

The Beginner 5K Walk Training Schedule

You will begin to increase the time you spend walking each week before working on speed. If you find any week to be difficult, repeat that week rather than adding more time, until you are able to progress comfortably.

Week 1: Getting Started

- Time: Start with a daily 15-minute walk at an easy pace. Weekly total goal: 60 to 75 minutes.
- Walk five days the first week. We want to build a habit, so consistency is important. Spread out your rest days, such as making day 3 a rest day and day 6 a rest day.

Week 2: Work on Your Walking Posture and Form

- Time: Add five minutes a day so you are walking 20 minutes, five days a week. Or you may wish to extend yourself more on some days, followed by a rest day. Weekly total goal: 75 to 100 minutes.

Week 3: Walk at a Moderate Pace

- Time: Add five minutes a day so you are walking 25 minutes, 5 days a week. Weekly total goal: 100 to 125 minutes.
- Walk at a moderate, determined pace
 - You may be breathing noticeably.
 - You can still carry on a full conversation while walking
 - You are not out of breath

Week 4: Add a Long Day

- Time: Add five minutes a day to walk 30 minutes, four days a week, at a moderate pace. We will keep most of your within-week walks at this distance and speed. Weekly total goal: 125 to 150 minutes.
- Make your fifth day a mileage-building day. Each week between now and your 5K walk, add time to one long day a week. For week 4, this walk should be 40 minutes long at an easy pace.

Week 5: Work on Speed

- Time: Walk 30 minutes a day four days a week.
- Long Walk: walk 45 minutes at an easy pace.
- Building speed: During each of your shorter walks concentrate on improving your walking form to add speed. If you have not been using arm motion, this can be the key to increasing speed.

Week 6: Build Mileage

- Time: Walk 30 minutes a day four days a week, paying attention to form and speed techniques.
- Long Walk: walk 60 minutes at an easy pace.
- Once you have accomplished this time, you know you will be able to complete the 5K.

Weeks 7 and 8: Add Intervals

- At this point, you could complete your 5K walk. But if you have the time to build your aerobic fitness and speed, add interval and threshold workouts to your shorter within-week walks while keeping your long walk at an easier pace. Be sure to have a rest day or two between these more-intense workouts.
- High-intensity interval walk: In this workout, after a warmup you walk as fast as you can for 30 seconds, slow for 2 minutes, and repeat 8 to 12 times. This builds speed and technique. Do this workout once per week.
- Anaerobic threshold workout: This workout builds aerobic fitness and you should do it for one workout each week. After a warmup, walk or run at 80 percent to 92 percent of your maximum heart rate for 30 minutes.
- Long walk: Walk 60 minutes at an easy pace. Once you have accomplished this time, you know you will be able to complete the 5K. Our continued training will help you to achieve it in comfort.

Week 9 and Beyond

- If you still have time before your 5K walk, you can turn your long walk of the week into a simulated race every-other-week. Aim to walk it at 80 percent of the speed that you hope to walk the 5K, rather than keeping it to an easy pace.
- You can also increase the distance of your long walk in the week where you are keeping the pace easy. Add 15 minutes to it every-other-week. The increased distance and time will help build your stamina and endurance.

Celebrate!

You have accomplished a great goal. You have trained properly to become a true walking athlete. Wear your event t-shirt with pride.