



The Great Dalata Run 2025 – Couch-to-5k

What is a couch-to-5k?

A couch-to-5k program is a beginner friendly program that is designed to go from a sedentary lifestyle to running a 5k in the space of about 6-7 weeks of training. This is an ideal method for anyone who may not have been active in a while and who would like to build their fitness up gradually and be able to contribute towards the Great Dalata Runs 2025.

Why should I start a couch-to-5k?

- Your health – running improves your cardiovascular health, boosts your mental health/ wellbeing and helps build muscle.
- Achievable goal – the couch-to-5k allows you to have a slow introduction back to exercise without the risk of injury whilst working towards an achievable goal.
- Sense of accomplishment – completing a 5k is an exciting milestone to work towards which will motivate you towards future goals.

How it would work

- This plan will take up only 3 days of your week.
- You will begin with walk – run intervals which will progress to longer running intervals.
- How long will it take? This program will last about 6-7 weeks depending on your fitness levels.

Everything you'll need

- A good pair of running shoes – keep the foundations of your body well-supported.
- Appropriate clothing – dress for the weather you'll be running in, high-vis vest if running at night.
- And finally, a good positive attitude and enjoy the journey towards your first 5k.

How to track progress

There are various running apps available to help you track your progress;

- Couch to 5K Runner – helps build you to your first 5k.
- Strava – Ideal for logging your runs and can even see what distance your friends are doing.
- Nike Run Club.

Tips for a smooth 5k journey:

- Listen to your body – any pain or extreme discomfort, take a break and if pain persists refer to a professional.
- Warm up & cool-downs – before every single run (high knees, jumping jacks, lunges, squats, arm circle, high kicks), stretching post-run.
- **CONSISTENCY** – most important part of your couch-to-5k journey and enjoy the process.
- Recovery – active recovery in-between days of running helps recover faster, why not go for a small walk and do some stretching (your body will thank you).
- Correct nutrition pre and post run, adequate hydration.

Let's look at how you could structure your next 8-9 weeks...

Example couch to 5k program that you can do in 6 weeks!

	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
WEEK 1	Run 1 min, walk 1 min. Repeat x 10	Rest	Run 2 min, walk 4 min. Repeat x 5	Rest	Rest	Run 2 min, Walk 4 mins. Repeat x 5	Rest
WEEK 2	Run 3 min, walk 3 min. Repeat x 4	Rest	Run 3 min, walk 3 min. Repeat x 4	Rest	Rest	Run 5 min, walk 3 min. Repeat x 3	Rest
WEEK 3	Run 7 min, walk 2 min. Repeat x 3	Rest	Run 1 min, walk 1 min. Repeat x 10	Rest	Rest	Run 8 min, walk 2 min. Repeat x 3	Rest
WEEK 4	Run 8 mins, walk 2 mins. Repeat x 3	Rest	Run 10 mins, walk 2 mins. Repeat x 2, then run 5 mins	Rest	Rest	Run 8 mins, walk 2 mins. Repeat x 3	Rest
WEEK 5	Run 9 mins, walk 1 min. Repeat x 3	Rest	Run 12 mins, walk 2 mins. Repeat x 2, then run 5 mins	Rest	Rest	Run 8 mins, walk 2 min. Repeat x 3	Rest
Week 6	Run 15 mins, walk 1 min. repeat x2	Rest	Run 8 mins, Walk 2 mins. Repeat x3	Rest	Rest	Let's do a 5k!	Rest

(Drafted from Irish Heart Foundation.