

The Perfect

Warm-up

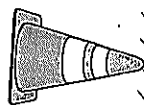
If you want to hit your target pace in the first kilometre, you need to be properly warmed up. Follow these tips from elite 5-K specialists Chris Solinsky and Jen Rhines to reach the starting line with your muscles loose and your cardiovascular system ready to roll.

STEP 1

Most elites run the first few minutes of their warm-ups more than two minutes a key slower than race pace. "I start quite slow and gradually pick it up as I feel better," says Solinsky. His warm-up run lasts 20 to 25 minutes; you should aim for at least 10 minutes, and do some light stretching afterward.

STEP 2

"At the end of the jog, I do two long strides: one for 45 seconds and one for 30 seconds," says Rhines. "These are at race pace or a little slower." These short, brisk runs prepare your cardiovascular system to work more efficiently; as a result, you'll be better able to hold race pace from the start. Don't worry about using up energy. Think back to how the first repeat of a speed workout can feel: sluggish. You don't want that to be your first kilometre. Finish strides about 10 to 15 minutes before race time.



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A FAST 5K

running 5-Ks or 10-Ks this spring or who have focused on longer races for the last year. This programme will help you gain for regain the ability to run a 5-K at a faster pace than you can sustain for longer races. You need a targeted plan to go faster. It's divided into three phases: aerobic development, speed endurance, and race preparation. The first phase is characterised by tempo work and hills. Then intervals replace tempo workouts, and you'll do a time trial to gain a sense of where your fitness is and to practice pacing. The last phase will have you running intervals at your 5-K goal pace to help your body get to know that speed. The eight-week plan accommodates various weekly mileage levels. Use the percentages printed in the far left column to figure out how much of your peak mileage you need to run in a given week (and determine the distance of your short, easy runs). Thus, if you want to top out at 50 kilometres a week and the schedule calls for 80 percent, you should run 40km that week.

WEEK MON TUE WED THU FRI SAT SUN

1 Short, easy run; 2 x 10 min. cross-training; or rest. Tempo Run (TR) 25 min. Same as above. ER 30 min. + HS 6 x 100-metre hill, walk/jog down. Same as above. Short, easy run; cross-training; or rest. Short Strides (SS) 4 x 50 metres with turning start, 2 min. rest (RR).

2 Same as above. TR 30 min. Same as above. Same as above. Same as above. Short, easy run + SS 5 x 50 metres with turning start, 2 min. RR.

3 Same as above. Aerobic Intervals (AI) 8 x 600 metres, 90 sec. RR. Same as above. 45-min. run + HS 8 x 100-metre hill, walk/jog down. Same as above. Short, easy run + SS 6 x 50 metres with running start, 2 min. RR.

4 Same as above. AI 6 x 1200 metres, 2 min. RR. Same as above. Short, easy run + Long Strides (LS) 6 x 50 metres, 2 min. RR. Same as above. 2km Time Trial. ER 75+ min.

5 Same as above. Race Pace (RP) 10 x 400 metres, 2 min. RR. ER 70+ min. Short, easy run; cross-training; or rest. Short, easy run + LS 4 x 150 metres recovery walk/jog. Same as above. 3km Time Trial.

6 Same as above. AI 5 x 1000 metres, 2 min. RR. ER 60+ min. Same as above. Same as above. Rest. 5-K race.

NOTE: Tempo intervals and Tempo Run (TR) half-marathon pace or slightly faster. On rolling terrain, aim for an even effort rather than even pace. Hill Sprints (HS) should be not all-out short sprints (SS). Near max speed Endurance Run (ER). Cross-training (CT) should be slower than 5-K goal pace. Aerobic Intervals (AI) 10K race pace or a bit faster. Typically about 5 to 10 seconds slower than 5-K goal pace. Long Strides (LS) about kilometre pace time trial 5-K goal pace. If you haven't raced a 5-K recently, do a time trial, run 2km as fast and evenly paced as you can use your average pace as your goal.

AEROBIC DEVELOPMENT

SPEED ENDURANCE

RACE PREPARATION