

10 Weeks to Your First 5K Race Walk to Run Program

The following training schedule was created by coach and marathoner Budd Coates, the health promotion manager at Rodale, Inc., publisher of RUNNER'S WORLD. In the last 15 years, Coates has helped hundreds of Rodale runners train for and complete their first race – an annual 3.5-miler in New York's Central Park.

Week 1

Run 2 minutes easy,
walk 4 minutes.
Repeat five times.

Week 2

Run 3 minutes,
walk 3 minutes.
Repeat 5 times.

Week 3

Run 5 minutes,
walk 2-1/2 minutes.
Repeat four times.

Week 4

Run 7 minutes,
walk 3 minutes.
Repeat three times.

Week 5

Run 8 minutes,
walk 2 minutes.
Repeat three times.

Week 6

Run 9 minutes,
walk 2 minutes.
Repeat twice, then run 8 minutes.

Week 7

Run 9 minutes,
walk 1 minute.
Repeat three times.

Week 8

Run 13 minutes,
walk 2 minutes.
Repeat twice.

Week 9

Run 14 minutes,
walk 1 minute.
Repeat twice.

Week 10

Run 30 minutes or 5K race*

Before starting this schedule, prepare your legs with eight days of walking. Walk for 20 minutes a day for the first four days, then increase to 30 minutes a day for four more days. Now you're ready to begin Week 1.

This program asks you to do four run/walk workouts per week. You'll fare best if you follow a regular schedule. Do the workouts on Monday, Wednesday, Friday and Saturday. Take rest days on Tuesday, Thursday and Sunday.

*During the week of your race, you'll want to cut back or "taper" your mileage. Run only 30 minutes on Monday, 20 minutes on Wednesday, then 10 minutes on Thursday (for a Saturday race) or Friday (for a Sunday race). Stay off your feet as much as possible, drink plenty of fluids and eat high-carbohydrate and low-fat foods.