8-Week 5K Training Program
For Beginners

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Completing a 5K is an excellent goal for those interested in running. Below is an 8-week program which incorporates a mix of walking, running, and cross training, designed to help you safely work your way up to running 3.1 miles without stopping. The American College of Sports Medicine recommends 3-5 days per week of cardiovascular training (at least 30 minutes), and 2-3 days per week of strength training (non-consecutive days).

Week	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
1	Walk 3 mins/Run 1 min (Repeat 5 times)	Rest	Walk 3 mins/Run 1 min (Repeat 5 times)	Rest	Walk 3 mins/Run 1 min (Repeat 5 times)	Walk 3 mins/Run 1 min (1 mile)	Rest
2	Walk 2.5 mins/Run 1.5 mins (Repeat 5 times)	Rest	Walk 2.5 mins/Run 1.5 mins (Repeat 5 times)	Rest	Walk 2.5 mins/Run 1.5 mins (Repeat 5 times)	Walk 2.5 mins/Run 1.5 mins (1.5 miles)	Rest
3	Run 2 mins/Walk 2 mins (Repeat 7 times)	CT	Run 2 mins/Walk 2 mins (Repeat 7 times)	CT	Run 2 mins/Walk 2 mins (Repeat 7 times)	Run 2 mins/Walk 2 mins (2 miles)	Rest
4	Run 2 mins/Walk 1.5 mins (Repeat 7 times)	CT	Run 2 mins/Walk 1.5 mins (Repeat 7 times)	CT	Run 2 mins/Walk 1.5 mins (Repeat 7 times)	Run 2 mins/Walk 1.5 mins (2 miles)	Rest
5	Run 2.5 mins/Walk 1 min (Repeat 8 times)	CT	Run 2.5 mins/Walk 1 min (Repeat 8 times)	CT	Run 2.5 mins/Walk 1 min (Repeat 8 times)	Run 2.5 mins/Walk 1 min (2.5 miles)	Rest
6	Run 3 mins/Walk 1.5 min (Repeat 8 times)	CT	Run 3 mins/Walk 1.5 min (Repeat 8 times)	CT	Run 3 mins/Walk 1.5 min (Repeat 8 times)	Run 3 mins/Walk 1.5 min (2.5 miles)	Rest
7	Run 3 mins/Walk 1 min (Repeat 10 times)	CT	Run 3 mins/Walk 1 min (Repeat 10 times)	CT	Run 3 mins/Walk 1 min (Repeat 10 times)	Run 3 mins/Walk 1 min (3 miles)	Rest
8	Run 3 mins/Walk 30 sec (Repeat 10 times)	CT	Run 3 mins/Walk 30 sec (Repeat 10 times)	CT	Run 3 mins/Walk 30 sec (Repeat 10 times)	Run (3.1 miles)	Rest

- If you are over the age of 40, have recently been inactive, *and have or previously had a medical condition*, consult with your physician before beginning an exercise program.
- In this program, three days a week will focus on training for time (~20-30 minutes), and one day a week will focus on training for distance (beginning at 1 mile and working up to 3.1 miles). It is important to have at least one day of rest, to help your body recover and prevent injury.
- As you progress in the program, it is important to incorporate Cross-Training (CT) 1-2 days a week. Cross-Training can be any aerobic activity that is not running or walking (e.g., resistance training, biking, elliptical, group fitness classes). Cross-training will help strengthen your muscles and may aid in injury prevention.
- Each session should begin with a warm-up and end with a cool-down (5-10 minutes). Warming-up is important to prepare your body for exercise and cooling-down allows the body to gradually return the heart-rate to normal. Warm-up and Cross-Training exercises can found on the Health *Plus* Online Workouts page!
- For beginners, training should be at an easy pace. On a perceived exertion scale (RPE) of 1-10, one being minimal effort and 10 being maximal, aim for an effort in the range of 3-7. If you are struggling to complete training sessions, it is okay to slow down. Repeat weeks if needed, and move ahead when you feel ready.
- It is okay to rearrange days to accommodate your schedule. Just try to avoid training on consecutive days, having rest or cross-training spread throughout the week.

References: ACSM's Complete Guide to Fitness & Health, Health Plus' Beginning Runners Guide, Runner's World