

OLYMPIC / STANDARD DISTANCE TRIATHLON – 12 WEEK – BEGINNER PLAN

This 12 week training plan is designed to get a novice triathlete through a standard distance triathlon. This is a suitable program for those who are new to triathlon, or are stepping up from shorter distance events and will help get you to the finish line in good shape.

In order to be able to complete the training you should have a reasonable level of fitness at the start of the training. A pre-requisite would be that you can swim 750m continuously, you can cycle for 45mins and run for 25mins. However, because this program still needs to work around your schedule, you can customise and adapt where necessary. You may double up on some training days to allow other days off, or include “B races” as part of your training, but try to stick to the rough volumes prescribed to allow sufficient recovery.

The intensity of the training in this plan is executed using the RPE (Rate of Perceived Exertion) scale, this allows the athlete to work to their limits with specific barriers. The full RPE scale is detailed in the appendix at the back of the plan. If you use a Heart Rate Monitor and/or GPS tracking, we recommend you use this in conjunction with RPE to monitor pace and effort as this will help you judge your pace more effectively.

Strength and Conditioning

This plan includes weekly strength & conditioning sessions that you can find at the back of this document in the appendix. We've broken these sessions into three phases to allow adaptations to your strength through the program that meet the demands of your training.

Base Phase

This is intended to prepare the joints and soft-tissue for the upcoming training load. Key elements include mobility, flexibility and balance work, core work with some easier compound movements to increase strength endurance.

Core Phase

This phase builds on the work you've done, adding in more demanding movements which challenge single legs strength and control of more complex movements. This added skill is essential to good performance and injury prevention.

Performance Phase

Building on the complexity of the existing program, this phase also includes the addition of explosive movements that build your power, completed as a circuit that will increase anaerobic fitness too. Exercises in this phase are targeted at improving your ability to maintain a strong form, and increase speed.

Flexibility and Mobility

If you are finding you're getting tight and sore muscles throughout training you can perform the 'Mobility/Warm-up' section of the 'Strength and Conditioning Sessions' more frequently as required to help loosen tight muscles.

Getting a sports massage once in a while can also be a good way to help keep your muscles moving well, if you're new to sports massage be careful not to get one too close to race day as you may find your muscles have a fatigued feeling afterwards like you've done a tough work out.

Missed a Session?

From time to time your busy lives may get in the way of the training schedule, sometimes this is unavoidable, don't feel guilty! In this situation don't try and make up the session you've missed, simply pick up your schedule as normal the following day. Also, don't train on your rest days! These are in there for a reason to allow your muscles to recover and repair themselves ready for the next training sessions in your plan.

WEEK 1								GOALS
DAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY	Establishing a routine of allocating time to train
SESSION	Swim	Bike	Run	Rest	Strength & Run	Swim	Bike	
DISTANCE	1 km	10 km	4 km		45 min/2.5 km	1.2 km	15 km	Letting your muscle start to work into focused training
INTENSITY	Technique	Aerobic	Aerobic		Tempo	Endurance	'Just Ride'	Learning skill/drill work for technique improvement
SESSION DETAILS	Swim: Session 1 <i>(Your swim sessions are listed at the back of this document in the appendix)</i>	Start off easy and increase effort to a comfortable sustainable pace. Note your cadence, and heart rate if you're measuring it. This will give you a good idea of your aerobic effort and HR for future sessions RPE 6-7	Steady effort run, using breathing rate as an indicator of effort Complete the distance working within a comfortable effort level RPE 7		Strength: Base Phase Run: At a firm pace, faster than your aerobic pace RPE 8	Swim: Session 2	Riding outside provides natural changes in intensity through the terrain, conditions and layout of the road Get out on your bike, spend time getting used to gearing, handling and just spending time in the saddle Aim to ride at a comfortable pace around RPE 5-7	Embarking on strength training to improve strength endurance Use this week to set a sort of bench mark for each discipline; to work out where your fitness levels are and to work out a base pace from which to work from in later sessions
KEY FOCUS	Body position, comfort in the water, drill work to improve technique	Getting the legs moving, working out different effort levels	Getting into running, establishing a baseline pace for aerobic effort		Starting strength program. Core & flexibility work	Holding a steady effort, and consistent stroke number per length for same speed	Getting used to being on your bike, experiment with gears	WEEKLY DISTANCE: 33.7 KM
NOTES	Technique sessions are aimed at giving you short sets of drills and swimming to make it easier to focus on one element of your swim stroke at a time. Being efficient in the water is the key to swimming more quickly	If you've not already, look at getting a bike fit. This is about more than being quick, a proper fit can help prevent injuries Pace judgement will be crucial come race day, these sessions will help you learn to judge pace better	Make a note of your pace/speed during these sessions as a reference of your speed for a given effort Then work from this pace or effort when completing faster or slower efforts		First strength session of the program, focus on technique and execution of the movements. Most of your improvements early on will come from better mobility	Learning to hold your pace is important. The easiest way to judge and control pace in swimming is by focusing on your breathing; if breathing is easy then stroke will remain relaxed. Hard breathing means hard swimming	Time in the saddle will allow you to get used to your bike, and if you're thinking about changing the positions or using aero-bars then the more you can get used to them the better	

