

DERBY



10K

Supported by



Couch to 10K 24 Week Plan

Off the Couch

Building Fitness

Peak Training

Race Preparation

Ready to Race

Race Day!



Introduction

We're excited to bring you the training plan for the Derby 10K 2019. In addition to the plan, this year we are planning a series of group runs on 11th November, 9th December, 13th January, 17th February and 17th March - get the dates in your diary!

According to experts, 24 weeks is the ideal period for a training plan that will achieve peak fitness for a race. This applies to endurance runners at all levels, from absolute beginners to those hoping to win Olympic medals. Our plan therefore starts on 22nd October; 24 weeks out from the race on 7th April.

It is split into five phases, the first of which is aimed at beginners or those coming back to running after a long period. It will get you from zero to 5k of continuous running by the end of the year.

In the new year, the plan continues and is suitable for both beginners progressing from the first phase, and anyone else who already has the fitness to run 5k. After 6 weeks of building a great base of fitness and improving endurance, it moves on to the 'Peak Training' phase. Here the intensity of training increases to get you into top shape to achieve your goal for the race. We'll then do some specific race preparation work, before a final week of 'tapering' to ensure you are fresh and ready to go.

We've designed the plan to be as flexible as possible so that anyone can follow it. However, everyone is different and won't respond to training in exactly the same way. So it's important that you adapt things to suit your own level of fitness and other aspects of your life, such as work and family commitments. Listen to your body and do not over-stretch yourself, particularly in the early stages. Do not train if you are injured or feeling ill and, if you're not used to regular exercise, it is sensible to consult with your doctor before starting.

A photograph of a man with a beard and bald head, wearing a yellow high-visibility vest over a black jacket, clapping his hands. He is smiling and looking towards the right. In the background, other people are visible, including a woman on the left also clapping, and a man in an orange shirt with 'rainbows' written on the back. The image has a blue tint overlay.

Our Coach

Our training plan is written by Andy Brooks, who is a UK Athletics licensed Coach in Running Fitness and Lydiard Foundation Level II Coach. As well as coaching runners with a wide range of goals, Andy continues to compete in races himself and is a long term member of Shelton Striders Running Club in Derby. You can read more about Andy's experiences here:

www.peakrunning.co.uk/meet-our-coach



Weekly Plan

22.10.18 24 Weeks to go	Join us here if you're a beginner or coming back to running after a long period!	29.10.18 23 Weeks to go	5.11.18 22 Weeks to go	12.11.18 21 Weeks to go
19.11.18 20 Weeks to go	26.11.18 19 Weeks to go	3.12.18 18 Weeks to go	10.12.18 17 Weeks to go	17.12.18 16 Weeks to go
24.12.18 15 Weeks to go	Join us here if you can continuously run for 5km	31.12.18 14 Weeks to go	7.1.19 13 Weeks to go	FIRST 5K! 
14.1.19 12 Weeks to go	21.1.19 11 Weeks to go	28.1.19 10 Weeks to go	4.2.19 9 Weeks to go	Join us here if you're running regularly and can comfortably cover 7-8km
11.2.19 8 Weeks to go	18.2.19 7 Weeks to go	25.2.19 6 Weeks to go	4.3.19 5 Weeks to go	11.3.19 4 Weeks to go
18.3.19 3 Weeks to go	Final race preparations	25.3.19 2 Weeks to go	1.4.19 1 Weeks to go	Time to taper! 



Week One

24

Weeks to go | 22nd to 28th October

Week 1 is designed to help you get into a regular routine of training and start the gradual process of building your fitness.

Ideally, this week you should aim to do three training sessions. These should be spread throughout the week, rather than on consecutive days, to allow sufficient recovery time in between.

Each session should last around 30-35 minutes in total, made up as follows:

Begin with a 5-minute walk to warm up your muscles and increase your heart rate slightly.

Once warmed up, jog at an easy pace for 1 minute and then slow back to a walk for 1 minute, or until you have your breath back and your heart rate has settled back down.

Repeat this, alternating running and walking, up to 8 times. Walk gently for 5-minutes at the end to cool down.

If you feel able to run for longer periods, that's fine. And, if you need longer walk breaks between running, that's also fine. However, we recommend that you do not make your total workouts any longer than 30-40 minutes during this first week.

It is important that you start with a really gentle jog and do not try and run too fast. During this early stage you get the most benefit from the time you spend exercising at an easy/moderate intensity. Going too fast, will actually have a negative effect on your overall training plan. We'll explain a lot more about this in the coming weeks.



Week Two

23

Weeks to go | 29th October to 4th November

Have you been able to complete Week 1 of the plan, without any adverse effects?

If so, you're ready to move onto the second week. The plan for this week involves three training sessions again, spread throughout the week with at least one non-running day in-between each of them.

The amount of running begins to increase and, from now on, one session will generally be longer than the others. Ideally this longer session should be done on a day where you have more time and can relax afterwards, eg. at the weekend or another day you don't work. Remember as training progresses we'll be holding several meet ups on Sunday mornings the first one is next Sunday 11th!

Week 2 Recommended Training Sessions

Session	Warm-Up	Main Session	Cool Down	Total Time
1	5 minutes brisk walking	Run 1 min, walk 1 min: twice Run 2 mins, walk 2 mins: five times	5 minutes walking, gradually reducing pace	32 mins
2	5 minutes brisk walking	Run 1 min, walk 1 min: twice Run 2 mins, walk 2 mins: four times	5 minutes walking, gradually reducing pace	28 mins
3	10 minutes brisk walking	Run 1 min, walk 1 min Run 2 mins, walk 2 mins: five times Run 3 mins	10 minutes walking, gradually reducing pace	45 mins

Remember these sessions are for beginners who are new to running or have not done any running for a number of years. If you have the fitness to run for longer or take shorter walking breaks, it's okay to do so but we don't recommend exceeding the total workout time.

On the other hand, if you are struggling to complete all of the sessions or find that you have a lot of stiffness afterwards, don't panic. At this stage, it's okay to reduce the amount of running in favour of more walking. Alternatively, you could replace one of the sessions with another form of aerobic exercise, such as cycling or swimming. The most important thing at this stage is to regularly be doing at least 30 minutes of exercise.

At the end of each running section you should be breathing fairly hard but not gasping for breath and unable to talk. If you are, set off at a slower speed and try to pace yourself in the next effort.

