



8-Week Couch to 5K Running Program & Workout Guide

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Disclaimer

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Introduction

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Welcome to the 8-Week Couch to 5K Running Program! This program is designed to help beginners build the endurance needed to run a 5K non-stop in just 8 weeks. Alongside the running program, you'll engage in resistance training to support your overall fitness goals. Consistency is key, and by staying committed to both the running and resistance training programs, you'll see impressive results.

8-Week Running Program

This program consists of three running sessions per week. Each session combines walking and running to gradually build your stamina. By the end of 8-Week, you'll be ready to run a 5K.

Week 1-4: Building the Foundation

Week 1:

- Day 1: 5 min warm-up walk, 1 min run/1.5 min walk (x6), 5 min cool-down walk
- Day 2: 5 min warm-up walk, 1 min run/1.5 min walk (x6), 5 min cool-down walk
- Day 3: 5 min warm-up walk, 1 min run/1.5 min walk (x6), 5 min cool-down walk

Week 2:

- Day 1: 5 min warm-up walk, 1.5 min run/2 min walk (x5), 5 min cool-down walk
- Day 2: 5 min warm-up walk, 1.5 min run/2 min walk (x5), 5 min cool-down walk
- Day 3: 5 min warm-up walk, 1.5 min run/2 min walk (x5), 5 min cool-down walk

Week 3:

- Day 1: 5 min warm-up walk, 1.5 min run/1.5 min walk, 3 min run/3 min walk (x2), 5 min cool-down walk
- Day 2: 5 min warm-up walk, 1.5 min run/1.5 min walk, 3 min run/3 min walk (x2), 5 min cool-down walk
- Day 3: 5 min warm-up walk, 1.5 min run/1.5 min walk, 3 min run/3 min walk (x2), 5 min cool-down walk

Week 4:

- Day 1: 5 min warm-up walk, 3 min run/1.5 min walk, 5 min run/3 min walk (x2), 5 min cool-down walk
- Day 2: 5 min warm-up walk, 3 min run/1.5 min walk, 5 min run/3 min walk (x2), 5 min cool-down walk
- Day 3: 5 min warm-up walk, 3 min run/1.5 min walk, 5 min run/3 min walk (x2), 5 min cool-down walk

Week 5-8: Increasing Endurance

Week 5:

- Day 1: 5 min warm-up walk, 5 min run/3 min walk, 5 min run/3 min walk, 5 min cool-down walk
- Day 2: 5 min warm-up walk, 5 min run/3 min walk, 5 min run/3 min walk, 5 min cool-down walk

- Day 3: 5 min warm-up walk, 5 min run/3 min walk, 5 min run/3 min walk, 5 min cool-down walk

Week 6:

- Day 1: 5 min warm-up walk, 5 min run/3 min walk, 8 min run/3 min walk, 5 min cool-down walk

- Day 2: 5 min warm-up walk, 5 min run/3 min walk, 8 min run/3 min walk, 5 min cool-down walk

- Day 3: 5 min warm-up walk, 5 min run/3 min walk, 8 min run/3 min walk, 5 min cool-down walk

Week 7:

- Day 1: 5 min warm-up walk, 8 min run/3 min walk, 8 min run, 5 min cool-down walk

- Day 2: 5 min warm-up walk, 8 min run/3 min walk, 8 min run, 5 min cool-down walk

- Day 3: 5 min warm-up walk, 8 min run/3 min walk, 8 min run, 5 min cool-down walk

Week 8:

- Day 1: 5 min warm-up walk, 10 min run/3 min walk, 10 min run, 5 min cool-down walk

- Day 2: 5 min warm-up walk, 12 min run/2 min walk, 12 min run, 5 min cool-down walk
- Day 3: 5 min warm-up walk, 15 min run, 5 min cool-down walk

Training Basics

For these 8-weeks, you will be following a 2-phase workout program. This means that after 4 weeks, you will start a new set of workouts. Setting it up this way ensures variation while keeping it simple, allowing you to learn the workouts and complete them in as little time as possible.

You will complete 3 workouts each week. The first two will be full-body strength workouts intended for maximum effect. The third is a metabolic workout designed to shed fat in the shortest amount of time: Phase 1 will take 20 minutes, and Phase 2 will take 15 minutes.

Phase 1 specifically builds strength using total-body movements and compound exercises. If you are new to these exercises, take your time in transitioning. You will complete workouts off the Phase 1 sheet during the first 4 weeks only.

Phase 2 will increase the challenge slightly. If you are tracking the weights used (and repetitions performed for the metabolic workout), try to increase the amount or number completed each week after you learn the exercises. Make it a personal challenge not only to maintain the shape you are in but to improve your strength, endurance, and overall fitness throughout the program.