WEEK 2								GOALS
DAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY	Building on the first week slightly, but not too much, so as to allow recovery
SESSION	Swim	Bike	Swim & Run	Rest	Strength	Run	Bike	
DURATION	1.1 km	12 km	1 km/3 km		45 min	6 km	20 km	Pace judgement and learning times for completing distances etc.
INTENSITY	Speed Work	Intervals	Technique/ Tempo		Resistance	Hills	Aerobic	
SESSION DETAILS	Swim: Session 3	5 min Warm up RPE 4-5 3 min RPE 6 2 min RPE 8 Repeat until there's 1 km left, then finish with: 1 km warm down RPE 4	Swim: Session 1 Run: RPE 8		Strength: Core Phase	Head out for a steady run around RPE 5-7 Aim to include some undulation in your route, holding the effort level on the hills, both up and down You can combine this with an off-road element too since this will strengthen your stabilising muscles too	Steady ride, outside. Play around with position on the bike, using the drops to get more aero when going faster on the flats. This will save energy and make you faster Work through your gears to maintain effort RPE 6-7	Getting to know the exercises on the strength program The newer you are to cycling, the more benefit you'll get from just being outside on your bike, getting used to it. So, value outdoor sessions over indoor structure
KEY FOCUS	Speed & fitness. Aim to keep good form even when tired	Maintain steady pace then build effort towards end of the bike	Body position, comfort in the water, rotate through hips to create power		Flexibility, core strength, balance, leg strength	Maintaining pace even on undulating terrain	Working at threshold and below	WEEKLY DISTANCE: 43.1 KM
NOTES	The key to quick swimming is efficiency. Remember to use breathing to dictate your pace. And when you're getting tired think; "swim smooth, not fast"	Session may be done on indoor trainer where practical, however don't ignore value of getting out on the bike	Being efficient in the water starts with body position; the flatter you are and the higher your legs sit, the smoother you'll flow through the water		Strength training is valuable for making you more "robust", but exercises must be performed correctly; focus on technique	You may utilise sessions like these as trail run sessions, running off road takes more skill and control so you build strength on the muscles of the hips and core	Learning to vary the pace on the bike will keep training interesting, but will also teach pace judgment and your ability to overtake cleanly	

WEEK 3								GOALS
DAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY	<p>Consistency, keep the routine going. Modify session timings to fit your schedule if need be or if you find one session fatigues you for another too much</p> <p>Your first brick session will be a chance to feel what it's like to run off the bike</p> <p>Use these sessions as benchmarks for your effort and speed</p>
SESSION	Swim	Bike	Swim & Run	Rest	Strength	Swim	Brick	
DURATION	1.2 km	15 km	1.1 km/5 km		45-60 min	1 km	15 km/3 km	
INTENSITY	Endurance	Mixed effort	Speed/Aerobic			Technique	Steady state	
SESSION DETAILS	Swim: Session 2	3 km RPE 4 3 km RPE 5 3 km RPE 6 3 km RPE 8 3 km RPE 5 Use the gearing to keep your cadence between 85-95	Swim: Session 3 Run: 'Just run', steady effort, relaxed breathing RPE 6-7		Strength: Base Phase	Swim: Session 1	Bike: RPE 5-6 steady effort Run: RPE 6-7 steady effort Complete the run straight after the bike with as little break between the two as possible	
KEY FOCUS	Leg & head position in the water. Pace & speed	Pacing & cadence	Swim, speed endurance Run posture/form and ability to hold pace and technique		Execution & posture during exercise	Body position, legs high in the water, low head position while swimming - looking down	Getting used to running off the bike	WEEKLY DISTANCE: 41.3 KM
NOTES	Building your endurance, your ability to hold constant speed and be able to repeat efforts of the same distance	Pace control, having the ability to switch pace based on perceived effort will be a key skill in pacing in a race	The focus of this run should be feeling comfortable with the distance, focusing on your posture and run form, finishing feeling strong		Third week in, the exercises should start to get easier as your body begins to adapt. Keep paying attention to good body position	Working in technique to improve body position in the water	First Brick, running off the bike can feel odd as the leg movements differ. Start slow and try to settle into a comfortable run rhythm	

WEEK 4								GOALS
DAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY	One month in you'll be starting to feel improvements in fitness from training
SESSION	Swim	Bike	Run	Rest	Strength & Run	Swim & Run	Bike	
DURATION	1.4 km	20 km	6.5 km		60 min/3 km	1.7 km/5 km	25 km	
INTENSITY	Technique	Intervals	Endurance		Tempo	Endurance/Interval	Hills	By now you should be getting more familiar with judging your effort on the RPE scale
SESSION DETAILS	Swim: Session 4	5 min RPE 5 5 min RPE 8 Repeat until within the last km then drop to RPE 4 for cool down	Run: RPE 6-7 Let your breathing control your pace		Strength: Core Phase Run: Tempo run at best sustainable pace	Swim: Session 5 Run: 1 km warm up RPE 4 Repeat 4 times: 600 m RPE 9 400 m RPE 5	Steady state ride with some hills included. Maintain steady cadence and rhythm. Pace judgement on hills RPE 6-7	
KEY FOCUS	Body position, rotation through the hips. Arm position at the beginning of the stroke	Pace judgement and working at higher efforts	Keep it light so you can hold a steady pace throughout		Learning to run at fast pace and maintain it	Speed and consistency between sets of same effort	Pace judgement on hills	WEEKLY DISTANCE: 62.6 KM
NOTES	Your kicking should be already feeling better, but still keep body position in mind and legs high in the water. Think about rotation through the hips. Long and smooth is fast through the water	This may be performed on a turbo or outside, whichever is convenient	Steady effort at a below max pace, focusing on holding form and keeping each km the same speed. If your form suffers then slow the pace		The strength program should be getting easier and you should be increasing your resistance/times of each exercise	Speed Endurance, improving your speed is important, but be sure to remain consistent between sets of the same distance	Running up and down hills increases strength. Control pace on ascent so you're able to continue at a good pace once at the top	