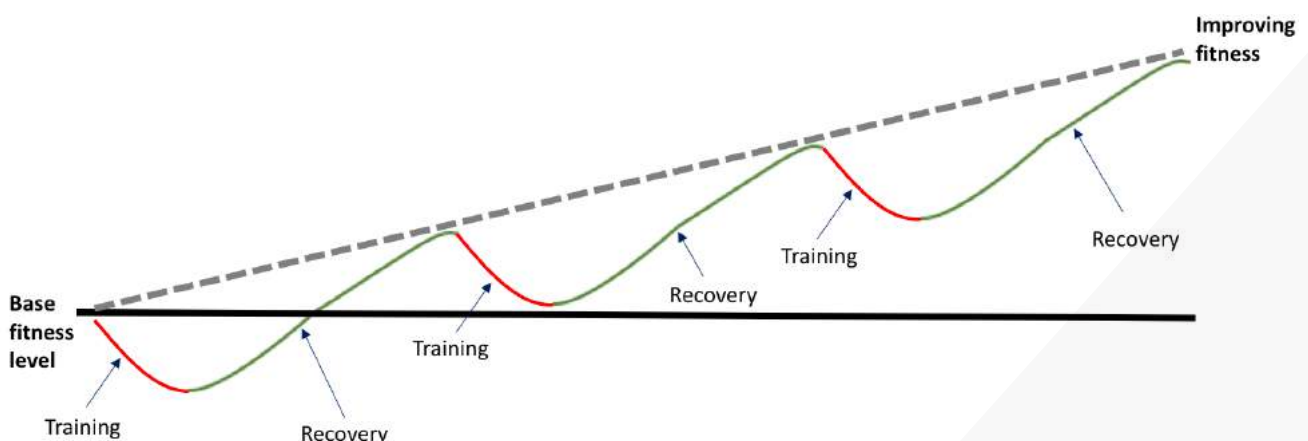
As we mentioned last week, the objective at this early stage of training is to strengthen your bones, develop the right muscle fibres and improve the efficiency of your heart at working your aerobic system. This will prepare you for the later stages of the plan and is done by gradually increasing the level of exercise and, more importantly, recovering properly between each workout.





Training Tips

In their initial enthusiasm for getting fit quick, people taking up running often want to train more. However, what they often overlook is that it's not during the training that they get fit, it's during the rest and recovery. A training session puts the body under stress and causes low level damage. But, as it recovers, it adapts and becomes stronger than it was before, enabling it to cope with slightly more stress the next time. This process is illustrated in the graph below.



If you train too hard in one session the dips at the ends of the red sections of the line will be deeper and the recovery will take longer. And, if you train again too soon after the previous session, before your body has recovered to its previous baseline, it's likely that the whole line will start heading downwards rather than upwards. In either case you won't get fitter and the risk of injury or illness is much greater, which could put you on the side-lines for weeks.

Preventing injury is really important for obvious reasons and is something that you'll hear more about in future weeks. In the meantime, as well as ensuring you recovery properly between training sessions, we recommend that you get into the habit of doing some gentle stretching exercises at the end of each session. Some guidance on this can be found here:

<http://www.nhs.uk/Livewell/c25k/Pages/how-to-stretch-after-arun.aspx>



Week Three

22

Weeks to go | 5th to 11th November

In this third week, there are three sessions in our training plan once again. These should be spread evenly throughout your week, with non-running days in-between. And we recommend that you do them in the order shown if possible, with the longer session done at the weekend, or on another day where you're not busy with work or other aspects of your life.

There is a logic to the way the sessions progress, which will become more apparent as the weeks go by. Fitness develops better when harder training sessions are alternated with easier ones. This is so your body has adequate opportunity to recover, while also getting used to regular aerobic exercise.

Week 3 Recommended Training Sessions

Session	Warm-Up	Main Session	Cool Down	Total Time
1	5 minutes brisk walking	Run 2 mins, walk 2 mins: twice Run 3 mins, walk 2 mins: four times Total running time = 16 mins	5 minutes walking, gradually reducing pace	36 mins
2	5 minutes brisk walking	Run 2 mins, walk 2 mins: twice Run 3 mins, walk 2 mins: three times Total running time = 13 mins	5 minutes walking, gradually reducing pace	31 mins
3	10 minutes brisk walking	Run 2 mins, walk 1 min Run 3 mins, walk 2 mins: four times Run 5 mins Total running time = 19 mins	10 minutes walking, gradually reducing pace	48 mins

Join us for our first meet up run this Sunday (11th) at 9am at the Derby County Community Trust offices, 14 Pride Point Drive, Pride Park, Derby, DE24 8BX. There's plenty of parking and we'll make sure the kettle's on after.

If you are on track and coping well with the programme, the temptation to add more sessions may creep in. However, as we explained last week, recovery is really important and where your fitness actually improves. We therefore recommend that you only do extra sessions if you feel completely recovered from your last one, and then it may be better to do some kind of cross-training rather than more running. This could be another aerobic exercise, such as cycling or swimming; or something that is good for improving your strength and flexibility, such as Pilates or yoga. DCCT offer a range of activities as part of our Everybody Active membership. Find out more here:

<https://www.derbycountycommunitytrust.com/programmes/health/everybody-active/>

Another thing to consider, when increasing the amount of exercise you do, is sleep. It's essential for recovery, so make sure you get enough and, if possible, try and have at least one day per week when you wake up naturally, not to an alarm clock.





Week Four

21

Weeks to go | 12th to 18th November

Wow, we're in week 4 already! We hope the plan is helping you and that you're getting into a regular routine with your training. If you are struggling with any aspects of it, have questions or would like to discuss things with our coach, get in touch!

As for this week's plan, we continue the pattern of three sessions of running with walking breaks as follows:

Week 4 Recommended Training Sessions

Session	Warm-Up	Main Session	Cool Down	Total Time
1	5 minutes brisk walking	Run 3 mins, walk 2 mins: twice Run 5 mins, walk 3 mins: three times Total running time = 21 mins	5 minutes walking, gradually reducing pace	41 mins
2	5 minutes brisk walking	Run 3 mins, walk 2 mins: twice Run 5 mins, walk 3 mins: twice Total running time = 16 mins	5 minutes walking, gradually reducing pace	33 mins
3	10 minutes brisk walking	Run 3 mins, walk 1½ mins Run 4 mins, walk 2 mins: four times Run 8 mins	10 minutes walking, gradually reducing pace	56.5 mins

Strengthening Exercises

This week, we recommend introducing another activity as part of your routine from now on – strengthening key muscles including abdominals and gluteals. This will particularly benefit those of you that spend a lot of time sitting at a desk or driving. Although the human body is designed to run, our 21st century lifestyles often mean that we become weak in areas that are important for running.

It has been said that trying to run without strong supporting muscles in the core, is like firing a canon from a canoe! And a recipe for picking up injuries.



An easy test to get an idea of how well your supporting muscles are working is simply standing on one leg. If you struggle to balance for more than a few seconds, it's probably something you should work on.

A small amount of regular strength work will improve your running and reduce that risk of injury. To start, we recommend spending 10-15 mins, 2-3 times per week, either before your running or on days in-between.

In addition to standing on one leg, some other simple exercises to start you off are illustrated below.

For each of the exercises shown, build up the amount that you do gradually. They should be performed slowly.

We suggest doing two sets of 5 for each exercise, with a minute to recover in between. As with the running, it's fine to do a few more if you feel able, but don't overstretch yourself to the extent you can't maintain good form.

Exercise	Illustration
Table top Lie flat on your back with arms at your side. Bend 90 degrees at hips and knees as shown. Engage core muscles (try to draw your belly button down) Slowly lower one leg until your heel is almost touching the floor and then bring back to starting position. Repeat with other leg. Keep your back as flat as possible, do not arch it.	
Bridge Lie flat on your back with arms at your side. Raise your hips off the ground as shown, engaging your glutes (buttocks) and pushing down through your heels. Hold the position at the highest point for 1-2 seconds and then slowly lower your hips back to the ground.	



