



Getting Ready For a 13km Fun Run

Not being a full time professional athlete these days I am mindful of the fact that us 'normal people' seem to juggle work / family & play as best we can. For me these days it all about making the most of the spare time I have to exercise & knowing I am getting the absolute most benefit from the minutes I put into it.

Believing in what you are doing when you train & having absolute strength of mind in the program puts you in a powerful position when you compete.

I have learnt over the years when I was training up to 5 hours a day / 6 days a week that I had times when some of the work I was doing wasn't beneficial. There were definitely junk miles that should have been left out of the program. Because of this I was working too much in the endurance phase of my program & not concentrating on speed enough.

That said a lot of runners think they don't have the speed to run 13km well & this comes down to a lot of recreational runners not devoting time to speed work. So instead they develop endurance but not the speed to run a solid 13km time. Building speed along the way is the best method in getting your times down.

I want to give you an insight into how I attack training for a 13km race based on being time poor these days making the most of every session. I have assumed you have a general level of fitness coming into the 1st week of the program but if you think you may struggle then a few weeks of general fitness running will be needed. You can do this with aerobics runs 3 to 4 days a week.

There are 3 key sessions a week you need to do to get the most out of this 8 week program. These are – Long aerobic run / Speed session / Fartleg session (intervals).

Any extra sessions you want to do outside of these 3 should be recovery runs.

Long Aerobic Run

This is a once a week longer run at an aerobic pace & helps with fatigue & strength thru your legs. You should run this at a comfortable pace (able to talk if you needed to).

Good idea not to run on hard surfaces. This run gives you the mental strength to know you can run the time duration on race day.



Speed

These sessions preferably should be down on the track where you can measure the distances well. The speed component of the session is run at high speed efforts ranging from 400m – 800m. These efforts are aimed at improving max speed & running technique. Each effort set is conducted in a fresh state so you can concentrate on holding good posture & achieve high speed. Important note to warm up well before starting the main set & always warm down to rid yourself of lactate acid that has been built up during the session.

Fartlek

These longer interval sessions are completed at a speed slower than your 10 km race pace. These sessions are there to improve your anaerobic threshold & running economy.

Be careful not to run the efforts too hard because this will negate the session. A good session to do on grass. Eg – golf course or oval with a few slight hills etc.

Warm Up & Warm Down

All sessions should have this component. Easy running with some drills to loosen up thru a wide range of motion such as high knees & butt kick drills.

Training Speeds

The speed & intensity of a given session is really important. It's the difference between putting together a great 8 week block & not. You might think that running everything harder than set out will make you better. This is not the case. You could cause yourself an injury.

Let's take an intensity rating from 1 – 10. 1 being easy & 10 being flat out.

Consider on race day that you will range around 7-8 out of 10.

I have marked in red the intensity rating you should aim at for each session.

This 8 week program I have chosen Tues / Sat / Sun as the training days.

Obviously you can change this to suit your schedule. Remember to have a gap between the Speed workout (Tues) & the Fartleg session (Sat).

(For someone wanting to run between 1hr – 1hr 45)



	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Week 1	Rest	3km easy, then 4 x 400m, with 400m or 3-min jog recoveries, then 3km easy <i>I. 8-9</i>	Rest	Rest	Rest	3km easy, 3km faster, jog to finish <i>I. 6-7</i>	4-5km easy <i>Intensity 4-6</i>
Week 2	Rest	3km easy, then 4 x 600m or 2 mins, with 400m or 3-min jog recoveries, then 3km easy <i>I. 8-9</i>	Rest	Rest	Rest	15 mins easy, 15 mins fast but controlled, jog to finish <i>I. 6-7</i>	4-6km easy <i>Intensity 4-6</i>
Week 3	Rest	3-4km easy, then 4 x 800m or 3 mins, with 400m or 3-4 min jog recoveries, then 2M easy <i>I. 7-8</i>	Rest	Rest	Rest	30-40 mins relaxed, inc hills <i>I. 6</i>	7-8km easy <i>Intensity 4-6</i>
Week 4	Rest	3km easy, then 8 x 400m or 70-80 secs, with 400m or 3-min recoveries, then 3km easy <i>I. 7-8</i>	Rest	Rest	Rest	8km, first half at 70%, second at 85%	7-8km easy <i>Intensity 4-6</i>
Week 5	Rest	3km easy, then 8 x 500m or 90-100 secs, with 400m or 3-min recoveries, then 3km easy <i>I. 7-8</i>	Rest	Rest	Rest	35-45 mins fartlek with varied efforts and recoveries <i>I. 6-7</i>	8-9km easy <i>Intensity 4-6</i>
Week 6	Rest	3-4km easy, then 5 x 800m or 3 mins, with 400m or 3-min jog recoveries, then 3km easy <i>I. 7-8</i>	Rest	Rest	Rest	8-9km gradual acceleration in 3km segments, ie 70%-80%-90%	9-10km easy <i>Intensity 4-6</i>
Week 7	Rest	3-4km easy, then 10 x 400m or 70-80 secs, then 400m or 2-3-min jog recoveries, then 3km easy <i>I. 8-9</i>	Rest	Rest	Rest	Warm up, then 4 x 1M or 4 - 5min, with 3-4 min recoveries, then cool down <i>I. 7-8</i>	9-10km easy <i>Intensity 4-6</i>
Week 8	Rest	3km easy, then 4 x 500m or 90-100 secs, with 400m or 2-3 min jog recoveries, then 2km easy <i>I. 7</i>	Rest	4km Easy <i>I. 4-5</i>	Rest	Rest	RACE