WEEK 5								GOALS
DAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY	By week 5 you should be more settled with the routine and moving any sessions to fit in with your day to day life
SESSION	Swim	Bike	Run	Rest	Strength	Swim & Run	Bike	
DURATION	1.6 km	20 km	7.5 km		60 min/5 km	1.4 km/5.2 km	30 km	As the bike distance increases you should start to find a comfortable speed/rhythm with your pedalling that will become your natural cadence. Use gears to keep you in this range
INTENSITY	Speed Work	Intervals	Aerobic Hilly			Technique/ Track	Aerobic	
SESSION DETAILS	Swim: Session 6	5 km warm up RPE 4-5 3 min RPE 6 2 min RPE 8 Repeat until you've 1-2 km left, then spin easy to cool down	Run: Head for a steady endurance run, using breathing rate and HR to gauge your effort If possible aim to run an undulating route so that your legs are challenged RPE 6-7		Strength: Base Phase	Swim: Session 4 Run: Track session 1	Head out on a route with varying terrain, aiming to keep a steady tempo Use longer rides to practice pacing and getting used to different positions, gearing and pedal cadence (leg turnover)	As the weekly distance increase make sure you're sleeping and eating enough to recover
KEY FOCUS	Pacing is key, consistent breathing over efforts. Keep technique even when tired	Working above and below your aerobic level	Holding steady pace throughout		Leg strength, cardio fitness, recovery	Arm position, rotation & speed work	Maintaining pace on bike. Running hard off the bike	WEEKLY DISTANCE: 70.7 KM
NOTES	Swimming hard will help your top end speed, but ensure you are able to pace yourself so you can maintain your intensity too	If you judge this right you should feel on the limit of sustainable effort on RPE 8, but without dropping. This will be around your race intensity. Pace it so you can repeat each effort	Maintaining a steady pace when the terrain isn't flat is difficult, so this session will help you manage your efforts, almost like natural intervals		The strength program should be getting easier and you should be increasing your reps/times of each exercise	You should be finding the drills easier now and noticing the difference in your form Track sessions are great for pacing, and working on speed development	The bike section of this workout should be fairly easy, focus on pedal efficiency. Then on the run, push yourself	

WEEK 6								GOALS
DAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY	<p>If you're considering things like elastic laces in your shoes, or perhaps running without socks to improve transition time, then practice this now to give you time to get used to it</p> <p>Half way through, you should be feeling fitter, but also make sure you're resting enough and getting suitable recovery nutrition</p> <p>Make sure you're taking enough water out on longer rides & experiment with electrolyte drinks & any race fuel you might be planning to use</p>
SESSION	Swim & Strength	Bike	Run	Rest	Strength	Swim	Brick	
DURATION	1.7 km/60 min	35 km	8.5 km		45-60 min	1.6 km	15 km/5 km	
INTENSITY	Endurance	Intervals	Endurance		Strength	Speed Work		
SESSION DETAILS	<p>Swim: Session 5</p> <p>Strength: Core Phase</p>	<p>5 min warm up RPE 5</p> <p>6 min RPE 6 5 min RPE 7 4 min RPE 8 Repeat until you reach 34 km then ride easy for remaining time RPE 5</p>	<p>Run: Steady pace, use pace and effort from previous runs as target speed</p>		<p>Strength: Performance Phase</p>	<p>Swim: Session 6</p>	<p>Warm up for a few minutes then ride at a steady pace RPE 7</p> <p>Try to run hard off the bike RPE 7-8</p>	
KEY FOCUS	Leg position high in the water, speed judgement on intervals	Harder efforts for improved power and speed	Hold a steady pace them aim to negative split the second half		Increasing volume from previous sessions	Speed endurance, breathing and consistent length speeds	Learning to run hard off a hard bike	WEEKLY DISTANCE: 66.8 KM
NOTES	If you struggle with kicking, you may break up your lengths with breaststroke & free style leg kicks, which will also work different muscles	While this session may be done outside on a flat loop, it's a good one for the turbo/indoor trainer too	Learn to go by feel to improve pace judgment come race day		Take care with newer exercises, making sure you're happy with them before pushing too hard	Monitor your time for each set, either use a stopwatch (or swim watch) or use the pool clock to go off a fixed turnaround time. This will help with your consistent pacing	Practice with gearing to find and maintain a steady cadence/rhythm so you can control your effort	

WEEK 7								GOALS
DAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY	<p>With a good base fitness behind you it's a good opportunity to rest your speed in some of the sessions. Over the longer runs and rides, or swim sections think about your target race pace</p> <p>Make note of where you've made improvements so far and where you think you might need to focus a little more time improving</p> <p>If you've not already, start thinking about hydration and fuelling for longer rides and perhaps experiment with various drinks/gels if you're planning to take them come race day</p>
SESSION	Swim	Bike	Swim & Run	Rest	Strength	Run	Bike	
DURATION	1.4 km	30 km	1.7 km/7.5 km		60 min	9 km	40 km	
INTENSITY	Technique	Time Trial	Endurance/Hills			Tempo/TT	Hills	
SESSION DETAILS	Swim: Session 4	Spend a few minutes warming up and then attempt a 30 km best effort Use your pace from previous sessions aim to hit your threshold speed for the distance Warm down, easy leg spin afterwards for a couple minutes	Swim: Session 5 Run: Find a hilly route with continuous undulation, or a single hill that you can use as part of a small loop RPE 5-9 for duration of distance		Strength: Performance Phase	Run: Tempo run at best possible pace. This will be a good indicator of what speed you may be able to hold come race day RPE 8	Steady state ride with some hills included. Maintain steady cadence and rhythm If you don't have many local hills you can rep a single hill a few times during your ride Practice seated and standing climbing so you can use both. Gain confidence on descents	
KEY FOCUS	Following each drill, use the freestyle to focus on what the drill highlighted	Maintaining intensity with minimal change in pace	Pacing on hills, descending under control		Good form, flexibility & core, progressing your overall strength	Holding a steady pace, finishing as strong as you started	Pace judgement on hills	
NOTES	If you're using fins for your kick sets, try using the freestyle sets immediately afterwards to keep them on as you swim and feel what a stronger kick does to your hip rotation	This should be done on a flattish route. Alternatively, this may also be done on a turbo trainer, WATT bike or gym bike. The idea is to test how well you can hold a goal race pace	Both up & down hill running is good for strength. Constantly changing heart rate will also bring about fitness adaptations			Ensure you warm up prior to running; foam rolling & mobility work to allow better run form. A chance to test your run legs and see what pace you can sustain	Play with position on bars for flat & climbing, try to get into a more 'aero' position on the flats. Use your gears and keep your pedal cadence smooth	

