



How to train for the 10k GETTING STARTED

The 10K race series may seem like aeons away but for those wishing to achieve an optimal performance, or at least an injury-free preparation; this is the time to get started with your training. The race isn't just for athletic enthusiasts. Even if you have never taken part in a race of this kind, or indeed any regular exercise at all, both taking part and completion are achievable aims. The key to training success lies in beginning gently and gradually building up both the duration and intensity of your 10K training sessions. Leaving enough time to take things easy will allow you to reach your goal injury-free and without feeling that you're doing yourself in.

Why Bother?



Regular physical activity can greatly improve your quality of life. The sense of achievement attached to accomplishing goals you have set yourself can really kick your self-esteem into shape. Regular activity will also allow you to build up increased levels of strength and stamina so that everyday tasks will take less out of you giving you more energy to spend enjoying yourself. It also has the capacity to lift the blues and has been shown in studies to be at least as effective as drugs in treating mild depression. In short, active living means you get to live a better life for longer!

How to Run



You might want to know what a "jog" means. You want to avoid going like the clappers so that you make yourself ill and are unable to move for the next four days! Speed is not a consideration; the most important thing here is finding a pace that feels comfortable to you. You should be able to describe your activity as "somewhat hard". This basically means a pace that allows you to hold a conversation whilst on the move - if you are too breathless to talk you should slow down.

Where to Run



This is entirely up to you but you should try and vary the routes and surfaces you run on. Not only will this help to prevent boredom but it will also save your legs - running on hard surfaces like tarmac can give them a bit of a pounding. If you enjoy running on the roads try to give yourself a break now and then. If you have access to an indoor or outdoor running track you might want to try this, alternatively you could use the treadmills at your local gym or explore some of your local cycle paths or walking routes. Anything that is a bit more spongy underfoot will be greatly appreciated by your hard-working pins.

What to Wear



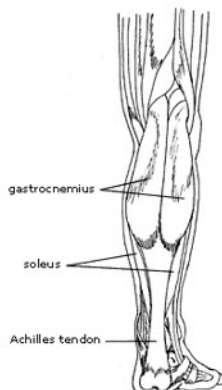
A good pair of running shoes is a necessity. It's probably worth a visit to your local sports shop for some expert advice. Spend a bit of time and money on this in the first instance and you're likely to save yourself additional costs in the long run. Apart from that you can wear anything you like - tracksuit, leggings, shorts and T-shirt - the bottom line is that you feel comfortable and movement isn't restricted

When Not to Run



Don't run if you don't feel up to it. If you are feeling unwell it's better to leave things for a few days rather than risk illness or injury. In general, training through illness will prolong your recovery and exercising through a cold or flu isn't good for you. It's also best to leave at least two hours after eating a meal before you exercise. This will give you time to digest your food and prevent indigestion or feelings of discomfort during exercise. If you feel really peckish before your run a light snack like a banana should fill the holes without leading to discomfort.

No Pain No Gain



This is a myth although, unfortunately, it hasn't died yet. Discomfort is your body's way of telling you that it is being pushed to dangerous limits and if you feel uncomfortable you should ease down. Avoid overworking yourself as this is likely to put you off - enjoy your exercise and there is a much greater chance that you'll keep it up.

Cooling Down



You should follow each training session with a cool down period. Don't come to a standstill immediately after your training run as this can make you feel a bit dizzy or light-headed. Instead, keep yourself on the move with a gentle walk for 5 minutes or so. It is important to stretch after training to minimise any tightness and stiffness and so helping to prevent injury in subsequent exercise sessions. To get the most from your post-exercise stretching hold each position for at least 10-15 seconds. As before the stretch should only be held as far as is comfortable, it shouldn't be sore or uncomfortable and your limb shouldn't shake. It's also important that you hold the stretch steady without bouncing it.

Finally, please remember that if you are very overweight, haven't exercised for many years, are a heavy smoker, receiving medication or are pregnant it is important that you consult your doctor before exercising.



How to train for the 10k ADVANCED

If you're looking to set a PR in the 10-K, here is a training plan that can help you reach your goal

Many runners are goal-oriented. After having run a certain time for the 10-K, they next want to better that time and set a Personal Record, otherwise known as a P.R. If that is you, this training program will help you attain your goals.

The 10-K continues to be a popular race with road runners. It is the same distance (6.2 miles) as the longest track event in the Olympic Games.

Many beginners, in fact, choose the 10-K as their first race distance. Experienced runners like the distance too, feeling it offers an additional challenge, along with 5-K and marathon running.

You can prepare for this level of training, by moving backward to the training schedule for The 5-K. Or you can work on your aerobic base, by spending several months training like a marathoner-without racing 26 miles. Do this by running the first six to eight weeks as described in the Marathon Training Guide, then return to this programme. This schedule contains some different elements:

- **3/1 Long Runs:** Many runners don't realise it, but they can build speed by running long. This is because after about 60 to 90 minutes of running, you deplete the glycogen in your slow-twitch muscles. The body then begins utilising glycogen in your fast-twitch muscles, thereby training them. To improve this effect, run the first three-fourths of your long runs gently, then pick up the pace the final one-fourth the distance. For instance, if a comfortable run for you would be 90 minutes at 8:00 mile pace, accelerate to 7:30 or 7:00 miles the final 20-25 minutes. Do this 3/1 Long Run every other weekend.
- **Hill Training:** One way to improve leg strength (which equals speed) is to run hills. Hills vary in length and pitch, so pick what's convenient. Ideal would be a moderately inclined hill that you can run up in about the same time you might run 400 meter repetitions on the track. Turn around and jog or walk back down. You can run hills once weekly, or every other week, alternating them with interval training.
- **Frequent Racing:** One way to improve your 10-K time is to race at other distances every second or third week. Running 5-K and 8-K races will build speed and sharpen your racing ability. One approach is to start in the back and run the first mile of a 5-K at a slow pace, then pick it up in the closing miles. Or, you might want to try some races at longer distances such as the 15-K, 10 miles or even a Half-Marathon to work on endurance.

Combine these three increments in the following 10-K training schedule. In the last week before your 10-K, ease back slightly in your training distances to taper for the race.

Week	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN
1	3	6 x Hill	3	40 min Tempo	rest	3	90 min (3/1)
2	3	7 x 400	3	45 min Tempo	rest	3	90 min
3	3	7 x Hill	rest or easy run	30 min Tempo	rest or easy run	rest	5-K Race
4	3	8 x 400	3	40 min Tempo	rest	3	90 min (3/1)
5	3	8 x Hill	3	45 min Tempo	rest	3	90 min
6	2	6 x 400	rest or easy run	30 min Tempo	rest or easy run	rest	10-K Race

To continue training for additional 10-K races, or races at other distances, simply repeat the fourth and fifth weeks of the programme, making certain to get a day or two of rest before each race.