Some tips from Runners World Magazine

Running surfaces: they make a huge difference

- **Sidestep the pavement** Concrete pavements are made of crushed rock, and over time they'll crush your legs. A little running on pavements – say five minutes – is okay, but never do the bulk of your daily run on pavements. Aside from the pounding your legs will take, urban pavements are crowded, uneven and cracked, so you can easily trip on them. Avoid them as much as possible.
- **Beware the one-track mind** Tracks are definitely easier on your legs than pavements, but they're tougher on your psyche. Many beginner runners go to a track for their initial runs and, not surprisingly, find circling a 400m loop to be mind-numbing. Tracks are for speed sessions or races, not endurance runs.
- **Look for the open road** Asphalt is the surface on which most runners log the most miles. Asphalt isn't the softest surface, but it's a lot softer than concrete. Don't run on the side of steeply cambered roads, because it can lead to injuries. If possible, run on the most level part of the road.
- **Go for the green** Parks are excellent places to run. Usually there are plenty of grass fields to run around. You can do loops around the entire park or laps around the football pitches. Most parks have amenities such as toilets, and are generally safe for solo running. Grass is the softest surface to run on, but it can be uneven, so be alert for hard-to-see bumps, holes and sprinklers, which can trip you up.
- **Run on the dirt** Smooth dirt trails are easy on the legs and great for the mind. And there's less chance of running into hazards on dirt than on grass. Nothing's better than running on a great trail through a forest or along a scenic river or lakefront: the pounding's minimal, the mind wanders and the miles flow by.



Shoes: the most important purchase you'll make

- **Buy the real thing** Get a quality pair of running shoes; not tennis, aerobics or cross-training shoes, but shoes made specifically for running.
- **Go to a specialist running shop** When you're looking to buy, don't head for the major sports chain on the high street. Go instead to a shop that specializes in running footwear. At a specialist running shop, you'll find a wide selection of shoe models and sizes, as well as trained salespeople who are themselves runners and who understand the particular needs of beginners.
- **When you shop for shoes, do these three things:** (1) go late in the day, when your feet are their largest (feet swell during the day and during running); (2) bring along the socks you'll wear while running; and (3) have both feet measured by a salesperson, even if you think you know your shoe size (one foot is often larger than the other, and you'll need to be fitted for the larger foot).
- **Be fastidious about fit** The running shoes you buy must fit properly to work properly. A good-fitting running shoe will feel snug but not tight. There should be room at the front of the shoe to allow your feet to spread during running. Press your thumb into the shoe beyond the big toe; it should fit between the end of your toe and the end of the shoe. In the rearfoot, your heel should also fit snugly so the shoe will hold your foot securely.
- **Take the shoes for a test run** Most running shops will allow you to jog around in the shoes you're considering. Do so. As you run, pay attention to how your toes feel: are they sliding forward? Do they feel pinched together? Also, notice your heels: are they sliding out of your shoe slightly? In general, are the shoes comfortable? If not, try another pair.



Apparel: not just a fashion statement

- **Use thin layers** Sweat moves more easily through two thin layers than it does through one thick layer. A well-designed layering system keeps you warm and dry during the colder months, yet still allows freedom of movement.
- **Make it breathable** Cotton is great at soaking up sweat, but it's also great at holding on to it. A soaked T-shirt will stick to your body, and cotton's coarse, rough fibres may chafe your skin. Breathable, synthetic fabrics, such as CoolMax, wick perspiration away from your skin and out to the next layer of clothing or to the outer surface, where that moisture can evaporate quickly, with the desirable result of keeping you cooler in hot weather and warmer in cold weather.
- **Consider the weather conditions you'll be running in** If you rarely run in rain, sleet or snow, you don't need a waterproof jacket. If winter temperatures in your area rarely drop below zero, you may only need one layer, so buy a good one.
- **Don't overdo it** Many runners make the mistake of overdressing when it's cold outside. A good rule of thumb is that you should feel slightly cold during the first km or so of your run. If you feel toasty right after heading out the door, you're probably going to get too hot later on.
- **When the sun shines, protect your skin with a dark shirt** Dark-coloured clothing absorbs UV light, protecting your skin better than light-coloured clothing, which lets light through. You may feel a little warmer in a darker shirt when the temperature soars, but sun protection is more important.