WEEK 8								GOALS
DAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY	<p>Any new kit you're planning to use should be use in training to test it, new goggles (tinted for open water), trainers, elastic laces, bike shoes, tri suit etc. You need to make sure it all fits and works as expected</p> <p>Open water competency will be a massive factor in your comfort, confidence and will count come race day</p> <p>Practice getting your wetsuit on and getting used to it quickly so that come race day it's all routine</p>
SESSION	Swim & Strength	Bike	Swim & Run	Rest	Strength	Swim	Brick	
DURATION	1.6 km/60 min	35 km	1.5 km/10 km		45-60 min	1 km	20 km/7.5 km	
INTENSITY	Speed Work	Intervals	Technique/ Endurance			Open Water	Brick	
SESSION DETAILS	Swim: Session 6 Strength: Core Phase	5 min warm up RPE 5 5 min RPE 6 4 min RPE 7 3 min RPE 8 Repeat until you reach 33 km then ride easy for remaining time RPE 5	Swim: Session 7 Run: Steady effort, using breathing to control speed and focus on good run form RPE 7		Strength: Performance Phase	Acclimatisation to the wetsuit, water clarity, temperature Practice sighting, learning how it feels to swim in a wetsuit, learn to let it help you Break this session into as many little bits as you like, the key here is purely open water confidence	Negative splits are useful for teaching pacing and holding back for a stronger send half of your race Bike: 10 km RPE 6 10 km RPE 8 Run: 5 km RPE 6 2.5 km RPE 8 If you have anything left with 1km to go, go all out	
KEY FOCUS	Working hard to push yourself on the shorter, faster efforts	Aim to be consistent with your efforts, it's a small change between each effort	Holding a steady pace, finishing as strong as you started		Increasing intensity/duration of exercises	Getting in your wetsuit and experiencing open water	Pacing and running a negative split	
NOTES	Be strict with your turnaround time, it's good to push yourself to work hard when not fully recovered, as it'll make dealing with fatigue easier on race day	By now you should know your speeds at different intensities, so stick to them here as best you can	Ensure you warm up prior to running, foam rolling & mobility work to allow better run form. As this is a long training day, ensure you're well fed and hydrated		After 8 weeks you should be noticing a difference in your strength. Increase intensity, but maintain good technique	Relax your stroke in open water, when breathing aim to keep one eye in the water, and keep your lead hand out in front until your recovery arm is on the way forward	Aim to finish each leg faster than you started, this simulates more fatigue, but also trains you to work harder at the end of a race. When you need to the most	

WEEK 9								GOALS
DAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY	As the volume reaches this level you should really feel the endurance improvements
SESSION	Swim	Bike	Run	Rest	Strength & Run	Swim	Bike	
DURATION	2 km	40 km	11 km		60 min/5.6 km	1.5 km	50 km	Focus on your ability to hold higher efforts for longer
INTENSITY	Endurance	Hills/Intervals	Endurance		Track	Open Water	Aerobic	
SESSION DETAILS	Swim: Session 8	Outdoors: Ride a hilly route with at least one climb that takes 4-8 minutes to climb. Aim for around 20 minutes of climbing in total over your ride OR Indoors: 5 min warm up then: 5 min RPE 5 5 min RPE 8 Repeat until 4 km to go, ease into a warm down	Steady sub maximal pace, holding good form throughout. If you wish to do this run off-road, you can. It's add variety but also naturally changing surface and terrain will improve strength and run form		Strength: Performance Phase Run: Track session 2 Gentle walk/jog to cool down	Swim: Open Water Swim, Acclimatisation to the wetsuit, water clarity, temperature Practice sighting, learning how it feels to swim in a wetsuit, learn to let it help you	Head out on a steady pace ride with varied terrain where you know you'll get a mix of fast flat and some climbs Ride at a steady pace adding in the odd burst on a climb or your favourite flat bit. Treat this like a 'fartlek' (random interval) sessions	Use hills sessions to focus on power and control Keep improving open water skills & confidence Keep monitoring how much water you consume over a session so you've an idea of what you might need come race day
KEY FOCUS	Aim to match or beat speeds from previous sessions	Efforts of high and low intensity work	Focus on run form and posture especially when you begin to tire		Hold form, and ensure times are repeated on shorter sets	Getting in your wetsuit and experiencing open water	Using your gears to maintain effort	WEEKLY DISTANCE: 110.1 KM
NOTES	When we're tired, our form deteriorates, this then cost us speed. When you feel tired, focus on regaining your form, instead of trying to work harder	Working above and below your usual sustainable pace will improve your average speed on flats	Ensure you're hydrated and perhaps practice with any energy products you're planning to use on race day		The longer set should be closer to your goal race pace. The shorter sets should be faster	Focus on controlling your breathing as this is often first to go if you're new to open water. Remember to keep your head down to improve body position	Experiment with different positions on the bike, hoods, drops, aiming to be more 'aero' where it counts	