Week Five

20 Weeks to go | 19th to 25th November

You're probably expecting your training workload to increase again this week, in the way it has every week so far. There is, however, good news! This week the plan backs off a little, and has less running than the last couple of weeks.

Having an easier week every few weeks is good practice, and something that even the most elite athletes do. It allows your body a little recovery to soak in the training and become stronger whilst keeping to a consistent routine.

Although you may be tempted to just keep increasing the training each week, this is unwise and increases the risk of injury or becoming overly fatigued. Remember what we said in Week 2 about the importance of rest and recovery as part of a good training plan. You need to be in good shape for the weeks ahead, where the load will increase again.

Week 5 Recommended Training Sessions

Session	Warm-Up	Main Session	Cool Down	Total Time
1	5 minutes brisk walking	Run 5 mins, walk 2 mins: three times Total running time = 15 mins	5 minutes walking, gradually reducing pace	29 mins
2	5 minutes brisk walking	Run 5 mins, walk 2 mins: three times Total running time = 15 mins	5 minutes walking, gradually reducing pace	26 mins
3	10 minutes brisk walking	Run 5 mins, walk 2 mins: four times Total running time = 20 mins	10 minutes walking, gradually reducing pace	56.5 mins

Strengthening Exercises

This week, we recommend doing a similar routine to last week. Concentrate on doing the exercises in a slow and controlled way, and maintaining good form. More guidance and some additional exercises can be found on a downloadable sheet prepared by our coach at:

<https://www.peakrunning.co.uk/free-resources>

The Role of the Feet

Saying that our feet play an essential role when running sounds like stating obvious, but we thought it would be useful for you to understand a bit more about how each foot works when we run, and give you some tips how to make sure they're strong and healthily. Local running movement specialist, Phil Rose from Natural Born Runners (www.naturalbornrunners.co.uk) offers the following advice and builds upon our recommendation about standing on one leg in last week's plan. Our feet are the foundation of healthy, enjoyable running and can often be overlooked when starting out. To minimise injury risk, increase running efficiency and get on the start line of our chosen race healthy and happy, strengthening the feet really important. The role of the foot is to provide stabilisation. During a run we take thousands of steps and the last step needs to be as stable as the first. Understanding how the foot functions gives a greater appreciation of the task that our feet endure, so something worth taking a closer look at.

The big toe is an anchor that provides a stable foundation and controls pronation (foot rolling inwards). Excessive pronation can cause pain in the back of the lower leg, over the heel and into the sole of the foot. Wearing footwear that squeezes the toes together adversely affects stabilisation. The arch of the foot is designed to flatten and reform, this is an important part of a solid base and also provides elastic energy that we can use to power each step. Walking around the house (maybe even at work) barefoot allows the arch to work naturally and will strengthen the foot.

And a great exercise to add to your running training is the single leg balance. Do this one barefoot for maximum benefit. Simply relax, balance on one leg with your hands on hips, looking straight ahead. How easy is it to maintain balance for 30 seconds? If you are stable and maintain an upright posture (hips don't sway side to side) this indicates good stability. If it looks like you're disco dancing during balance, then this exercise is a must to be repeated each day. Once mastered try closing your eyes and balancing for 15 seconds. It's a lot harder but the benefits will show in your running.



Week Six

19

Weeks to go | 26th November to 2nd December

If you've been following our training plan from the start, it's probably worth taking a moment to reflect back on the progress you've made so far, and give yourself a big pat on the back. Sometimes people feel that their fitness is slow to improve, but actually the progress over just a few short weeks can be massive! Since the beginning of last month you've gone from running 1 minute at a time to up to 8 minutes – an 800% increase!

In case you have been wondering about the logic behind the training sessions we've suggested so far, now is perhaps a good time to give a little explanation. To start with it's perhaps worth understanding that the best measure of fitness isn't how much you can do, but how quickly you can recover to do it again.

For some beginners, going out and running for an hour on the first training session may be possible but, if they're so sore and can barely walk for the next week, it's clearly not a wise thing to do. Our plan is therefore designed to build you up in manageable increments with adequate recovery, whilst getting you out training consistently – which is the most important factor.

Having walking breaks in the early stages may feel a bit frustrating for some. But, as well as being necessary for beginners to get their breath back and heart rate down, there are other benefits to fitness. They help the body become more efficient at recovering quickly and, as the legs are still moving, continue to work the body's aerobic system.

Many of you will have found that the first one or two running segments in a training session are the hardest, and then it starts to feel a little easier. This is because the body is a bit like a diesel engine; it creaks and groans a bit when you first start it up but, once fully warmed up, it cruises smoothly and efficiently. This is why we tend to start with shorter running segments, before progressing to the longer ones. It ensures your body is thoroughly warmed up and has reached operating temperature, before embarking on the hardest part of the session.

We also consider the brain as well as the body; we find that structuring the sessions this way helps to ensure you pace yourself and do not go too hard too soon, because your brain knows what there is to come. Also, finishing your week with the longest continuous running segment will hopefully show you that you're really making progress, feel good about yourself, and be motivated for the following week's training.

Week 6 Recommended Training Sessions

Session	Warm-Up	Main Session	Cool Down	Total Time
1	5 minutes brisk walking	Run 5 mins, walk 2 mins: twice Run 8 mins, walk 4 mins: twice Total running time = 26 mins	5 minutes walking, gradually reducing pace	44 mins
2	5 minutes brisk walking	Run 5 mins, walk 2 mins Run 8 mins, walk 4 mins: twice Total running time = 21 mins	5 minutes walking, gradually reducing pace	37 mins
3	10 minutes brisk walking	Run 5 mins, walk 1 min Run 7 mins, walk 2 mins: twice Run 10 mins Total running time = 31 mins	10 minutes walking, gradually reducing pace	54 mins





18

Weeks to go | 3rd to 9th December

With the nights well and truly drawn in, winter weather and lots to do in the run up to Christmas, it can be easy to find excuses not to run at this time of year. However, if you do make the effort, you will almost certainly be pleased that you did. As many long term runners will tell you, the only run you regret is the one you didn't do.

That said; ice, snow and high winds can make running hazardous; so common sense must apply if the conditions are dangerous. If you do have to miss a training session or two due to the weather, don't fret that you'll lose all your fitness. That won't happen unless you're snowed in for weeks. So, just stay safe and get out again as soon as you can.

Anyway, what's the plan for this week...weather permitting?

Well, as you might suspect, we'll continue to build up the amount of running. However, one subtle change is that for the longest session of the week (which we recommend you do at the weekend or other day off), we'll use distances rather than time as the targets for how far you'll run. Whereas our training plan is, generally speaking, aimed at building up the time you spend exercising, we feel that including some sessions based on distance are helpful. This is because they help to show you how well you are progressing towards the goal of 10k (6.21 miles).

