2026 LRC 5K TRAINING GUIDE

ABOUT THIS PROGRAM

This program was designed to work for runners new to the 5k distance as well as those seeking improved performance.

In this program, we use the term *running* to refer to: running, run/walking, jogging, fitness walking, or walking. When we use running and jogging in a workout, running = harder effort and jogging = recovery effort – use effort to guide your pace.

The Saturday run for the 5k plan starts at 30 minutes and builds to 60 minutes with a cutback week halfway through. This cutback week is also known as a de-loading week and should be part of any progressive overload training plan.

QUCK START NOTES
These topics will be expanded upon in the program's educational topics.

Fuel your runs: This means that you need to eat a little something before your early morning run, or time your other meals/snacks based on when you will run. Once your runs increase to over 60 minutes, you also need to eat during your run. The target is 30 grams (120 calories) to 75 grams (300 calories) of carbohydrates per hour, depending on the total run duration and your intensity. No matter where on the pace spectrum you fall, you should plan to consume some carbohydrates every 15 – 20 minutes.

Hydrate: Drink to thirst, but plan to drink every 20-30 minutes so you don't drink a lot at once and end up with a sloshy stomach.

Sleep: Get 7 – 9 hours per night. It's the most important aspect of training after getting time on your feet.

Shoes: If you can't remember how old your trainers are, or you've been running consistently three days a week for 3-6 months and haven't gotten a new pair, it might be time.

Discomfort/ Pain: You should 100% expect to be uncomfortable. Growth happens when you are uncomfortable – whatever you endeavor you pursue. You need to distinguish between being uncomfortable versus something that suggests you need to adjust your training or take some time off. Runners experience overuse injuries from trying to do too

much, in too little time, or at too fast a pace. Take things slow and use the discomfort to guide you.

Stretching: Research has proven there are no benefits to static stretching before or after a run. If you want to become more flexible, that is a separate practice. You should NOT stretch if something feels tight or sore. Your muscle tension is controlled by your brain, and the tightness may simply be that your brain has determined that restricting movement is the best course of action under the circumstances (training load and/or stress load). In most cases, you are not really lengthening your muscle, you are retraining your nervous system to allow a greater range of motion and to be able to tolerate a higher pain level. Stretching doesn't always improve range of motion - sometimes the only improvement you may see is when you are static stretching.

Strengthening: Yes, strength training can help you. But you can't start multiple progressive overload programs simultaneously. Strength training for running should be boring. The six basic movements: hinge, squat, lunge, push, pull, and carry are sufficient. Two sessions per week for about 20-30 minutes is enough to support running. Once you are proficient at double leg movements with no pain, you can progress to single leg variations -> bodyweight squat to weighted goblet squat to single leg Bulgarian split squats. If you aren't already strength training, save it for after the program wraps up.

Heat Illness: Warm temperatures can be detrimental to performance and your health, and heatstroke can result in permanent disability or death. Please take a few minutes to read our guide on Hot Weather Running (temperatures over 70° F).

Why you should have the run/walk method as a tool in your training toolbox.
Olympian Jeff Galloway helped popularize the run/walk method as a way for runners of all paces to manage fatigue, reduce aches and pains, and reach big goals. It's an excellent approach for new runners or anyone moving up to a longer distance because it allows more time on your feet while steadily building endurance. Run/walk is also a smart option when returning from injury or when you want to lessen the strain on your body. And on days when it's very hot—or when motivation is low—this method can make getting out the door feel much more doable.

This table shows the run/walk interval that Jeff Galloway recommends for a pace range, but you can use whatever works for you, and you do not always have to use the same interval. You don't have to have a goal to be able to run without breaks, there are so many ways to make running work for your current fitness and ability.

Pace Range	Run/Walk Interval		Pace Range	Run/Walk Interval
08:00 - 09:00	4:00 / 0:30		13:00 - 14:00	0:30 / 0:30
09:00 - 10:00	2:30 / 0:30		14:00 - 15:00	0:15 / 0:30
10:00 - 11:00	1:30 / 0:30		15:00 - 16:00	0:15 / 0:30
11:00 - 12:00	1:00 / 0:30		16:00 - 17:00	0:10 / 0:30
12:00 - 13:00	0:30 / 0:30		17:00+	0:05 / 0:30

Paces

Most of your running should be done at EASY pace. Easy is also known as conversational pace, recovery, or long run pace. You should be able to easily run and talk or sing at the same time.

Your easy pace is a range and can vary daily based on the temperature, your overall fatigue, and your current stress level. You should feel like you are holding yourself back.
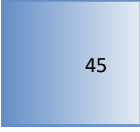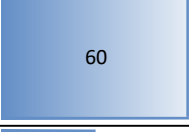
Weekday training is in minutes vs miles
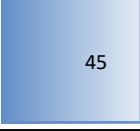
Running for time works for everyone, regardless of their pace. It also keeps the weekday runs from adding too much fatigue. 30 minutes at the prescribed effort results in the same physiological benefit for everyone, regardless of their pace. Having a range lets you be in control of your training and adapt the program to work with your schedule. You can go as slow as you need to or run less time on the days you need to and feel good about what you accomplished.

If you miss a run

If everything else stays consistent and you aren't experiencing any issues, you can pick back up per the schedule. If you miss a week or more, you'll want to backtrack a few weeks so you don't overdo it.

Do I have to run on the assigned days or can I move them around?

If you have 3 days of easy running scheduled a week, include a recovery day after each run. A recovery day doesn't necessarily mean no activity, but the effort level should be low intensity, so it doesn't add to your cumulative fatigue. At least one day per week of rest (no activity) is recommended.

Week	Sunday Date	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday long run (minutes)
1	1/11	walk or rest	rest, walk or 20 minute EASY run	20-30 minute EASY run	rest or cross train	20-30 minute EASY run	rest	30
2	1/18	walk or rest	rest, walk or 20 minute EASY run	20-30 minute EASY run	rest or cross train	20-30 minute EASY run	rest	35
3	1/25	walk or rest	rest, walk or 20 minute EASY run	20-30 minute EASY run	rest or cross train	20-30 minute EASY run	rest	40
4	2/1	walk or rest	rest, walk or 20 minute EASY run	30-40 minute EASY run	rest or cross train	30-40 minute EASY run	rest	45
5	2/8	walk or rest	rest, walk or 20 minute EASY run	30-40 minute EASY run	rest or cross train	30-40 minute EASY run	rest	35
6	2/15	walk or rest	rest, walk or 20 minute EASY run	40-50 minute EASY run	rest or cross train	40-50 minute EASY run	rest	45
7	2/22	walk or rest	rest, walk or 20 minute EASY run	40-50 minute EASY run	rest or cross train	40-50 minute EASY run	rest	50
8	3/1	walk or rest	rest, walk or 20 minute EASY run	40-50 minute EASY run	rest or cross train	40-50 minute EASY run	rest	55
9	3/8	walk or rest	rest, walk or 20 minute EASY run	50-60 minute EASY run	rest or cross train	50-60 minute EASY run	rest	60
10	3/15	walk or rest	rest, walk or 20 minute EASY run	50-60 minute EASY run	rest or cross train	50-60 minute EASY run	rest	30
11	3/22	walk or rest	rest, walk or 20 minute EASY run	20-30 minute EASY run	rest or cross train	20-30 minute EASY run	rest	5k

Foundations