

5k TRAINING SCHEDULES:

Prepared by Maurice Ault – UK Athletics Group Event Coach (Speed & Endurance).

Introduction:

My approach to running has always been to keep it simple. Internationals and super elite runners very often have personal coaches and are able to dedicate their daily lives to running. Most others have to fit training and racing around family, work, education and social constraints. These programmes recognise these constraints and can be modified to suit each individual's needs and circumstances.

Key considerations in training plans:

Whatever one's natural ability may be, and irrespective of age, certain general principles apply.

1. Training should be focused on the reason for running, and racing, in the first place.
2. Training needs to be meaningful and related to each person's natural physical ability.
3. One can continually improve until optimum performance level is reached.
4. Never train when unwell (or injured) – no matter how slight the problem maybe. You will only make the problem worse and delay your return to normal training.
5. Never train in adverse weather conditions. You will only waste time and energy.
6. Quality of training is always more important than quantity. Don't do 'junk' miles.
7. It's essential to keep a simple training diary noting dates, weather conditions, what training is done & how did you feel during, and after, training.

Important elements in training:

1. Training should always include aerobic work, eg making the heart and lungs work hard thereby making the running engine more powerful and able to operate at a higher level of performance.
2. General strengthening & conditioning of the running body. Arms, legs and the upper body should function correctly and hence be 'conditioned' by exercise. General gym work is excellent for general body conditioning.

3. Good running technique should be constantly developed and applied. High knees, high leg back lift and good arm action are all essential for quality running.
4. Developing good foot speed, a good stride and regular cadence.
5. Varying levels of speed should be practiced so one can adjust the running pace to the distance run.
6. Developing general overall endurance capability is essential.

The four major components in training:

These are common to any runner irrespective of ability or gender.

1. **The Long Run** is done at a steady pace after which one should be tired but not exhausted. Depending on the runner's experience, and objectives, the distance can be progressively increased until an optimum distance is reached. This run can be on / off road.
2. **The Hard Run** is run much harder on a hilly route or, much quicker on a gentle undulating route. The distance should be about half the Long Run distance. This run can be done on / off road. One should feel more tired after this run.
3. **The Quality Run** is concerned with real speed and can be done on level roads or paths. Alternatively it could incorporate a track session at a local athletic arena.
4. **The Easy Run** is primarily a recovery run but still putting miles in the legs. Use it to concentrate on running style and technique.

In any given weekly period one should incorporate these 4 runs BUT novice runners, or those with 'time to train' constraints can miss out the Hard Run (or Quality Run), if they wish.

Beginners 5km Training Schedule

In this programme the Easy Run is an optional that one can undertake as an additional run each week. The focus of this programme will be more emphasis on Hard Runs & Quality Runs.

Week	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1	4 miles Long run		3 miles Quality Run		3 miles Hard Run Hilly Course		3 miles Quality Run
2	4 miles Long Run		3 miles Quality Run		3 miles Hard Run Flat Course		3 miles Quality Run
3	4 miles Long Run		3 miles Quality Run		3 miles Hard Run Hilly Course		3 miles Quality Run
4	4 miles Long Run		2 miles Quality Run		3 miles Hard Run Flat Course		2 miles Easy Pace
5	5 miles Long Run		4 miles Quality Run		3 miles Hard Run Hilly Course		4 miles Quality Run
6	5 miles Long Run		4 miles Quality Run		3 miles Hard Run Hilly Course		4 miles Quality Run
7	5 miles Long Run		4 miles Quality Run		3 miles Hard Run Hilly Course		4 miles Quality Run
8	5 miles Long Run		3 miles Quality Run		3 miles Hard Run Flat Course		3 miles Easy Pace
9	6 miles Long Run		4 miles Quality Run		4 miles Hard Run		3 miles Quality Run

Hilly Course

10	6 miles Long Run	5 miles Quality Run	4 miles Hard Run Hilly Course	3 miles Quality Run
11	6 miles Long Run	5 miles Quality Run	4 miles Hard Run Hilly Course	4 miles Quality Run
12		4 miles Fast pace	3 miles Steady pace	5k!!

Key:

- **The Long Run** is done at a steady pace after which one should be tired but not exhausted. Depending on the runner's experience, and objectives, the distance can be progressively increased until an optimum distance is reached. This run can be on / off road.
- **The Hard Run** is run much harder on a hilly route or, much quicker on a gentle undulating route. The distance should be about half the Long Run distance. This run can be done on / off road. One should feel more tired after this run.
- **The Quality Run** is concerned with real speed and can be done on level roads or paths. Alternatively it could incorporate a track session at a local athletic arena.
- **The Easy Run** is primarily a recovery run but still putting miles in the legs. Use it to concentrate on running style and technique.

Intermediate 5km Training Schedule

This programme is designed so you can, with confidence, take part in a 5 Km race in 12 weeks time. It assumes you have successfully completed the 12 week beginners' programme or can already comfortably complete the training set out in Wk 12.