In addition, as well as the three running sessions and regular strength exercises (explained in earlier weeks) we recommend that, on one of the days you are not running, you spend 30 mins cross-training using another type of cardio-vascular exercise. This could be cycling, swimming, using a cross-trainer in the gym, or just brisk walking.

<https://www.derbycountycommunitytrust.com/programmes/health/active-recovery/>

Our second meet up run is this Sunday, come along at 9am, 14 Pride Point Drive, Pride Park, Derby, DE24 8BX

Week 7 Recommended Training Sessions

Session	Warm-Up	Main Session	Cool Down	Total Time
1	5 minutes brisk walking	Run 5 mins, walk 2 mins Run 10 mins, walk 3 mins: twice Run 5 mins Total running time = 30 mins	5 minutes walking, gradually reducing pace	48 mins
2	5 minutes brisk walking	Run 5 mins, walk 2 mins Run 10 mins, walk 3 mins: twice Total running time = 25 mins	5 minutes walking, gradually reducing pace	43 mins
3	½ mile (800m) minutes brisk walking	Run ½ mile (800m), walk ¼ mile (400m) Run 1 mile (1600m), walk ¼ mile (400m); twice Total running distance = 2.5 miles	½ mile (800m) minutes brisk walking, gradually reducing pace	3.5 miles





Week Eight

17

Weeks to go | 10th to 16th December

This week, as we approach the festive season, the plan continues to build up the amount of running you are doing. This is particularly the case for the longer session, which you should try and do on a non-working day.

The longest continuous run of 2 miles may seem a bit daunting, if this is your first attempt at that distance. But, if you have been coping the plan so far, it should be within your capabilities. However, as the continuous distances increase, it is really important that you start off slowly and pace yourself. It is much better to start easy and finish strong, than to go off too hard and struggle to finish.

Week 8 Recommended Training Sessions

Session	Warm-Up	Main Session	Cool Down	Total Time
1	5 minutes brisk walking	Run 5 mins, walk 2 mins Run 12 mins with, walk 3 mins: twice Run 5 mins Total running time = 34 mins	5 minutes walking, gradually reducing pace	52 mins
2	5 minutes brisk walking	Run 5 mins, walk 2 mins Run 12 mins, walk 3 mins: twice Total running time = 29 mins	5 minutes walking, gradually reducing pace	44 mins
3	½ mile (800m) minutes brisk walking	Run ½ mile (800m), walk ¼ mile (400m) Run 2 miles (3.2km), walk ¼ mile (400m) Run 1 mile (1.6km), walk ¼ mile (400m) Total running distance = 3.5 miles	½ mile (800m) minutes brisk walking, gradually reducing pace	5.25 miles



16

Weeks to go | 17th to 23rd December

Well, as well as nearing the end of the year, we've reached the last week of the 'Off the Couch' phase of our training plan! So, you're probably expecting us to turn the screw again and make it a tough week of training. But seen as it's Christmas we thought we'd be nice!

While there is a big milestone to reach in session 3, for the other two sessions the training backs off a little again this week; similar to what happened back in week 5. As well as aiding recovery, and letting your hard work soak into your body, this will help ensure you're fresh and motivated to tackle that milestone, which is a 5k continuous run.

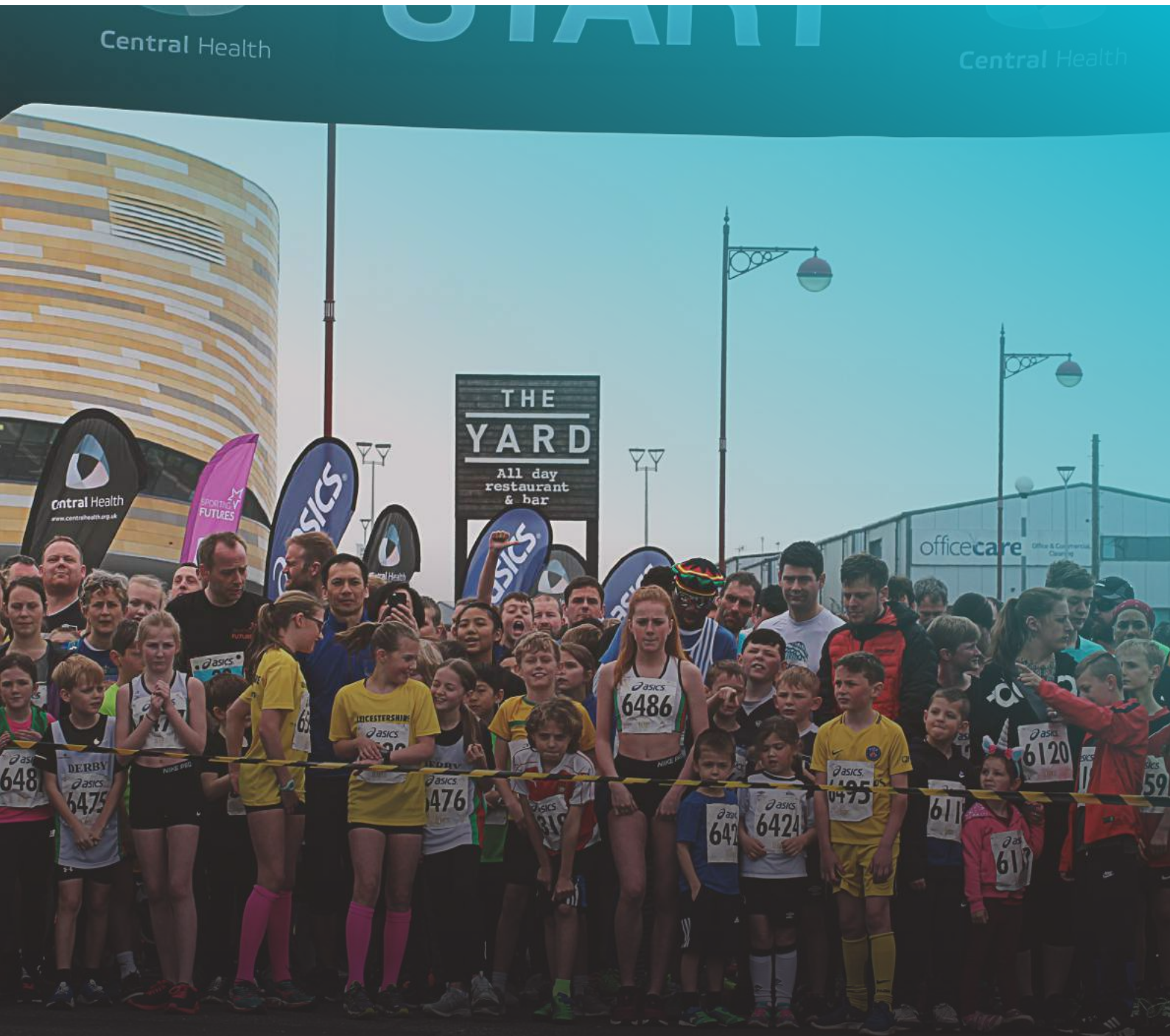
To do your first 5k (3.1 miles) run, you might want to consider going down to take part in your local parkrun. These are held on Saturday mornings, plus some locations hold additional ones over the Christmas and New Year period.

