

Walking is a great way to get the 150 minutes of moderate exercise needed every week for good health. For those who want to raise the bar, however, consider jogging. Yes, it is possible.

Those who have never run before should not be hesitant – here's how to work up to comfortably running a 5K, or 3.1 miles, in nine weeks, courtesy of the British National Health Service. Before starting, make sure to consult a doctor.

While the training is confined to nine weeks, it is OK to repeat a week until physically ready to move on to the next. There are many apps and websites to help with this project.

Each week will consist of three walks or runs. Start each one with a brisk 5 minute walk and after the warm up, do the following routines:

Week one

Do blocks of 1 minute of running and 1.5 minutes of walking. Total: 20 minutes each time.

Week two

Do blocks of 1.5 minutes of running and 2 minutes of walking. Total: 20 minutes each time.

Week three

Two repetitions of 1.5 minutes of running and 1.5 minutes of walking, then 3 minutes of running and 3 minutes of walking. Total: 23 minutes each time.

Week four

3 minutes of running, 1.5 minutes of walking, 5 minutes of running, 2.5 minutes of walking, 3 minutes of running, 1.5 minutes of walking and 5 minutes of running. Total: 26.5 minutes each time.

Week 5

Run one: Two repetitions of 5 minutes of running and 3 minutes of walking, then 5 minutes of running. Total: 26 minutes.

Run two: 8 minutes of running, 5 minutes of walking and 8 minutes of running. Total: 26 minutes.

Run three: 20 minutes of running. Total 25 minutes.

Week six

Run one: 5 minutes of running, 3 minutes of walking, 8 minutes of running, 3 minutes of walking and 5 minutes of running. Total: 29 minutes.

Run two: 10 minutes of running, 3 minutes of walking and 10 minutes of running. Total: 28 minutes.

Run three: 25 minutes of running. Total: 30 minutes.

Week seven

25 minutes of running. Total: 30 minutes each time.

Week eight

28 minutes of running. Total: 33 minutes each time.

Week nine

30 minutes of running. Total: 35 minutes each time.

Structure greatly helps motivation, so choose certain days of the week for runs and stick to them. Be sure to have a rest day between each run to reduce your chance of injury. On the off days, strength and flexibility classes, such as weight training and yoga, are great for recovery.

Some new runners may experience sore calves or shins, often caused by running on hard surfaces or wearing shoes without enough support. Don't worry if some runs don't go well. Just move on to the next one. Even a bad run is good for you. Make sure to consult a doctor before starting any exercise regimen.

To find a 5K race, visit runsignup.com or active.com.

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