WEEK 10								GOALS
DAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY	<p>This is the last hard week before we start to taper down. As such it is a good opportunity to make sure you're able to easily complete each distance</p> <p>If you're aware you are particularly behind on one discipline, then you can swap out a session you're good at to allocate more time to work on your weaknesses</p> <p>Speed work and pacing is key</p> <p>Nutrition is very important, making sure you're fuelling for and recovering from every session</p>
SESSION	Swim & Strength	Bike	Swim/Run	Rest	Strength	Swim	Brick	
DURATION	1.9 km/60 min	40 km	1.5 km/10 km		45 min	2 km	30 km/8 km	
INTENSITY	Speed Work	Fartlek	Technique/ negative split		Strength	Open water	Bike/Run	
SESSION DETAILS	Swim: Session 9 Strength: Core Phase	Head out for a steady ride, spending a few km warming up and then adding into some random intervals based on things you pass on your route; small hills, fast flats etc If your riding with a friend, take turns to nominate segments to work hard on	Swim: Session 7 Run: 10 km, splitting your run into two halves; run the first half at RPE 5. Then continue with the second half at RPE 7+		Strength: Performance Phase	Keep practicing your wetsuit fitting, getting into the water and warming and with a few drills Break your swim into 2-3 longer efforts to really put your open water skills into practice	Race simulation: Using your intended race kit, clothing Bike: warm up over the first couple of km then build into RPE 8 Run: strong off the bike and into race pace as soon as you can RPE 8+	
KEY FOCUS	Hold pace and repeat on higher efforts	Simulating holding a pace in a race with shorter higher efforts like hills/overtaking	Pacing your run effort so that you're able to work hard at the end of a run		Work hard in these final few sessions, keep good technique	Working with the suit, sighting, covering longer distances	Get into a good run rhythm as soon as you can off the bike	
NOTES	Final fitness push. The hard work you do here will fine tune your race fitness	You can do this session on an indoor trainer or outside on a flat circuit where you can ride uninterrupted. It's probably more fun outside	If you've got any new shoes for race day, start to wear them in now, similarly if you're using elastic laces practice running in them when running hard	If you haven't already start thinking about recovery massage With the volume of training you're doing your body will thank you for a little maintenance	Strength sessions here are now key in keeping your body mobile and working muscles that you'll be relying on. Don't skip the mobility work!	Even though we want to try and race at a steady pace, mixing up your speed will simulate fatigue or being out of breath and help you learn to cope with it. Swimming in a group can help too	Prep you bike as you intend to on race day, bottles, nutrition, spare inner tube and pump or CO2. Field test all your planned equipment and transition strategies	

WEEK 11								GOALS
DAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY	Bringing the volume down and working on speed will let your body start to recover while acting as a last surge for your peak fitness
SESSION	Swim	Bike	Run	Rest	Strength & Run	Swim	Brick	
DURATION	2 km	25 km	5.3 km		45 min/8 km	2 km	20 km/3 km	
INTENSITY	Endurance	Intervals	Track		Steady	Open water		
SESSION DETAILS	Swim: Session 8	Outside: On a course similar to the one you'll race on, work at just below your race intensity with periodic burst of hard efforts every few minutes RPE 7-9 OR Indoor: 5 min RPE 6 3 min RPE 9 Repeated until you reach the target distance.	Run: Track session 1		Strength: Performance Phase Run: Steady pace RPE 6-7	Aim to split this session down into longer segments of 350-500m or even try 2 x 750m efforts. Continue to work on sighting, and relaxing yours stroke and breathing Perform a couple of practice starts to, in a group if possible	Race day simulation: Use all your kit and practice how you'll lay it out come race day Bike & Run RPE 7-8 working on your pacing and trying to settle into your run as soon as you can off the bike. Work on transition time, and decide how you will lay out your kit on the day	Everything should be aimed at setting up your race plan NB: All plans need to be flexible, this is a critical stage in training and if you feel over fatigued you must rest
KEY FOCUS	Longer efforts, consistency	Pushing fitness with intervals above sustainable pace	Speed, pacing, consistency		Flexibility and core work Run, steady pace	Distance, breathing, sighting. Swimming in a group	Transition speed, pacing	WEEKLY DISTANCE: 65.3 KM
NOTES	Try to push yourself over the longer sets, seeing how fast you can get without losing form	Keep hydrated, think about you bike position and gearing too	Over the shorter efforts, let yourself work really hard if you feel you can		Keeping your muscles working, but more importantly keeping them mobile and recovering will be important for being at your best on day	By now you're hopefully feeling more comfortable in your wetsuit. At the end of each session also practice removing it quickly too	Everyone lays out transition slightly differently. Find what works for you and practice it; e.g. race belt, elastic laces, nutrition	

WEEK 12 – Race Week								GOALS
DAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY	The hard work is done, nothing you can do now will make you fitter. The focus here is to maintain your peak while allowing recovery
SESSION	Swim	Bike	Run	Strength	Run	Swim	RACE DAY	
DURATION	1.9 km	10 km	2.5 km	30 min	1.5 km	500 m	1.5/40/10 km	
INTENSITY	Speed Work	Fartlek	Fartlek	Easy	Easy	Easy	Race Pace	Keep the sessions high quality with good pace work Reduced volume and distance allows for adaptation and recovery If you've travelled to an event having a run or swim when you get there can help you get over a journey
SESSION DETAILS	Swim: Session 9	Final pre-race checks; ride a steady effort bike in race set up, carry what you're planning to carry in the race Add in some bursts 2-4min efforts RPE 5-7	Run at a steady pace focusing on your form and keeping a light foot strike. Add in shorts burst of harder efforts for a little bit at a time RPE 5-7	Just do the warm-up/flexibility part of your routine ONLY	Still warming up beforehand this should be about keeping your legs moving. Still working at a good tempo, but not quite race pace RPE 7	Relaxed effort swim, loosening off with a few short bursts RPE 5-7	The hard work is over, stick to what you know in training. Race hard, race well and enjoy the day.	
KEY FOCUS	Speed, pacing	How the bike feels	Run form	Flexibility, recovery	Relaxed form	Good position, technique in the water. Relaxed stroke		
NOTES	Hold back a little on the longer efforts and work hard on the shorter ones	This is your pre-race bike check; is everything in working order? Do you have the spares you need? After the ride, clean the bike and give the tyres a once over	This distance should feel very easy now and you should feel good when you finish	If possible, book a massage		Nice short session to loosen off. You could even do this session in open water for a confidence boost and wetsuit removal practice	Do your best, and have fun!	WEEKLY DISTANCE: 67.9 KM