Week	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1	4 miles Long run		3 miles Quality Run			3 miles Hard Run Hilly Course	3 miles Quality Run
2	4 miles Long Run		3 miles Quality Run			3 miles Hard Run Flat Course	3 miles Quality Run
3	4 miles Long Run		3 miles Quality Run			3 miles Hard Run Hilly Course	3 miles Quality Run
4	4 miles Long Run		2 miles Quality Run			3 miles Hard Run Flat Course	2 miles Easy Pace
5	5 miles Long Run		4 miles Quality Run			3 miles Hard Run Hilly Course	4 miles Quality Run
6	5 miles Long Run		4 miles Quality Run			3 miles Hard Run Hilly Course	4 miles Quality Run
7	5 miles Long Run		4 miles Quality Run			3 miles Hard Run Hilly Course	4 miles Quality Run
8	5 miles Long Run		3 miles Quality Run			3 miles Hard Run Flat Course	3 miles Easy Pace
9	6 miles		4 miles			4 miles	3 miles

Long Run

Quality Run

**Hard Run
Hilly Course**

Quality Run

10	6 miles Long Run	5 miles Quality Run	4 miles Hard Run Hilly Course	3 miles Quality Run
11	6 miles Long Run	5 miles Quality Run	4 miles Hard Run Hilly Course	4 miles Quality Run
12		4 miles Fast pace	3 miles Steady pace	5k!!

At the end of this intermediate training programme you should be very strong and able to race 5 Km at a really quick speed whether the course be flat or hilly. You could even race hard off-road.

Key:

- **The Long Run** is done at a steady pace after which one should be tired but not exhausted. Depending on the runner's experience, and objectives, the distance can be progressively increased until an optimum distance is reached. This run can be on / off road.
- **The Hard Run** is run much harder on a hilly route or, much quicker on a gentle undulating route. The distance should be about half the Long Run distance. This run can be done on / off road. One should feel more tired after this run.
- **The Quality Run** is concerned with real speed and can be done on level roads or paths. Alternatively it could incorporate a track session at a local athletic arena.
- **The Easy Run** is primarily a recovery run but still putting miles in the legs. Use it to concentrate on running style and technique.

Advanced 5km Training Schedule

In this programme the various runs will be described in more detail and introduce the concept of repetition (reps) training. The hill reps are run very hard with slow jog back recovery. The speed work reps are run flat out with slow jog recovery. The training sessions assume the participant has completed the beginners & intermediate 5 Km programmes, or is already a relatively experienced runner who has successfully completed at least 3 races of 5 Km or longer.

WEEK	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1	6 miles Long Run		3 miles Quality Run				4 miles Quality Run
2	6 miles Long Run		3 miles Quality Run				4 miles Quality Run
3	6 miles Long Run		3x400m Quality Run				4 miles Quality Run
4	6 miles Long Run		4 miles Quality Run				4 miles Quality Run
5	7 miles Long Run		4x400m Flat Out				4 miles Quality Run
6	7 miles Long Run		5x400m Flat Out				4 miles Quality Run

7	7 miles Long Run	5x400m - Flat Out	Hills 6x 300m (jog back to recover)	4 miles Quality Run
8	7 miles Long Run	4 miles Quality Run	4 miles Hard Run Hilly Course	4 miles Quality Run
9	7 miles Long Run	6x400m - Flat Out	Hills 7x 300m (jog back to recover)	4 miles Quality Run
10	7 miles Long Run	7x400m - Flat Out	Hills 8x 300m (jog back to recover)	4 miles Quality Run
11	7 miles Long Run	10x300m - Flat Out	Hills 12 x 150m (jog back recover)	4 miles Quality Run
12	5 miles Fast Pace	4 miles Steady Pace		5k!!

Note:

With the hill and speed work sessions (with 5 reps or more) you can usefully break them down into groups of 3 or 4 reps (called sets) and take a short rest of say 3 – 4 minutes. Take care not to get cold.

It is important to use the jog back recovery sensibly so you can always repeat the effort (and time taken) on each rep. The emphasis throughout is: work the rep very hard – recover & repeat. If you have access to an athletic track then its better to do the speed work reps there. The hill distances don't need to be exact so long as the distance worked is about right.

Key:

- **The Long Run** is done at a steady pace after which one should be tired but not exhausted. Depending on the runner's experience, and objectives, the distance can be progressively increased until an optimum distance is reached. This run can be on / off road.
- **The Hard Run** is run much harder on a hilly route or, much quicker on a gentle undulating route. The distance should be about half the Long Run distance. This run can be done on / off road. One should feel more tired after this run.
- **The Quality Run** is concerned with real speed and can be done on level roads or paths. Alternatively it could incorporate a track session at a local athletic arena.
- **The Easy Run** is primarily a recovery run but still putting miles in the legs. Use it to concentrate on running style and technique.