



HIIT *Guides*

Beginners
8 Week Running Plan

Your Way To 5k

You choose:
2 or 3 runs per week

8-Week

Your Way to 5k Plan

Welcome to **Your Way to 5K**—a flexible, beginner-friendly running plan designed to help you go from walking to running a 5K at your own pace. Whether you're brand new to running, coming back after a break, or just want a plan that fits around your life, this guide is for you.

I hated running when I was younger. I had asthma attacks almost every time I was forced into it at school—and honestly, that feeling stuck with me for years.

When I started my weight loss journey around 2017, I decided to give running another go. It was awful. My asthma still wasn't well-controlled, my legs had no power, and I was trying to run around Helsby—literally on the side of a hill. Every run felt like a battle. But deep down, I really wanted to conquer it. Running had become this looming thing I hated because I couldn't do it, and I needed to change that.

For a few years, I dipped in and out. I preferred spin classes, and they felt more manageable. But when the gyms shut during Covid, I decided to give running everything I had. No distractions, no excuses—just me, my trainers, and a straight line down to Wigg Island. That was the turning point. I signed up for my first 10K in London in 2021, and for the first time, I started to feel like a runner.

So if you're reading this thinking running just isn't for you—maybe you've tried before, or maybe the thought alone feels overwhelming—I understand. I've been there. But I also know it can feel different. Running doesn't have to be about speed or distance. It's about building confidence, taking it one step at a time, and proving to yourself what you're capable of.

This guide is here to support you in doing exactly that—with structure, reassurance, and a clear plan to help you move forward, no matter where you're starting from.



8-Week

Your Way to 5k Plan

You can choose from two options:

- 2 sessions per week for a slower, more manageable build
- 3 sessions per week for a steadier, slightly faster progression

Each session blends walking and running intervals with guidance on heart rate zones to help you train safely, build fitness gradually, and feel confident as you go. Your Way to 5K takes the pressure off and puts you in control—no extremes, no judgement, just progress that works with your lifestyle.

We'll be using heart rate zones to guide your effort levels—this helps you train smarter, not harder. By staying in the right zone for each session, you'll build endurance, avoid burnout, and get the most out of your runs without overdoing it.

Here's a quick overview of the zones used in this plan, based on a percentage of your maximum heart rate (usually estimated as 220 minus your age):

Zone 1 (Very Light – 50–60%)

- Gentle movement, very easy pace. Great for warming up, cooling down, or active recovery.

Zone 2 (Light – 60–70%)

- A comfortable pace where you can hold a full conversation. This is your go-to zone for building endurance and aerobic fitness.

Zone 3 (Moderate – 70–80%)

- You'll feel more effort here—breathing is heavier, and you can talk, but not easily. This is where most of your run intervals will happen.

Zone 4+ (Hard – 80% and above)

- A tough pace that feels challenging. Breathing is laboured and talking is difficult. You'll only touch this zone occasionally, if at all.

If you want a full calculator I have one on my website:

<https://www.theholistichealthpt.com/bmr-tdee-calculator/>



8-Week

Your Way to 5k Plan

If you don't have a fitness watch or heart rate monitor, that's totally fine—you can use effort levels instead. Zone 2 should feel like a brisk walk or light jog where you could chat with someone. Zone 3 is more of a focused effort where you'd prefer to stay quiet, and Zone 4 is pretty tough going!

Notes:

- Always do your warm-up and cool-down walks to prepare your body and aid recovery.
- Adjust based on how your body feels, especially with hills or longer runs.
- Use a heart rate monitor or smartwatch to stay in the correct zones.
- Walk portions should always be done at a very easy pace (Zone 1).



2x Per Week

Your Way to 5K Plan

Each run includes:

5-minute warm-up walk (Zone 1)

Structured intervals or steady run (Zone 2–Zone 3)

3–5 minute cool-down walk (Zone 1)

Week 1

Run 1 & 2:

Jog 90s (Zone 2), Walk 90 sec (Zone 1) x6

Week 2

Run 1: Jog 90 sec (Zone 2), Walk 1 min (Zone 1) x5

Run 2: Jog 2 min (Zone 2), Walk 1 min x5

Week 3

Run 1: Jog 3 min (Zone 2), Walk 2 min (Zone 1) x4

Run 2: Jog 5 min (Zone 2), Walk 2 min, Jog 3 min (Zone 2), Walk 1 min, Jog 5 min

Week 4

Run 1: Jog 6 min (Zone 2), Walk 90 sec, Jog 4 min (Zone 2), Walk 90 sec, Jog 6 min (Zone 2)