If you've never been to one, you'll find that there is a great atmosphere which is supportive of new runners. Plus, running amongst a large group is great practice for race day. Parkrun is completely free, but you do need to register and obtain a barcode to print at home, if you want to be shown on the results. More info at:

<http://www.parkrun.org.uk>

Week 9 Recommended Training Sessions

Session	Warm-Up	Main Session	Cool Down	Total Time
1	5 minutes brisk walking	Run 5 mins, walk 2 mins Run 12 mins, walk 3 mins: twice Total running time = 29 mins	5 minutes walking, gradually reducing pace	44 mins
2	5 minutes brisk walking	Run 5 mins, walk 2 mins Run 20 mins Total running time = 25 mins	5 minutes walking, gradually reducing pace	37 mins
3	½ mile (800m) minutes brisk walking	Run ½ mile (800m), walk ¼ mile (400m) Run 3.1 miles (5km) Total running distance = 3.6 miles	½ mile (800m) minutes brisk walking, gradually reducing pace	4.85 miles





Week Ten

15 Weeks to go | 24th to 30th December

We're approaching the new year! This week will be busy with celebrations but if you were able to complete your 5km (3.1 miles) continuous run last week, then big congratulations, you've reached a significant milestone! The other good news is that most people find that building on from 5k to 10k is much easier than getting from zero to 5k.

You may have noticed that, if you include the time walking to warm up, cool down and between running segments, the total distance you cover during the longest session of the week is not that far off 10km (6 miles) already. This should give you confidence that you will be able to complete the distance on race day. So, the task for the next 14 weeks is really about helping you to achieve your personal goal for the race; be that simply running continuously or going for a specific time.

That said, for the next few weeks we are not really too concerned with distances. As we explained right back in week 1 the fitness benefit comes from the time you spend exercising not the distance.

Week 10 Recommended Training Sessions

Session	Warm-Up	Main Session	Cool Down	Total Time
1	5 minutes brisk walking	Run 5 mins, walk 2 mins Run 15 mins, walk 2 mins: twice Run 5 mins Total running time = 40 mins	5 minutes walking, gradually reducing pace	56 mins
2	5 minutes brisk walking	Run 5 mins, walk 2 mins Run 15 mins, walk 2 mins: twice Total running time = 35 mins	5 minutes walking, gradually reducing pace	51 mins
3	10 minutes brisk walking	Run 5 mins, walk 2 mins Run 35 mins, walk 5 mins Run 10 mins Total running time = 50 mins	10 minutes brisk walking, gradually reducing pace	77 mins



Week Eleven

14 Weeks to go | 31st December to 6th January

Happy New Year! In the weeks ahead the volume of training will continue to increase, and we will also start to introduce some more intensive workouts to help improve your speed and running efficiency. As we do this, the need for a thorough warm-up and cool-down becomes ever more important, to ensure you get the most training benefit from the sessions and minimise the risk of injury.

Many runners skimp on the warm-up and cool-down because they feel they don't have time, are sceptical about the benefit or (if they are honest with themselves) have become desensitised to the risk of injury. Even if they've had an injury in the past, it's surprising how quick they forget the pain and the discipline needed to prevent another one. Although a bit extreme, one way to look at it is to compare it with smoking. Just as one cigarette is highly unlikely to cause serious health damage, not warming up once is unlikely to lead to injury. However, the more it becomes a habit the greater the likelihood of negative consequence.

We recommend that you think of the warm-up and cool-down as integral parts of each training session; activities that you will get as much benefit from in the long term as the running itself. So, allow enough time for this or, if you're pushed, reduce the amount of running in the session.

As we've been demonstrating at our organised training runs, a good warm up routine in particular can have multiple benefits. As well as gradually bringing your heart rate up, increasing the blood flow to your muscles and getting your joints moving, it can also be used as an opportunity to (i) strengthen key muscles and (ii) practice drills that will improve your running form and, therefore, efficiency.

We suggest that you always spend at least 10 minutes on both warm-up and cool-down.

If you've got the fitness to regularly run 5k non-stop, the warm-up should include:

Some brisk walking and/or very gentle jogging

Some dynamic stretches, such as rotating your arms, drawing a circle with your hips, standing on one leg while swinging the other through, side steps and marching on the spot bringing your knees up high

Some running drills such as high knees and butt-kicks (see these links: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uEQvYdVq3Fo> and <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Wo08ZIIFWpQ>)

Some strength exercises such as squats and lunges

For the cool-down you should jog gently after the end of the main running session, gradually bringing down the intensity to a walk, followed by some static stretching. We have also been demonstrating good stretching technique at our organised training runs, and will continue to do so at future ones. This link from week 2 of the plan, may also help: <http://www.nhs.uk/Livewell/c25k/Pages/how-to-stretch-after-a-run.aspx>

Anyway..... what about this weeks running you're probably asking? Well here it is!

From this week on, we're introducing a fourth session. This is optional and should only be done if you feel you're coping well with the training and, more importantly, feeling well recovered before the next session.

If you're not able to do this session, don't worry, it won't mean that you'll not have the fitness to complete the race. Those that are able to do it will just have a slightly better level of fitness than they may otherwise have had, which may help improve their time.

Alternatively, doing another kind of aerobic exercise, such as cycling, swimming on an exercise class will give similar benefits.

Week 11 Recommended Training Sessions

Session	Warm-Up	Main Session	Cool Down	Total Time
1	As recommended above	Run 5 mins at very easy pace, walk 2 mins Run 20 mins, walk 2 mins: twice Run 5 mins Total running time = 50 mins	As recommended above	76 mins
2	As recommended above	Run 5 mins at very easy pace, walk 2 mins Run 20 mins, walk 2 mins: twice Total running time = 45 mins	As recommended above	69 mins
3	As recommended above	Run 5 mins at very easy pace, walk 2 mins Run 20 mins Total running time = 25 mins	As recommended above	47 mins
4	As recommended above	Run 10 mins at very easy pace, walk 2 mins Run 40 mins Total running time = 50 mins	As recommended above	72 mins



Week Twelve

13

Weeks to go | 7th to 13th January

Okay folks, after last week's lecture on the importance of a good warm up and cool down routine, we know you don't really want us to keep harping on about it. So we won't – for now anyway. We're going to trust you to do it, because we know that you know it makes sense and will help you in the long run... literally. The recommended sessions will therefore just have details of the main running segment, and you can add on your warm-up/cool-down routine.

From this week we are starting to focus more on continuous running and also introducing you to 'fartlek'.

There should now be less need to take walking breaks within most of the sessions, provided you pace your-self well, don't start too fast, and your route is not too hilly. Just start conservatively, keep your heart rate relatively low and remember that the training benefit is still coming from the time you're moving, not the speed.

