

THE PLAN

The following 5K plan, designed by Frankie Ruiz, is a 12-week program consisting of progressive workouts that combine easy-pace sessions with training techniques like tempo runs, long runs, intervals, striders, and fartleks. (See “Learn the Lingo” on page 32 for definitions of these terms.)

To ease into the program, Ruiz says, start with a walk-run

combo for 21 minutes (or walk at a brisk-for-you pace). Build up to doing these sessions five times per week, ignoring the tempo work and long runs noted in the program until you’re ready.

Taking your time to develop your base will serve you down the road. (If you’re new to exercise, consult with your health-care provider for medical clearance.)

WEEK	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT	SUN
1	Easy: • 21 minutes easy pace • 6 x 20-second striders	Medium: • 21 minutes medium pace • 6 x 20-second striders	Recovery: 21 minutes easy pace	Tempo: • 5 minutes easy pace • 5 minutes tempo pace • 5 minutes easy pace • 6 x 20-second striders	Recovery: 21 minutes easy pace	Long Run: 30 minutes	Rest
2	Easy: • 21 minutes easy pace • 6 x 20-second striders	Medium: • 21 minutes medium pace • 8 x 20-second striders	Recovery: 21 minutes easy pace	Tempo: • 5 minutes easy pace • 5 minutes tempo pace • 5 minutes easy pace • 6 x 20-second striders	Recovery: 21 minutes easy pace	Long Run: • 35 minutes • 6 x 20-second striders	Rest
3	Easy: • 25 minutes easy pace • 8 x 20-second striders	Intervals: • 10 minutes easy run • 6 x 400 meters (3-minute jog/rest between repetitions) • 10 minutes easy run	Recovery: 21 minutes easy pace	Fartlek: • 5 minutes easy pace • 8 x 2 minutes fast, 1 minute easy • 8 x 100-meter striders	Recovery: 21 minutes easy pace	Long Run: • 35 minutes • 6 x 20-second striders	Rest
4	Easy: • 25 minutes easy pace • 8 x 20-second striders	Intervals: • 10 minutes easy pace • 2 x 400 meters (3-minute jog/rest between repetitions) • 2 x 800 meters (5-minute jog/rest between repetitions) • 4 x 200 meters (3-minute jog/rest between repetitions) • 10 minutes easy pace	Recovery: 25 minutes easy pace	Fartlek: • 5 minutes easy pace • 5 x 2 minutes fast, 1 minute easy • 5 minutes easy pace • 8 x 100-meter striders	Recovery: 25 minutes easy pace	Long Run: • 40 minutes • 6 x 20-second striders	Rest
5	Easy: • 25 minutes easy pace • 8 x 20-second striders	Intervals: • 5–10 minutes easy pace • 8 x 400 meters (3-minute jog/rest between repetitions) • 5 minutes easy pace	Recovery: 25 minutes easy pace	Long Intervals: • 10 minutes easy pace • 3 x 1 mile (rest between repetitions, at least half the time it took to run 1 mile) • 5 minutes easy pace	Recovery: 25 minutes easy pace	Long Run: • 45 minutes • 6 x 20-second striders	Rest
6	Easy: • 30 minutes easy pace • 8 x 20-second striders	Intervals: • 10 minutes easy pace • 8–12 x 400 meters (2- to 4-minute jog/rest between repetitions) • 10 minutes easy pace	Recovery: 25 minutes easy pace	Long Intervals: • 10 minutes easy pace • 2 x 1 mile (rest between repetitions, at least half the time it took to run 1 mile) • 2 x 800 meters (rest between repetitions, at least as long as it took to run 800 meters) • 5 minutes easy pace	Recovery: 21 minutes easy pace	Long Run: • 45 minutes • 6 x 20-second striders	Rest
7	Easy: • 35 minutes easy pace • 8 x 20-second striders	Intervals: • 10 minutes easy pace • 5 x 1,000 meters (4-minute jog/rest between repetitions) • 10 minutes easy pace	Recovery: 30 minutes easy pace	Tempo: • 5 minutes easy pace • 10 minutes tempo pace • 5 minutes easy pace • 8 x 20-second striders	Recovery or Rest: 25 minutes easy pace (optional)	Long Run: • 50 minutes • 6 x 20-second striders	Rest