RATE OF PERCIEVED EXERTION (RPE)

We use the Rate of Perceived Exertion (RPE) scale illustrated below to determine the intensity of your sessions. These will be highlighted in each session to make it clear as to what is expected. This table helps you understand exactly how you should feel when executing the training session. Due to the nature of the scale, it is subjective and requires you to feel how your body is responding to the exercise, when doing this consider how your heart is pumping, how quickly you are breathing, how much you are sweating and how much discomfort you are experiencing in your legs.

Heart rate training – If you like to train to heart rate, where the RPE is 6-7 train to 65%-75% of your maximum heart rate, for and RPE of 7-8 aim for a range of 70-80% and for RPE 9 around 85-90% of your maximum heart rate.

Please remember that everybody's RPE figure could be different to yours when exercising at the same speed because we all respond differently to exercise.

RPE	DESCRIPTION
0	Complete rest
1	Very Weak: I am just about moving
2	Weak: I am walking at a faster pace and can hold a conversation easily
3	Light: I am beginning to sweat a little, but can hold conversation throughout
4	Moderate: I am very happy at this effort
5	Somewhat Strong: I am sweating more heavily and starting to feel my breathing is becoming more stressed
6	Strong: I am beginning to feel more out of breath but could maintain this pace for a few hours
7	Very Strong: My breathing is very laboured, but I can still maintain pace for an hour without slowing
8	Hard: I am starting to struggle to hold this pace and my heart is racing and am sweating heavily
9	Very Hard: This is hurting and I can only hold this effort for up to 5mins
10	Extremely Hard: I am absolutely flat out and this is sprinting. I will need to stop after 30secs

RUN SESSIONS

Hill Runs

Hill work is typically completed through a series of hill repeats. It's a great way to develop strength and stride efficiency. Ideally done on a moderate grade (6 to 7 percent).

When it comes to hill training you have two main options:

1. Structured repetitions of a single hill that takes between 3-5 min to ascend which you can then perform as many repetitions as required to reach the target distance.
2. If you happen to have access to somewhere hilly to run, you can just plan a route that takes in plenty of up and down over the course of your run.

These runs are also good ones to do off-road, since rough terrain will make you work harder, build stability and add variety.

Tempo Runs

After a warm up of 5 minutes or so at a steady aerobic pace (RPE4-6) run the rest of the session at a sub threshold pace (RPE7-8), this is a hard session but not super tough. Think of it as being “comfortably uncomfortable”. Finish your session with 5 mins easy (RPE4-5).

Intervals

Structured durations of above and below threshold efforts aimed at improving performance and fitness by getting you to work harder than you're currently able to sustain. Add a warm-up and cool down of 5 mins easy to the beginning and end of your session, then use the following ratio in your session and repeat:

3 min @ RPE 9 (Very Hard – refer to RPE chart)

2 min @ RPE 5 (Somewhat Strong – refer to RPE chart)

Fartlek Runs

'Fartlek' translates from Swedish to English as “speed play”, these are unstructured intervals that are made up as you run. It might be, “sprint to that lamp post... to the next bridge” etc. It's great for mixing things up and when running with a friend to keep things fun.

Track Sessions










See following page

APPENDIX

Track Sessions

Track work is used to develop speed and pace consistency. Specific track (400m loop) intervals have been outlined within the training program, however these can be adapted and completed over a similar distance around any flat course you have available to you, for example, a football field.

You should aim to run your 'main set' as fast as you can (around an RPE8), however the pace you set should be consistent for all of your 400m efforts, for example the 400m pace during your 400m effort should be the same as your 400m pace during your final 800m effort. If you start out too fast your 400m times will start slipping. Find a pace you can maintain and hold. You may find the first few laps easy but by the end of the session the same pace will feel hard. As you progress over the weeks you can try add extra intervals or start to take a few seconds off your 400m lap times. Recovery times between intervals should also be consistent – for this session take 60-90 secs only between each repetition.

TRACK SESSION 1	TRACK SESSION 2	ALTERNATIVE SESSION
Warmup 400m @RPE 4-5	Warmup 400m @RPE 4-5	Warmup 400m @RPE 4-5
Drills Side Steps  Bounding  Leaping 	Drills Side Steps  Bounding  Leaping 	Drills Side Steps  Bounding  Leaping 
Main Set 1 x 1200m 2 x 800m 4 x 400m	Main Set 1 x 1600m 2 x 800m 4 x 400m	Main Set 1 x 1200m 3 x 400m 1 x 1200m 3 x 400m 1 x 1200m 3 x 400m
Cool Down 400m @RPE 4-5	Cool Down 400m @RPE 4-5	Cool Down 400m @RPE 4-5
TOTAL 5200m	TOTAL 5600m	TOTAL 8000m

Running drill videos can be viewed online via our YouTube channel here:

<http://bit.ly/RGA-RunDrills>

APPENDIX










SWIM SESSIONS – Beginner Plan

These sessions are based on a 25m pool, if you swim in a pool of a different length, then aim to adapt and match the plan as near as you can. Sessions fall into three categories; technique, endurance and speed sessions.

Sessions are a guide and depending on your ability you can choose to increase or decrease the number of sets for a given session to match your ability level, a focused session with no distractions and strict rest times should be approximately 45-60mins in duration so the distance you complete will vary depending on your ability.

