

A Faster 5k: 6-Week Beginner's Training Plan

Week 1: Introduction and Mile Time Trial

1. **Monday:** 2 miles easy run + 4x20 seconds striders
2. **Tuesday:** Rest
3. **Wednesday:** 1.5 miles warm-up, 1 to 1 Fartlek for 10 minutes (1 minute hard running followed by 1 minute easy), 1.5 miles cool-down
4. **Thursday:** Rest
5. **Friday:** 2.5 miles easy run + 4x20 seconds striders
6. **Saturday:** 1-mile time trial (Warm up with 1.5 miles easy running, run 1 mile as fast as possible, then 1.5 miles cool-down)
7. **Sunday:** Cross-training (e.g., swimming, cycling, or elliptical for 30-45 minutes)

Total Mileage: ~11 miles

Week 2: Introduction to Tempo Runs

1. **Monday:** Rest
2. **Tuesday:** 2 miles easy run + 4x20 seconds striders
3. **Wednesday:** 1.5 miles warm-up, 2 miles at tempo pace (comfortably hard), 1.5 miles cool-down
4. **Thursday:** 3 miles easy run + 4x20 seconds striders
5. **Friday:** Rest
6. **Saturday:** 1.5 miles warm-up, 1 to 1 Fartlek for 12 minutes, 1.5 miles cool-down
7. **Sunday:** Cross-training (30-45 minutes)

Total Mileage: ~14 miles

Week 3: Building Stamina

1. **Monday:** Rest
2. **Tuesday:** 3 miles easy run + 4x20 seconds striders
3. **Wednesday:** 1.5 miles warm-up, 2.5 miles at tempo pace, 1 mile cool-down
4. **Thursday:** 3.5 miles easy run + 4x20 seconds striders
5. **Friday:** Rest
6. **Saturday:** 1.5 miles warm-up, 1 to 1 Fartlek for 14 minutes, 1.5 miles cool-down
7. **Sunday:** Cross-training (30-45 minutes)

Total Mileage: ~16 miles

Week 4: Increasing Pace

1. **Monday:** Rest
2. **Tuesday:** 3.5 miles easy run + 4x20 seconds striders
3. **Wednesday:** 2 miles warm-up, 3 miles at tempo pace, 1 mile cool-down
4. **Thursday:** 4 miles easy run + 4x20 seconds striders
5. **Friday:** Rest
6. **Saturday:** 1.5 miles warm-up, 1 to 1 Fartlek for 16 minutes, 1.5 miles cool-down
7. **Sunday:** Cross-training (30-45 minutes)

Total Mileage: ~18 miles

Week 5: Taper and Recovery

1. **Monday:** Rest
2. **Tuesday:** 3 miles easy run + 4x20 seconds striders
3. **Wednesday:** 1.5 miles warm-up, 2 miles at a relaxed tempo pace, 1.5 miles cool-down
4. **Thursday:** 3 miles easy run + 4x20 seconds striders
5. **Friday:** Rest
6. **Saturday:** 2.5 miles easy run + 4x20 seconds striders
7. **Sunday:** Cross-training (30-45 minutes)

Total Mileage: ~14 miles

Week 6: Race Week

1. **Monday:** Rest
2. **Tuesday:** 2.5 miles easy run + 4x20 seconds striders
3. **Wednesday:** 1.5 miles warm-up, 10 minutes of relaxed 1 to 1 Fartlek, 1.5 miles cool-down
4. **Thursday:** 2 miles easy run + 4x20 seconds striders
5. **Friday:** Rest and prepare (hydrate, sleep well, etc.)
6. **Saturday:** 5k Race Day! (Warm-up with 1-1.5 miles easy running, run the 5k race, then cool-down with 1-1.5 miles easy running)
7. **Sunday:** Celebrate and recover! (optional gentle cross-training or walking)

Total Mileage: ~11-12 miles (excluding the 5k race)

Tips:

- Always start and end your runs at a comfortable pace.
- Pay attention to your body's signals. If you're feeling overly fatigued or have pain (other than typical muscle soreness), it's okay to adjust the schedule, take extra rest, or seek medical advice.
- Ensure you're hydrating and fueling properly to support your training.
- Make sure you have a good pair of running shoes that provide the support and cushioning you need.
- Enjoy the process and celebrate your progress!