How to build your long run to 10K

The most important run of the week. How fast, how far, and what to eat.

The long run is the run that takes you from 5K to 10K. Here is how to get it right.

Slower than you think

Run it at an easy pace. You should be able to talk in full sentences. Walk breaks are fine. Finishing matters more than speed.

Add distance slowly

Big jumps in distance may raise your risk of injury. In one study of new runners, those who added more than 30% in two weeks seemed to get more overuse injuries, like runner's knee and shin splints. The plan builds slowly for you. Stick to it.

Food and water

Up to about an hour, water is enough. Running longer? A little carbohydrate, like a sports drink, a gel or a banana, can help.

Bad days happen

Heavy legs, tired, slow? Run it slower, or cut it short. One bad run changes nothing.

Don’t skip the easy weeks

Weeks 4 and 8 are easier on purpose. Your body catches up in them. Write every run on the last page of your plan, “Your runs, week by week”, and watch the long run grow.

SOURCES

1. Nielsen RO et al. (2014). Excessive progression in weekly running distance and risk of running-related injuries: an association which varies according to type of injury. Journal of Orthopaedic & Sports Physical Therapy.

2. Jeukendrup A (2014). A step towards personalized sports nutrition: carbohydrate intake during exercise. Sports Medicine.

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