Rest times between sets should be minimal and depend on the effort level and length of the interval. Aim for between 20-45 seconds. On longer sets of similar intervals you can go off a fixed turnaround, e.g. 100 m off 2:15, so whatever time remains after your 100m is your rest.

Swim drills used in sessions

Catch Up 	Kicking with board 	Pull / Pull Buoy 	Fist Drill 
Single Arm 	Kicking on Side & Back  	Pull & Paddles 	Sighting (Open water) 

Drills can be found on YouTube here: <http://bit.ly/rga-swim-drills>

FS = Freestyle/Front Crawl

SWIM SESSION 1 – Technique	SWIM SESSION 2 - Endurance
Warmup 100m Warm up @RPE 4+	Warmup 200m warm up – FS RPE 4
Main Set – CSS TEST 100 m Drill (25m fist/25m FS x 2) 100 m FS @RPE 7 50 m Kicking, Fins optional (on your front with kickboard) Rest 15 sec between lengths 150 m FS @RPE 7 100 m Drill (25m I-arm FS/25m I-arm FS/50m FS) 150 m FS @RPE 7 50 m Kicking, Fins optional (on your side, I-arm out in front, 25 m each side) 150 m FS @RPE 8	Main Set (Twice through) 1 x 200 m FS + Pull buoy @RPE 6 2 x 100 m FS @RPE 7 2 x 50 m FS + Pull buoy @RPE 7
Cool Down 50m Warm down, any stroke @RPE 4	Cool Down 100m warm down, any stroke @RPE 4
TOTAL 1000m	TOTAL 1200m

APPENDIX

SWIM SESSIONS – Beginner Plan

SWIM SESSION 3 – Speed Work

Warmup

100 m warm up FS @RPE 4
150 m FS + Pull buoy @RPE 6

Main Set

5 x 100 m FS @RPE 7 (35 sec rest)
5 x 50 m FS @RPE 8 (25 sec rest)

Cool Down

100m Warm down @RPE 4

TOTAL 1100m

SWIM SESSION 4 – Technique

Warmup

200 m warm up FS @RPE 4
150 m Drill (25m I-arm FS/25m I-arm FS/25m FS x 2)

Main Set

100 m Kicking, Fins optional (on your side w/I-arm out in front, 25 m each side x2)
150 m FS @RPE 5 (think about hip rotation and smooth leg kick)
100 m Kicking, Fins optional (on your front with kickboard) Rest 15 sec between lengths
150 m FS @RPE 6 (think about hip rotation and smooth leg kick)
50 m Alternate stroke (BK or BR) @RPE 6
2 x 200 m FS + Pull buoy (+ Paddles if you have them) @RPE 8

Cool Down

100m warm down, any stroke @RPE 4

TOTAL 1400m

SWIM SESSION 5 - Endurance

Warmup

200 m warm up FS @RPE 5

Main Set

300 m FS + Pull buoy (+ Paddles if you have them) @RPE 6
150 m FS @RPE 8 (CSS)
(Repeat above 2 times through)

400 m FS @RPE 7 (no rest)

100 m FS @RPE 9

Cool Down

100m Warm down any stroke RPE 4

TOTAL 1700m

SWIM SESSION 6 – Speed Work

Warmup

200 m warm up FS RPE 5

Main Set

1 x 200 m FS + Pull buoy RPE 7 (45 sec rest)
2 x 100 m FS RPE 8 (35 sec rest)
4 x 50 m FS RPE 9 (25 sec rest)
(Repeat above 2 times through)

100 m FS Ascending effort each length, RPE 6, 7, 8, 9

Cool Down

100m warm down, any stroke RPE 4

TOTAL 1600m

APPENDIX

SWIM SESSIONS – Beginner Plan

SWIM SESSION 7 – Technique

Warmup

200 m warm up FS RPE 4

300 m Drill (25m I-arm FS/25m I-arm FS/50m FS x 3)

Main Set

100 m FS + Pull buoy

200 m Kicking, Fins optional (25m on front, 25m on each side, 25m on back) Rest every 100 m

300 m FS RPE 7

100 m Kicking, Fins optional (25m on front, 25m on each side, 25m on back)

200 m FS + Pull buoy RPE 8

Cool Down

100 m Warm down any stroke RPE 4

TOTAL 1500m

SWIM SESSION 8 - Endurance

Warmup

200 m warm up FS @RPE 4

Main Set

2 times through:

400 m FS + Pull buoy @RPE 6 (Slow & smooth, focus on hip rotation)

200 m FS @RPE 7

50 m Backstroke/Breaststroke

Then:

400 m FS RPE 7+

(Last 100m RPE 9)

Cool Down

100m warm down, any stroke RPE 4

TOTAL 2000m

SWIM SESSION 9 – Speed Work

Warmup

200m Warm up @RPE 4+

2 x 100 m FS Increasing effort each length; RPE 6, 7, 8, 9 (35 sec rest between 100m efforts)

Main Set

3 x 200 m FS @RPE 7-8 Race Pace!