Within one session, we recommend that you include some 'fartlek' efforts. This is a Swedish term which translates as 'speed-play' and basically means including some periods of running at different paces within your run. By definition it is unstructured and should allow you to play with speed, e.g. by running fast to the next lamp post, tree or other landmark, before slowing back to an easy pace. However, for the moment, we recommend that you keep the faster spurts short (e.g. 10-15 seconds) and allow at least 2-3 minutes of easy jogging to recover before the next one. The objective of this is to start getting your body accustomed to using the wider range of motion needed for faster running, without creating excessive fatigue.

Again this week, there are 4 sessions. Session 3 is optional and should only be done if you are recovering well between sessions. Also, it could be replaced by another type of aerobic exercise.

For session four, join us again for our third group training run at 9am on Sunday.
14 Pride Point Drive, Pride Park, Derby, DE24 8BX

Week 12 Recommended Training Sessions

Session	Main Session
1	Run 40 mins (excluding warm up/cool down)
2	Run 40 mins including 20 mins of 'fartlek' within the middle part of the session (excluding warm up/cool down)
3	Run 25 mins (excluding warm up/cool down)
4	Run 50 mins (excluding warm up/cool down)





Week Thirteen

12 Weeks to go | 14th to 20th January

Since Christmas we've been piling on the workload, increasing the overall amount of running and the length of continuous running. Therefore, as per the strategy we've been using throughout the training planning, you're due an easier week to aid recovery and ensure you're strong for the weeks ahead.

So, this week we're dropping down the number of sessions, and reducing the duration of them slightly. We have included a 'fartlek' element within session 2 again though, as it's important to get used to practicing running at different paces and using a wider range of motion. Remember though, although the sessions don't list the warm up and cool down routines, we hope you're being diligent with them.

Week 13 Recommended Training Sessions

Session	Main Session
1	Run 35 mins (excluding warm up/cool down)
2	Run 30 mins including 15 mins of 'fartlek' within the middle part of the session
3	Run 40 mins (excluding warm up/cool down)



Week Fourteen

11

Weeks to go | 21st to 27th January

After the 'recovery' week last week, we're now going to increase the volume slightly for the last two weeks of the 'base fitness' phase. The increase is about 10% of the overall volume each week, compared to the week before the recovery week. Increasing by around 10% is generally considered to be good practice, as it progressively increases the workload, without compromising the body's ability to recover.

The format of the runs is largely the same as recent weeks, and includes one 'fartlek' session within Session 2.

However, this week we are keen that you make one of the sessions a 'recovery' run, ideally the second one of two consecutive days of running. So, if you include the fartlek run on Wednesday, then the recovery run would be on Thursday.

The idea of the recovery run is to get you to practice running at a different and even slower pace than your regular runs, which themselves should still be kept at a comfortable pace at the moment. Assuming that you are now regularly running continuously for more than 30 minutes multiple times per week, this will help your body recover, while at the same time adding to the overall volume of exercise you're doing. The concept is similar to the use of walking breaks earlier in the programme.

The need for this kind of run will become more important once we get into the 'peak training' phase in the weeks to come, so it's worth starting to practice now.

The other noteworthy thing about this week's plan is that the target for the longer run is to achieve 1 hour of continuous running, which is a great milestone to hit. As always, it's important that you warm up well before the run, and pace yourself well; aiming for a consistent effort throughout.

Week 14 Recommended Training Sessions

Session	Main Session
1	Run 40 mins
2	Run 40 mins including 20 mins of 'fartlek' within the middle part of the session
3	Run 30 mins at very easy (recovery) pace
4	Run 60 mins





Week Fifteen

10

Weeks to go | 28th January to 3rd February

Congratulations if you were able to reach the big milestone of running continuously for 1 hour last week. But, if you're still working towards it, don't worry. As we've said before, everybody's fitness develops at a different rate, and there is plenty of time yet before the race.

For this last week of the 'base fitness' phase, the volume of running is increasing again by about 10%, by adding a bit of time to 2 of the sessions, as shown below.

Next week we'll enter the 'peak training' phase, which means we'll start to introduce you to some different types of sessions that will help you run to the best of your own potential on race day. However, the number of these sessions you should do, and how hard you work within them, should be something that's personal to you. We'll explain more next week.

Week 15 Recommended Training Sessions

Session	Main Session
1	Run 45 mins
2	Run 50 mins including 20 mins of 'fartlek' within the middle part of the session
3	Run 30 mins at very easy (recovery) pace
4	Run 60 mins



Week Sixteen

9

Weeks to go | 4th to 10th February

So, here we are at the start of the 'peak fitness' phase where, as we mentioned last week, we'll start introducing some new sessions to make you faster and stronger come race day. We suggest that you only tackle these sessions, if you've managed to reach the 60 minutes of continuous running milestone. If you're not quite there, you should keep plugging away at it before moving on to these new sessions.

The first new format we're going to introduce is a hill session. For this you need (funnily enough) a hill. It doesn't need to be a mountain, just a hill that is between 50 and 100 metres long, and has a moderate gradient. (Or if you run on a treadmill in the gym you can use a gradient of 3 or 4%).

Ideally the actual hill session should be in the middle part of a longer run, e.g. 15 mins easy running, 15 mins of hill repeats and 15 mins of easy running again to finish off the session (and then your cool down, obviously). This will ensure you're completely warmed up before tackling the hill and help to aid the recovery process afterwards.

The main objective of the hill session is to build strength in your legs rather than being a really intense cardiovascular workout, that has you gasping for breath before you've hardly started. Do not make the mistake of attacking the hill to try and get up it as quickly as possible; that is defeating the object. Taking it nice and steady will mean you have a better chance of completing the session and getting the most benefit from it.

So, when you get to your hill, run up it as slowly as you need to, but concentrating on good running form. When you get to the top, or the point that you are struggling to maintain a run (that doesn't matter by the way), turn and walk slowly back to the bottom. Take your time, let your muscles recover and heart rate settle back down. When back at the bottom, turn and, when you feel ready, repeat. Continue repeating the hill for a maximum of 15 minutes, or until you are starting to struggle. And, remember to save enough energy for the run back home.

Week 16 Recommended Training Sessions

Session	Main Session
1	Run 45 mins
2	Run 45 mins including 15 mins of hill reps within the middle part of the session
3	Run 30 mins at very easy (recovery) pace
4	Run 50 mins





8

Weeks to go | 11th to 17th February

The plan for this week is similar to week 16. However, there is a few minutes more running in some of the sessions and an opportunity to practice running a 'negative split' during the longer run.

Running a 'negative split' basically means running the second half of a run slightly faster than the first half. "What's the point in that", you may be thinking. Well, there are both physiologically and psychologically benefits.

Starting off too quickly during a long distance run can cause your heart rate to go too high too soon. As well as putting you into 'oxygen debt' (causing you to be breathless and experiencing muscle burn from excess lactate), this will tell your body to burn energy stores very quickly to try and keep up. The result of this is likely to be a painful experience, that will lead to you running slower than you're capable of in the latter part of the run.

However, starting off at an easier pace that you're capable of, will help your heart rate to increase gradually. As well as avoiding 'oxygen debt', your body's draw on its energy stores will be much smoother and longer lasting. It's therefore likely that you'll feel good and be able to run strong in the latter stages of the run.

