boosts motivation and reinforces progress toward larger goals.

Focus on Long-Term Benefits

Keeping future rewards in mind helps maintain motivation through short-term difficulties.

MANAGING MINOR ACHES AND INJURIES

Importance of Listening to Body

Pay attention to your body's signals to prevent aggravating minor aches and injuries.

Rest and Recovery

Rest is essential to allow minor injuries to heal properly and avoid further damage.

Use of Ice Therapy

Applying ice helps reduce swelling and numb pain in minor injuries effectively.

Seeking Medical Advice

Consult appropriate medical professionals for guidance to safely manage minor pains.

ADAPTING THE PLAN TO INDIVIDUAL NEEDS

Customise Pace

Adjust the speed of the program to match your current fitness level for optimal results.

Consider Health Conditions

Take existing health conditions into account to maintain safety and effectiveness of the plan.

Align with Schedule

Modify the program timing to fit your daily schedule ensuring consistent and sustainable progress.

REACHING THE 5K MILESTONE AND BEYOND

TIPS FOR YOUR FIRST 5K RACE DAY

Rest Well Before Race

Adequate rest before race day ensures peak physical performance and mental focus.

Eat Light Meal

Eating a light, balanced meal before the race provides energy without discomfort.

Dress Appropriately

Wear comfortable, weather-appropriate clothing and proper running shoes for optimal performance.

Pace Yourself

Maintain a steady pace to enjoy the race and finish strong without early exhaustion.

CELEBRATING ACHIEVEMENTS

Boost Confidence

Acknowledging your progress helps build self-confidence and motivation for future goals.

Share Success

Sharing your achievements with friends fosters encouragement and strengthens relationships.

Reward Yourself

Rewarding yourself acknowledges hard work and provides positive reinforcement.

Reflect on Journey

Reflecting on your journey helps appreciate growth and learn from experiences.

TRANSITIONING TO LONGER DISTANCES OR MAINTAINING FITNESS

Aiming for Longer Runs

After completing a 5K, focus on gradually increasing your running distance to build endurance safely.

Maintaining Fitness

Maintain fitness by combining regular running sessions with body weight training like at Leading Military Fitness and ensure adequate rest periods.

CONCLUSION

Manageable Fitness Journey

The LMF 5K program provides a structured and achievable plan from inactivity to running 5 kilometers.

Mindset and Preparation

The LMF 5K program provides a structured and achievable plan to set you up for success with the correct mindset & preparation.

Rewarding Achievement

Completing the program brings a satisfying sense of accomplishment and improved health benefits.

Be sure to follow us on all major Social Media Platforms

Thank you !