

# Get the Facts: Training for a Run

## **Myth:**

To train for a run, you just run.

## **Fact:**

Many will say, to train for a marathon, half marathon, 5k or a sprint, you just do it until it gets easier. There is some truth to this but it is extremely oversimplified and not applicable to most. For example, everyone starts at a different level. Some can run 4 miles but not quickly, some can run quickly but only for a short distance, some have never run in their lives. For this article, I will focus on the most beginner of trainers.

In order to get yourself started and keep from falling off the wagon, I find it most helpful to arrange a schedule. This should be tailored to your daily routine. Make it achievable and gradually increase the intensity as you see fit. If you're having trouble creating a schedule, there are plenty templates online to guide you. Remember though, there is no one golden routine. Everyone is different and the best routine is the one you create for yourself, so adjust the online templates to suit your personal needs. The next question would be "what to do when I train?" When starting from scratch, the best first step is to simply get out there and determine your current level. If you can only run a mile that's fine, if you can only make it a quarter mile without stopping, that's fine too. Just establish a starting point.

Now, use this to practice going further and further at a comfortable pace. This will help build the cardiovascular endurance needed for a distance event. Also, from time to time, switch up the pace and distance to add some variability to your training. A sample schedule may look something like:

Monday: 8am – 1 mi jog

Wednesday: 9am – 0.25 mi sprint à 0.5 mi slow jog à 0.25 mi sprint

Friday – 8am – 1 mi jog

Sunday – 9am – 2.5 mi slow jog

Repeat this or alter it to make it more suitable for you and don't be afraid to tone it down at first. A regimen that is too difficult initially will make it much more difficult to adhere to, and getting into the routine is the most important step.

Another problem often faced is that workouts may become boring. Swapping out one form of cardio for another works great and keeps things interesting. There are plenty of cardio exercises other than running available such as ellipticals, swimming, racquetball, soccer, biking, zumba, plyometrics (jump training), and many online videos to get your heart pumping. But, remember to come back to the main goal and reassess consistently to monitor progress.

## **Conclusion:**

In a nut shell, to increase your cardiovascular endurance for a run or endurance event keep, the most important step is to keep a schedule. Vary the exercises within that schedule to strengthen different areas which contribute to the goal (i.e. running uses leg strength, leg endurance, cardiovascular endurance, and agility). Find fun and different ways to train. Find a buddy to keep you accountable and motivated. Constantly reassess to track your progress and adjust your schedule accordingly. And finally, from last weeks' Wellness Weekly topic, fasting before endurance training may help increase glycogen availability to allow you to go further and faster in the future. Think about morning trainings before breakfast. In fact, there is a class at Carilion Wellness called Xtreme Training which is great for building cardio endurance with an instructor who pushes you but only to your own abilities.

Check it out!

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