Having the confidence that you can run strong, and push the pace, towards the end of your long run, can give a massive psychological boost as well as improving your physical fitness. It's therefore well worth practicing during training.

To run a 'negative split' we recommend that you use a route that is out and back or has loops of equal distance. Simply run the first half at a pace that is slightly easier than you are capable of. And then gradually increase the pace during the second half, saving your fastest running for the last few minutes. Always remember to cool down well afterwards though.

We'll be covering this in this Sunday's (17th) meet up run at 9am, 14 Pride Point Drive, Pride Park, Derby, DE24 8BX

Week 17 Recommended Training Sessions

Session	Main Session
1	Run 45 mins
2	Run 50 mins including 20 mins of hill reps (as per Week 16) within the middle part of the session
3	Run 30 mins at very easy (recovery) pace
4	Run 60 mins with 'negative split'





Week Eighteen

7

Weeks to go | 18th to 24th February

The week's plan includes another hill session to help you continue to build strength and power. Although these can be hard work, we hope you are starting to feel the benefit.

The format for this week's hill session is a bit different to the past couple of weeks, as we are going to use a format sometimes known as 'Kenyan Hills'.

Again you need a hill of moderate gradient between 50 and 100 metres in length. But this time the objective is to run continuously up and back down the hill for a period of time (we suggest 6 minutes), before taking a short recovery break (about 2 minutes). Then repeat the whole exercise twice more, so you will have done 3 x 6 minutes with a 2-minute break after each.

You should regulate your effort so that you can run up and down the hill for the six minutes without stopping, but such that you are ready for a recovery break at the end of each period.

For the longer run this week, we have extended the running time slightly to 70 minutes, to continue to build your endurance. Due to this increased duration, we recommend that you keep the pace easy throughout, and not try to push the pace in the latter part.

Week 18 Recommended Training Sessions

Session	Main Session
1	Run 45 mins
2	Run 50 mins including 3 x 6 mins of hill reps within the middle part of the session
3	Run 30 mins at very easy (recovery) pace
4	Run 70 mins



Week Nineteen

6

Weeks to go | 25th February to 3rd March

This week you are due a slightly easier week, so the amount of running is reduced. As we've done previously in the plan, this is good practice to allow your body some recovery time to become stronger before pushing on to the next phase.

This is especially important at this point, as we'll then have just 4 weeks to maximise your fitness and prepare for the race, prior to tapering down ready for race day itself.

The sessions this week include another 'Kenyan Hills' workout, similar to last week but shorter in duration. Also, as the longer run is shorter than previous weeks, we suggest that you use it as an opportunity to push the pace in the latter stages of it, and attempt to run a "negative split" as per Week 17.

Week 19 Recommended Training Sessions

Session	Main Session
1	Run 40 mins
2	Run 40 mins including 2 x 6 mins of Kenyan Hills within the middle part of the session (see Week 18 for details)
3	Run 30 mins at very easy (recovery) pace
4	Run 50 mins with 'negative split' (see Week 17 for details)



Week Twenty

5

Weeks to go | 4th to 10th March

The volume of running ramps up again this week and we are including an 'interval' session for the first time, focused on improving speed endurance.

If you have been following the plan all the way through, you will have done a lot of running at an easy/moderate level of intensity, which will have led to adaptations within your muscles. You will have a greater density of capillaries and more mitochondria, which are the structures in the cells that help release energy from fuel (food). Plus, your heart (which is also a muscle) will be bigger and stronger too. You will basically have built yourself a bigger and more fuel efficient engine, that can pump more oxygen around your body.

Also, if you have been doing strengthening exercises (such as those we recommended back in Weeks 4&5) and, more recently, the hill sessions within the plan, the relevant muscles, ligaments and tendons will have become more robust.

So, having invested in a bigger engine and more robust bodywork, this last few weeks of the plan is the time to fine tune your system, and put the icing on the cake of your training, by including some focused speed orientated sessions. However, as we have said before, only push on with more intense sessions if your training is going well and you don't have any injuries or niggles.

The objective of interval sessions, like the one we've included this week, is to help your body be more efficient at dealing with the build up of blood lactate (lactic acid), which happens when your body is working at high intensity, and flushing out the waste products (hydrogen ions).

The idea is to run at an up tempo (not flat out sprint) pace for a few minutes, repeated a number of times, with a recovery 'interval' between each where you run/jog at an easy pace. The benefit is gained during the 'intervals' between each effort as you, in effect, do a mini 'cool down' run.

Carefully judging your pace during the efforts is a really important aspect. You should be aiming to run at a pace that is equivalent to your target pace for race day, or slightly faster; NOT as fast as you can. The aim should be to run all the efforts at the same pace, and finish feeling stretched but not completely exhausted. A very common mistake is to go too hard in the first couple of efforts, and then struggle to finish the session.

Interval sessions are an effective way of improving your cruising/racing speed. However, they are quite stressful on the body so should be used sparingly unless you are an experienced runner and is in good health. Also, due this extra stress on the body, it will take longer to recover than a normal easy/moderate pace run. So give yourself enough time before running again.

Always make sure you are thoroughly warmed up before starting the interval session by running/ jogging for at least 10-15 minutes at an easy pace beforehand. And allow plenty of time for a thorough cool down afterwards.

With race day now getting quite close, this next couple of weeks is also a good time to test out any kit that you intend to wear or use on race day, particularly during the longer run. Don't wait until race day to find out that something doesn't fit well or creates a blister after 10 minutes.

Week 20 Recommended Training Sessions

Session	Main Session
1	Run 45 mins
2	Run 50 mins including 5 x 3 mins up-tempo efforts within the middle part of the session, with 2 min jogging recovery intervals between each
3	Run 40 mins at very easy (recovery) pace
4	Run 70 mins – test out that race day kit!





Week Twenty One

4

Weeks to go | 11th to 17th March

This week follows a similar pattern to last. There is a slight increase in total volume which makes it the 'peak' week of the plan in terms of the overall amount of running. So if you've been with us all the way through, give yourself a big pat on the back at the end of the week – as the majority of the hard work is now done!

The interval session is similar to last week, but with one additional 'effort'. See last week's plan for guidance on how it should be run. Also, think about how last week's session went beforehand and take any lessons learnt into account when doing the intervals this week.

Did you go too hard in the first effort and struggle later? Were you too conservative and got to the last effort without really feeling that you stretched yourself? Any little refinements you can make will help you get the maximum fitness benefit out of the workout. But remember, you don't want to be completely spent at the end and sore for the next few days – that will be counterproductive.

As we mentioned last week, testing out any kit before race day is a sensible thing to do. We also recommend rehearsing as much of your race day routine as you can beforehand too, to reduce the risk of any issues on race day.

This includes what you eat and drink the day before and on the morning of the race, having your kit ready the night before, planning the journey to the venue, parking etc. This is an ideal week for doing that, while you still have a couple more weeks to make changes if you need to.