8	Easy: • 40 minutes easy pace • 10 x 20-second striders	Intervals: • 10 minutes easy pace • 1 x 1,200 meters (3-minute rest) • 1 x 1,000 meters (3-minute rest) • 1 x 800 meters (3-minute rest) • 2 x 400 meters (2-minute rest between repetitions) • 2 x 200 meters (2-minute rest between repetitions) • 10 minutes easy pace	Recovery: 30 minutes easy pace	Tempo: • 5 minutes easy pace • 10 minutes tempo pace • 10 minutes easy pace • 10 x 20-second striders	Recovery or Rest: 25 minutes easy pace (optional)	Long Run: • 55 minutes • 6 x 20-second striders	Rest
9	Easy: • 35 minutes easy pace • 10 x 20-second striders	Intervals: • 10–12 x 400 meters (3 minutes rest between repetitions) • 4 x 200 meters (2 minutes rest between repetitions) • 10 minutes easy run	Recovery: 25 minutes easy pace	Fartlek: • 10 minutes easy pace • 12 x 2 minutes tempo pace (2 minutes brisk walk or medium/easy jog between repetitions) • 10 x 20-second striders	Recovery: 25 minutes easy pace	Long Run: • 60 minutes • 6 x 20-second striders	Rest
10	Easy: • 45 minutes easy pace • 12 x 20-second striders	Intervals: • 40 minutes easy pace • 12 x 20-second striders	Recovery: 30 minutes easy pace	Intervals: • 10 minutes easy pace • 5 x 1,000 meters (progressively get faster with each rep; 3–4 minutes rest between repetitions) • 10 minutes easy pace	Recovery: 25 minutes easy pace	Long Run: • 65 minutes • 6 x 20-second striders	Rest
11	Easy: • 40 minutes easy pace • 12 x 20-second striders	Intervals: • 1 x 1 mile (rest as long as it took you to run) • 2 x 800 meters (rest 4 minutes between repetitions) • 2 x 400 meters (rest 4 minutes between repetitions) • 4 x 200 meters (rest 2 minutes between repetitions) • 5 minutes easy pace	Recovery: 21 minutes easy pace	Tempo: • 5 minutes easy • 15 minutes tempo pace • 5 minutes medium pace • 12 x 20-second striders	Recovery or Rest: 21 minutes easy pace (optional)	Long Run: • 70 minutes • 6 x 20-second striders	Rest
12	Easy: • 35 minutes easy pace • 12 x 20-second striders	Intervals: • 20 minutes medium pace • 4 x 400 meters (rest/jog 3 minutes between repetitions) • 5 minutes easy pace	Recovery: 21 minutes easy pace	Tempo: • 5 minutes easy pace • 5 minutes tempo pace • 20 minutes easy pace • 6 x 20-second striders	Recovery or Rest: • 21 minutes very easy pace • 4 x 100-meter striders (optional)	5K event of your choice	Rest and celebrate!



LEARN THE LINGO

Familiarize yourself with these common training terms and techniques to enhance your running experience.

Tempo Run: Faster than your easy pace, your tempo pace is just past comfortable, one that you could sustain for up to 40 minutes but is fast enough that you couldn’t hold a conversation.

Intervals: Interval training calls for alternating between work and rest for set amounts of time. “Work” is running at a faster-than-usual pace; “rest” is a slower

pace to allow you to recover. While work intervals are not all-out sprints, they are nonconversational and difficult to sustain beyond the interval.

Long Run: “This is that one element of properly training for a 5K you can’t live without,” says Frankie Ruiz. Once a week, you’ll run a longer-than-usual time (and hence, distance) to build aerobic capacity and confidence. The goal here is to pace yourself by taking a slow and steady pace, and including walking and stretching breaks as needed.

Fartlek: A Swedish term for “speed-play,” this type of training session alternates between different speeds throughout your run.

Striders: A strider is not an all-out sprint, but pretty close: Take it a “gear or two below all-out speed,” says Ruiz. Lasting about 10 to 20 seconds, striders are a good time to focus on form. Pay attention to your posture, your arm swing, your cadence, and your knee lift. Take at least one minute of recovery after each strider.