6 x 100 m FS @RPE 9

4 x 50 m FS @RPE 10

Cool Down

100m Warm down any stroke @RPE 4

TOTAL 1900m






APPENDIX

STRENGTH AND CONDITIONING

BASE PHASE SESSION











MOBILITY WORK/WARM-UP

(YouTube link: <http://bit.ly/RGA-Warmup-exercises>)

EXERCISE	DEMO	DURATION	NOTES
Foam roller, back		30–45 sec	Foam roll your back, especially lower, to ease off connective tissue & increase mobility
Foam roller, ITB		30–45 sec	Roll ITBs to release tension in connective tissue that may inhibit knee/hip movement
Foam roller, calves		30–45 sec	Rolling calves, especially Achilles, can aid ankle flexibility and recovery from training
Foam roll, feet		30–45 sec	Using a lacrosse/hockey ball or rolling pin, roller your feet paying attention to arches
Kneeling hip flexor stretch		30–45 sec	Gently driving hips into stretch, with arms overhead to feel stretch in hips & torso
Hamstring 'track stretch'		8-10 reps	From "start" position to semi-standing while holding foot, until stretch is felt, in hamstring

MAIN SET

(YouTube link: <http://bit.ly/RGA-strength-exercises>)

EXERCISE	DEMO	SETS	REPS	TEMPO	REST	WEIGHT
Side plank, from knees		2-3 each side	45 sec	Static	20 sec	Body weight
Front plank on knees		2-3	45 sec	Static	20 sec	Body weight
Tube walking (band around ankles)		2-3	10 each side	Slow	20 sec	Resistance band
Dead bug		2-3	12-16	Slow	30 sec	Body weight
Two leg glute press with feet on step		2-3	12-15	Slow	20 sec	Body weight
Stability ball wall squat		2-3	12-15	Slow	30 sec	Body weight
Hamstring curl on stability ball		2-3	8-10	Slow	30 sec	Body weight
Forward lunge, alternating sides		2-3	20	Slow	30 sec	Body weight
Laying over stability ball, arm raise		2-3	12-15	Slow	30 sec	Body weight
Kneeling press up		2-3	12-16	Slow	30 sec	Body weight








APPENDIX

STRENGTH AND CONDITIONING

CORE PHASE SESSION












MOBILITY WORK/WARM-UP

(YouTube link: <http://bit.ly/RGA-Warmup-exercises>)

EXERCISE	DEMO	DURATION	NOTES
Foam roller, back		30–45 sec	Foam roll your back, especially lower, to ease off connective tissue & increase mobility
Foam roller, ITB		30–45 sec	Roll ITBs to release tension in connective tissue that may inhibit knee/hip movement
Foam roller, calves		30–45 sec	Rolling calves, especially Achilles, can aid ankle flexibility and recovery from training
Foam roll, feet		30–45 sec	Using a lacrosse/hockey ball or rolling pin, roller your feet paying attention to arches
Kneeling hip flexor stretch		30–45 sec	Gently driving hips into stretch, with arms overhead to feel stretch in hips & torso
Hamstring 'track stretch'		8-10 reps	From "start" position to semi-standing while holding foot, until stretch it felt, in hamstring
Side bends with arms overhead		10-12 reps	Bend from side to side pushing hips one way & arms the other overhead

MAIN SET

(YouTube link: <http://bit.ly/RGA-strength-exercises>)

EXERCISE	DEMO	SETS	REPS	TEMPO	REST	WEIGHT
Side plank, from knees		2-3 each side	45 sec	Static	20 sec	Body weight
Front plank on stability ball from knees or toes		2-3	45 sec	Static	20 sec	Body weight
Laying on side leg raises		2	20 each side	Slow	20 sec	Resistance band
Laying on back alternating leg lowering		2-3	14-18	Slow	30 sec	Body weight
Single leg glute press with foot on step		2-3	10-12	Slow	20 sec	Body weight
Calf raises on step		2-3	12-15	Slow	30 sec	Body weight
Hamstring curl on stability ball		2-3	8-12	Slow	30 sec	Body weight
Lateral lunges, alternating sides		2-3 each side	20	Active	30 sec	Body weight
Split squat, repeat each side		2-3	10-15	Slow	20 sec	Body weight
Stability ball row		2-3	10-15	Slow	20 sec	Suitable weight
Stability ball chest press		2-3	10-15	Slow	20 sec	Suitable weight

APPENDIX

STRENGTH AND CONDITIONING

PERFORMANCE PHASE SESSION










MOBILITY WORK/WARM-UP

(YouTube link: <http://bit.ly/RGA-Warmup-exercises>)

EXERCISE	DEMO	DURATION	NOTES
Foam roller, back		30–45 sec	Foam roll your back, especially lower, to ease off connective tissue & increase mobility
Foam roller, ITB		30–45 sec	Roll ITBs to release tension in connective tissue that may inhibit knee/hip movement
Foam roller, calves		30–45 sec	Rolling calves, especially Achilles, can aid ankle flexibility and recovery from training
Foam roll, feet		30–45 sec	Using a lacrosse/hockey ball or rolling pin, roller your feet paying attention to arches
Kneeling hip flexor stretch		30–45 sec	Gently driving hips into stretch, with arms overhead to feel stretch in hips & torso
Hamstring 'track stretch'		8-10 reps	From "start" position to semi-standing while holding foot, until stretch it felt, in hamstring
Side bends with arms overhead		10-12 reps	Bend from side to side pushing hips one way & arms the other overhead

MAIN SET

(YouTube link: <http://bit.ly/RGA-strength-exercises>)

EXERCISE	DEMO	SETS	REPS	TEMPO	REST	WEIGHT
Stability ball jack knife		2-3	10-15	Slow	20 sec	Body weight
Stability ball roll outs from knees		2-3	10-12	Slow	20 sec	Body weight
Lateral lunge to balance		2-3	10 each side	Slow	20 sec	Resistance band
Split squats, rear leg raised		2-3	10-12	Slow	30 sec	Body weight
Stability ball row		2-3	10-15	Slow	20 sec	Suitable weight
Stability ball chest press		2-3	10-15	Slow	20 sec	Suitable weight
CIRCUIT	Complete the following exercises as a circuit, one rep of each exercise before starting the second set					
Walking lunges		2-3	30 sec	Active	15 sec	Body weight
Skipping with rope		2-3	30 sec	Active	15 sec	N/A
Burpees		2-3	30 sec	Active	15 sec	Body weight
Box jumps (maximum knee height)		2-3	30 sec	Active	15 sec	Body weight