

The Beginner's 4-Week Running Program

Have you always wanted to learn how to run, but didn't know where to start? Our 4-week running jumpstart routine will give you the basic needed to run. Running takes skills. A few of those skills include breathing properly, and holding proper form. After you master those, and get used to running on a regular basis, you will find yourself in love with a new form of cardio.

Breathing

The key to breathing while running is breathing in through your nose and out through your mouth. If you do all mouth breathing, you are going to feel exhausted, and quickly. Of course, some runners prefer to inhale and exhale solely through the mouth, but we have found that this increases dehydration. Whatever you choose, stick with it. If breathing through your nose feels like a chore, then switch to mouth-only, but be sure to keep extra fluids on hand.

Once you have found a breathing method that works for you, you need to learn to pace your breathing. A steady INHALE 3, EXHALE 3-6 counts is common, but again, nobody breaths the same way.

To learn breathing control, take a one-minute walk, focusing on your breathing pattern (it should be deep and regular). Pick up the pace to a fast walk and try to keep the same breathing pattern. Next jog and then run. Each time, keep your mind on breathing at the same rate that you started with.

Our fitness expert says that she is constantly listening to her breathing pattern. In fact, she doesn't listen to music or anything because her main focus is internal. Try running without music for at least the first few weeks of running before adding in music, if you must.

Proper Form

Improper form is the main cause of running injuries. Even the best runners struggle with form.

Here are a key tips to maintaining proper running form:

Take short strides. Don't overextend your legs.

Your foot should land underneath your knee, not in front of it.

Push up and off the ground.

Keep your hands relaxed and your elbows slightly bent. Stay loose.

Keep your core tight, but not so tight you can't breathe.

Look ahead, always forward to the next stretch of your run.

Now that we have discussed breathing and form, click on to get the 4-week running program:

Week One:

Sunday**:

- 40-minute run-walk. Aim to run for 90 seconds and walk for 30 seconds.

Monday:

- Strength training or yoga

Tuesday:

- 20-minute tempo*

Wednesday:

- Upper body workout: 3 sets of 10 of pushups, dips, burpees, jumping jacks, and lat raises.

Thursday:

- 40-minute walk/run: run 2 minutes, walk 1 minute until you are done.

Friday:

- Lower body and abs: 3 sets of 10 of crunches, lunges, squats, pelvic lifts, and calf raises.

Saturday:

- 30 min steady

Week Two:

Sunday:

- 20-minute walk + 20-minute strength training (squats, wall sits, crunches, pushups, dips)

Monday:

- 45-minutes: Jog 5 minutes, Run 5 minutes, repeat

Tuesday:

- Rest

Wednesday:

- 5 times of 3 min fast run/3 min slow walk

Thursday:

- Upper Body: 3 sets of 10 reps of bicep curls, shoulder press, pushups and lat raises

Friday:

- 30-minute steady run (aim for the full 30 at your regular pace)

Saturday:

- legs +walking

Week Three:

Sunday:

- 30-minute steady pace

Monday:

- 30-minute strength training or yoga

Tuesday:

- 50-minute tempo (feel free to walk and run during this workout, if needed)

Wednesday:

- 30-minute upper body workout

Thursday:

- 20-minute tempo

Friday:

- Lower body and core workout

Saturday:

- 30 min steady run

Week Four:

Sunday:

- Rest

Monday:

- 30 minutes stretching. Take a 30 minute walk too.

Tuesday:

- 30-minute tempo

Wednesday:

- Upper Body workout

Thursday:

- 40-minute steady run

Friday:

- Lower body workout

Saturday:

- 50-min steady

* Tempo means to perform slightly faster than your regular pace. To find your regular pace, go running comfortably for 1 mile and time it. That is your regular pace.

** For every run, warm up and cool down with a 5-minute walk.