Don't forget that this Sunday (17th) is the final 'Meet Up Training Run', led by our coach Andy. As well as being able to get advice on training and final preparation, it's an opportunity to familiarise yourself with the start/finish area of the race and much of the race route – so you know what to expect on race day.

Meet at 9am, 14 Pride Point Drive, Pride Park, Derby, DE24 8BX

Week 21 Recommended Training Sessions

Session	Main Session
1	Run 45 mins
2	Run 60 mins including 6 x 3 mins at target race pace in the middle part of the session, with 2 min jogging recovery intervals between each
3	Run 30 mins at very easy (recovery) pace
4	Run 75 mins – rehearse that race day routine!





Week Twenty Two

3

Weeks to go | 18th to 24th March

If you're on plan, you've now done enough training to enable you to successfully complete the race. So you deserve a big 'WELL DONE' for that!

The next couple of weeks is mainly about putting the icing on the cake, and getting yourself in peak shape to run a great time. It's also a time where you have to be careful not to sabotage your race by trying to cram in lot of extra miles or pushing yourself too hard. While it's good to stretch yourself in the harder sessions, remember that the main priority is to stay healthy and injury free. As many experienced runners have found, it's better to be on the start line healthy and slightly under trained than over trained and unhealthy.

So, what do we have in store in this week's plan?

Basically, there are 2 harder sessions, and 2 easier sessions where it's important to keep the intensity low (i.e. be capable of holding a conversation without gasping for breath). And we recommend that you alternate the hard and easy sessions.

The first of the harder session involves running intervals again. However, the format is slightly different to previous weeks, in that the 'efforts' reduce in length. The idea of this is that you should aim to run progressively faster as the durations reduce. This will help improve your uptake of oxygen – to fine tune that big engine you've built over the course of the plan. It's also an opportunity to focus on good running form and efficiency, driving your elbows back and knees forward.

The second of the harder sessions is a longer run, which follows a similar concept but does not have recovery intervals. The aim of this 'progressive run' is to gradually increase the pace throughout the run, stepping it up a little every 10 mins, before reverting back to an easy recovery pace for the last 10 minutes as an extended cool down.

Week 22 Recommended Training Sessions

Session	Main Session
1	Run 50 mins
2	Run 50 mins with the following intervals starting after 15 mins of easy running: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 2 x 3 mins [2 mins jog recovery]• 3 x 2 mins [90 secs jog recovery]• 4 x 1 min [1 min jog recovery]
3	Run 30 mins at very easy (recovery) pace
4	Run 60 mins as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 0-10 mins: very easy• 10-20 mins: easy• 20-30 mins: slightly slower than target race pace<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 30-40 mins: around target race pace• 40-50 mins: slightly faster than target race pace<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 50-60 mins: very easy





Week Twenty Three

2

Weeks to go | 25th to 31st March

Well, we've reached the final week of training proper, before we start to taper down for the race itself.

As everyone is different and responds to training at different rates, we've tried to give guidance throughout the plan on how to adapt things to suit you. This week it is particularly important that you do the sessions in a way that you will personally benefit from the most.

If you are struggling with endurance and are concerned about the distance, it would be wise to keep the intensity of effort low and run for a bit longer. However, if this is your first 10k, do not think that you have to try and cover the full distance prior to race day. If you're up to 8-9k you'll be more than capable of reaching the finish line on 15th April.

Conversely, if you're confident about the distance but are struggling with your pace, you may wish to include a little additional faster running within the sessions.

In either case, as we said last week, it's important not to try and cram in lots of additional training or push too hard in at this stage, as that is likely to be detrimental to your performance on race day.

With the above in mind, we've provided two versions of the plan this week so you can pick that one that suits you best. Whichever you choose, you can refine to suit your own needs too.

Also, I know we've banged on about it a lot over the weeks, but make sure you do a thorough warm up and cool down before each session, and include some strength and conditioning exercises in your regime (see weeks 4 and 5). It will help you get the most out of the sessions and aid recovery for the next one.

Week 23 Recommended Training Sessions

Session	Option 1: Need more distance	Option 2: Want more speed
1	Run 50 mins at easy pace (slower than target race pace)	Run 40 mins including 10 minutes of short intervals starting after 20 mins of easy running, e.g. 100 metres fast* [100 metres jog recovery] repeat for up to 10 mins *Fast sections should be faster than target race pace but not a flat out sprint.
2	Run 55 mins with the following intervals starting after 15 mins of easy running: 5 x 3 mins [3 mins jog recovery] Efforts to be run at about target race pace	Run 50 mins with the following intervals starting after 15 mins of easy running: 10 x 1 min [1 min jog recovery] Efforts to be run faster than target race pace
3	Run 30 mins at very easy (recovery) pace	Run 30 mins at very easy (recovery) pace
4	Run 55 mins at easy pace (slower than target race pace)	Run 50 mins at easy pace (slower than target race pace), increasing speed slightly for last 10-15 mins





1

Week to go | 1st to 7th April

Congratulations! You've reached the final week of our training plan.

The hard work is now behind you and it is time to taper down to ensure you're well rested and feeling fresh on race day.

We recommend a maximum of three more sessions prior to the race, as outlined below, and suggest that you have at least one rest day from running (i.e. Saturday) immediately prior to race day. Although it does no harm to do some gentle low intensity exercise the day before the race, e.g. a short walk. Some people find this beneficial to keep their muscles and joints loose.

The sessions this week are relatively short and low intensity. The only exception to this is an optional short interval session, which is an opportunity to stretch your legs and practice good running form. Only include this if you are feeling good and not carrying any stiffness or niggles.

If you're itching to do more during the week, do so with caution and keep things low intensity. It's too late now to improve your fitness, but certainly not too late to jeopardise your race by overdoing things.

We also want to take the opportunity this week to share some DOs and DON'Ts for the next few days, to help ensure you have a good race.

DO:

Get plenty of sleep, especially on Friday night.
Eat good quality food and keep well hydrated in the last few days leading up to the race.
Set out ALL of your race day kit the day before.
Give yourself plenty of time to get to the start.

DO NOT:

Cram in lots of extra last minute training.
Over eat or eat something you don't normally have on Friday/Saturday.
Wear brand new shoes other kit you've not used before.
Forget your race number / timing chip on Sunday.

We hope you have found our training plan useful and informative, and would welcome any feedback.
If you are looking for coaching support to help you train for future events, our coach, Andy, can be contacted via info@peakrunning.co.uk or through his website www.peakrunning.co.uk

Finally, have a great race and enjoy the atmosphere! We are looking forward to see you crossing the finish line!

Week 24 Recommended Training Sessions

Session	Day	Details
1	Monday or Tuesday	Run 40 mins at easy pace (slower than target race pace)
2	Wednesday or Thursday	Run 30 mins at easy pace (slower than target race pace) Optional: Include 5-10 minutes of short intervals in the middle part of the run, e.g. 50 metres fast* [100 metres jog recovery]; repeat for maximum of 10 mins *Fast sections should be faster than target race pace but not a flat out sprint.
3	Thursday or Friday	Run 20 mins at very easy (recovery) pace
4	Saturday	Race Day!

Good Luck!