Use the workout sheets for each phase to guide your workouts. Keep track of the weights used and repetitions performed. Before long, you will become accustomed to recording your workouts, and you will be pleasantly surprised at how much more weight you can handle at the end of a phase than you could at the beginning.

90% Rule

Again, as mentioned previously, you only need to be 90% compliant with the training guidelines of this program. Since there are 3 workouts each week and 12 total each month, you can miss a total of 1 workout a month and still be compliant.

What does missing a workout mean? It means having a workout scheduled for the week and skipping it. It does NOT mean that you pushed back the workout or rearranged your schedule to fit it in; if you complete the workout, then you are still compliant.

The power of this setup is its flexibility. If you need to rearrange your workout schedule to fit in 2 workouts on back-to-back days, you can do so. This allows you to travel for long weekends or to accommodate a livelier social schedule.

Phase 1

Strength A	Sets	Reps	Rest	Day 1	Day 4	Day 7	Day 10
1A Plank Variations	3	45s	30s				
2A Split Squat	3	12ea	0				
2B Standing Band Row	3	12ea	30s				
3A DB Deadlift	3	12	0				
3B Tall Kneeling SA DB Press	3	12ea	30s				
4A DB Swing	3	30s	30s				
4B Mountain Climber	3	30s	30s				
Strength B	Sets	Reps	Rest	Day 2	Day 5	Day 8	Day 11
1A Side Plank Variations	3	30s ea	30s				
2A Hip Ext/ Leg Curl	3	12	0				
2B Push Up	3	12	30s				
3A DB Goblet Squat	3	12	0				
3B Tall Kneeling Band Pulldown	3	12	30s				
4A DB Wood Chops	4	20s	10s				
4B DB Wood Chops	4	20s	10s				
Metabolic Workout A	Sets	Reps	Rest	Day 3	Day 6	Day 9	Day 12
1A Alt Reverse Lunge BW	4	40s	20s				
1B Push Up Hold or Push Up	4	40s	20s				
1C DB Shoveling	4	40s	20s				
1D Rolling Planks	4	40s	20s				

1E Burpees	4	40s	20s				
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Phase 2

Strength A	Sets	Reps	Rest	Day 1	Day 4	Day 7	Day 10
1A Plank Pulldowns	3	10ea	30s				
2a Reverse Lunge	3	8ea	0				
2B Split Stance Rotation DB Row	3	8ea	30s				
3A DB Offset Squat/Deadlift	3	5ea	0				
3B Split Stance Single Arm Shoulder Press	3	8ea	30s				
4A Jump Squat	10	10s	5s				
4B Plank	10	10s	5s				
Strength B	Sets	Reps	Rest	Day 2	Day 5	Day 8	Day 11
1A Stability Ball Rollouts	3	10	30s				
2A DB Deadlift	3	8	0				
2B DB Push Up + Core Row	3	8	30s				
3A Walking Lunge	3	8ea	0				
3B Alt Bent Over DB Row (Prone)	3	8	30s				
4A Plank Walk Up	3 Min	10	0				
4B Ice Skater		10	0				
Metabolic Workout A	Sets	Reps	Rest	Day 3	Day 6	Day 9	Day 12
1A Squat to Shouldering w/ DB	3	60s	15s				
1B Mountain Climber	3	60s	15s				
1C Skier Swing	3	60s	15s				
1D Low Squat Jump Outs	3	60s	15s				

Resistance Training—Phase 2

- This week, you will transition to Phase 2 of your workouts
- As always, you will complete 3 workouts this week
- At the beginning of the week, schedule when you will complete each workout
- If you have not been 90% compliant with your workouts throughout Phase 1, make it more of a priority in Phase 2

Resistance Training

- By now, you should be getting more comfortable with the movements and even seeing some strength gains from Phase 1; don't be afraid to challenge yourself!
- You will complete 3 workouts this week
- At the beginning of the week, schedule when you will complete each workout

General Tips

1. **Prioritize Form:** Always focus on proper technique to avoid injury and maximize benefits.
2. **Progress Gradually:** Increase weight or reps when exercises feel too easy, but don't rush it. Form always comes first.
3. **Recovery is Key:** Ensure rest days are part of your schedule and get plenty of sleep for muscle repair.

4. Track Your Progress: Write down the weights used and reps completed to monitor improvement week to week.
5. Hydrate: Stay hydrated throughout the day and during your workouts to keep muscles working efficiently.
6. Warm-Up and Cool-Down: Perform dynamic stretches before each workout and static stretches afterward to maintain flexibility.
7. Enjoy the Process: Resistance training is about long-term improvements, so enjoy the journey and celebrate small victories along the way.

By following this 8-week Couch to 5K Running and Resistance Training Program, you'll be well on your way to improving endurance, building strength, and enhancing your overall fitness. Remember, consistency is key! Keep pushing yourself, but also listen to your body. Stay committed, and you'll achieve your goals.