Run 2: Jog 8 min (Zone 2), Walk 2 min, Jog 6 min (Zone 2)

Week 5

Run 1: Jog 9 min (Zone 2), Walk 2 min, Jog 6 min (Zone 2)

Run 2: Jog 10 min (Zone 2), Walk 2 min, Jog 6 min (Zone 2)

Week 6

Run 1: Jog 15 min (Zone 2), Walk 2 min, Jog 5 min (Zone 2–Zone 3)

Run 2: Jog 18 min (Zone 2), Walk 2 min, Jog 5 min (Zone 3)



2x Per Week

Your Way to 5K Plan

Week 7

Run 1: Jog 20 min (Zone 2), Walk 2 min, Jog 6 min (Zone 3)

Run 2: Jog 25 min (Zone 2)

Week 8

Run 1: Jog 28 min (Zone 2), final 2–3 min in Zone 3

Run 2 (5K): Run full 5K at Zone 2, push to Zone 3 in last 5 mins



2x Per Week

Your Way to 5K Tracker

Week 1	Run 1	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Run 2	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Week 2	Run 1	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Run 2	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Week 3	Run 1	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Run 2	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Week 4	Run 1	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Run 2	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Week 5	Run 1	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Run 2	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Week 6	Run 1	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Run 2	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Week 7	Run 1	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Run 2	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Week 8	Run 1	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Run 2	<input type="checkbox"/>	



3x Per Week

Your Way to 5K Plan

Each run includes:

5-minute warm-up walk (Zone 1)

Structured intervals or steady run (Zone 2–Zone 3)

3–5 minute cool-down walk (Zone 1)

Week 1

All Runs: Jog 90s (Zone 2), Walk 90 sec (Zone 1) x6

Week 2

Run 1: Jog 2 min (Zone 2), Walk 2 min x5

Run 2: Jog 3 min (Zone 2), Walk 2 min x4

Run 3: Jog 3 min (Zone 2), Walk 1 min x4

Week 3

Run 1 & 2: Jog 4 min (Zone 2), Walk 2 min x3

Run 3: Jog 5 min (Zone 2), Walk 2 min, Jog 3 min (Zone 2), Walk 1 min, Jog 5 min

Week 4

Run 1: Jog 6 min (Zone 2), Walk 90 sec, Jog 4 min (Zone 2), Walk 90 sec, Jog 6 min (Zone 2)

Run 2: Jog 8 min (Zone 2), Walk 2 min, Jog 6 min (Zone 2)

Run 3: Jog 10 min (Zone 2), Walk 1 min, Jog 5 min (Zone 2)

Week 5

Run 1: Jog 12 min (Zone 2), Walk 1 min, Jog 6 min (Zone 2)

Run 2: Jog 15 min (Zone 2), Walk 1 min, Jog 5 min (Zone 2)

Run 3: Jog 18 min (Zone 2)



3x Per Week

Your Way to 5K Plan

Week 6

Run 1: Jog 20 min (Zone 2)

Run 2 – Hill Repeats:

- 10 min jog (Zone 2)
- 4 x 30 sec hill jogs (Zone 3/4), walk back down for 90 sec (Zone 1)
- 5–10 min jog (Zone 2)

Run 3: Jog 22 min, final 2 min in Zone 3

Week 7

Run 1: Jog 25 min (Zone 2)

Run 2 – Hill Endurance:

- 10 min jog (Zone 2)
- 2 x 2 min hill efforts (Zone 4), walk down for 2–2.5 min (Zone 1)
- 10 min jog (Zone 2)

Run 3: Jog 28 min (Zone 2)

Week 8

Run 1: Jog 30 min (Zone 2)

Run 2 – Hill Finishers:

- 15 min jog (Zone 2)
- 3 x 1 min hill pushes (Zone 4/5), walk back down for 90 sec (Zone 1)
- 5 min jog (Zone 2)

Run 3 (5K Test): Run full 5K in Zone 2, push to Zone 3 in last 5 mins



3x Per Week

Your Way to 5K Tracker

Week 1	Run 1	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Run 2	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Run 3	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Week 2	Run 1	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Run 2	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Run 3	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Week 3	Run 1	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Run 2	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Run 3	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Week 4	Run 1	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Run 2	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Run 3	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Week 5	Run 1	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Run 2	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Run 3	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Week 6	Run 1	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Run 2	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Run 3	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Week 7	Run 1	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Run 2	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Run 3	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Week 8	Run 1	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Run 2	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Run 3	<input type="checkbox"/>	





I hope you enjoy your running journey, let me know how you get on!

Tag me on instagram when you've finished your next run:

 **@theholistichealthpt**

Briony

The Holistic Health PT