



INFORMATION SHEET

Taking up running can seem like a scary prospect, especially if you feel out of shape or unfit. But did you know that regular running can help reduce the risk of chronic illnesses such as heart disease, type 2 diabetes and stroke, boost your mood and keep your weight under control?

The Couch to 5K plan is designed to get you off the “couch” and **gradually work you up to running 5K or for half an hour, in just nine weeks.**

What is Couch to 5K?

Couch to 5K is a running plan developed to help absolute beginners get into running. The beginners' running plan was developed by a novice runner, Josh Clark, who wanted to help his fifty-something mother get off the couch and start running too.

The plan involves three runs per week, with a day of rest in between, with a different **schedule for each of the nine weeks.**

How does Couch to 5K work?

Probably the biggest challenge a novice runner faces is not knowing how or where to start. Often when trying to get into exercise, we can overdo it, feel defeated and give up when we're just getting started. Couch to 5K works because it starts with a **mix of running and walking, to gradually build up your fitness and stamina.** Week one involves running for just a minute at a time, creating realistic expectations and making the challenge feel achievable right from the start.

Who is Couch to 5K for?

Couch to 5K is for everyone. Whether you've never run before, or if you want to get back into being more active, Couch to 5K is a free and easy way of getting fitter and healthier. **If you have any health concerns about beginning an exercise regime such as Couch to 5K, make an appointment to see your doctor and discuss it with them first.**

What are the benefits?

There are plenty of benefits from getting into running. For starters, it's an easy way of improving your physical health. Running regularly will improve the health of your heart and lungs. It can also help you lose weight, especially if combined with a healthy diet.

There is evidence it may help increase bone density in some people, which can help protect against bone diseases such as osteoporosis.

There are also mental benefits of running. Taking on the challenge of Couch to 5K can help boost your confidence and self-belief, as you prove that you can set yourself a target and achieve a goal. Running regularly can also be a great stress reliever and has even been shown to combat depression.

How will Live Well Clover's Couch to 5K work?

STEP ONE: Everyone will use the same Couch to 5K training schedule (see the separate handout). For those that have a smart phone, you can download the free app to your phone (C25K by Zen Labs LLC).

STEP TWO: A group run lead by a volunteer run leader will be scheduled for 3 times each week for nine weeks. The best way to ensure you stick with your running plan is to carefully work out fitting the Couch to 5K into your busy week. If you can't join the group run, perhaps you can go with someone else or on your own at a different time. Missing a day here or there will not sabotage your program!

STEP THREE: The run leader will select different routes around Town so that participants will experience different scenery and be prepared for changing elevations. If you find that you can't go with the group, there are lots of great apps that will help you figure out distances that you walk & run such as MapMyRun and Caledos Runner.

STEP FOUR: Think about safety each and every time you go out. The run leader will lead with some basic stretches before and after each session. Each participant should be aware of his/her own physical limitations, infirmities and injuries. Participants must also be aware of the surroundings at all times watching out for other pedestrians, keeping aware of motorists (especially at intersections and driveways) and paying attention to sidewalks.

STEP FIVE: What are you going to wear? The most important item is a good pair of running shoes. The correct shoes may reduce your risk of injury. However, you need not spend a fortune on shoes or any other accessory. Other items you may wish to bring to each training session is water, sunscreen, hat, epi-pen, mobile phone, etc.

Couch to 5K

	WORKOUT 1	WORKOUT 2	WORKOUT 3
1	Brisk 5 minute warm-up. Alternate 60 seconds of jogging and 90 seconds of walking for a total of 20 minutes	Brisk 5 minute warm-up. Alternate 60 seconds of jogging and 90 seconds of walking for a total of 20 minutes	Brisk 5 minute warm-up. Alternate 60 seconds of jogging and 90 seconds of walking for a total of 20 minutes
2	Brisk 5 minute warm-up. Alternate 90 seconds of jogging and 2 minutes of walking for a total of 20 minutes	Brisk 5 minute warm-up. Alternate 90 seconds of jogging and 2 minutes of walking for a total of 20 minutes	Brisk 5 minute warm-up. Alternate 90 seconds of jogging and 2 minutes of walking for a total of 20 minutes
3	Brisk 5 minute warm-up. Do 2 repetitions of the following: Jog 90 seconds, Walk 90 seconds Jog 3 minutes, Walk 3 minutes	Brisk 5 minute warm-up. Do 2 repetitions of the following: Jog 90 seconds, Walk 90 seconds Jog 3 minutes, Walk 3 minutes	Brisk 5 minute warm-up. Do 2 repetitions of the following: Jog 90 seconds, Walk 90 seconds Jog 3 minutes, Walk 3 minutes
4	Brisk 5 minute warm-up, then: Jog 3 minutes, Walk 90 seconds Jog 5 minutes, Walk 2.5 minutes Jog 3 minutes, Walk 90 seconds Jog 5 minutes	Brisk 5 minute warm-up, then: Jog 3 minutes, Walk 90 seconds Jog 5 minutes, Walk 2.5 minutes Jog 3 minutes, Walk 90 seconds Jog 5 minutes	Brisk 5 minute warm-up, then: Jog 3 minutes, Walk 90 seconds Jog 5 minutes, Walk 2.5 minutes Jog 3 minutes, Walk 90 seconds Jog 5 minutes
5	Brisk 5 minute warm-up, then: Jog 5 minutes, Walk 3 minutes Jog 8 minutes, Walk 3 minutes Jog 5 minutes	Brisk 5 minute warm-up, then: Jog 10 minutes Walk 3 minutes Jog 10 minutes	Brisk 5 minute warm-up, then: Jog 25 minutes with no walking
6	Brisk 5 minute warm-up, then: Jog 5 minutes, Walk 3 minutes Jog 8 minutes, Walk 3 minutes Jog 5 minutes	Brisk 5 minute warm-up, then: Jog 10 minutes Walk 3 minutes Jog 10 minutes	Brisk 5 minute warm-up, then: Jog 25 minutes with no walking
7	Brisk 5 minute warm-up, then: Jog 25 minutes	Brisk 5 minute warm-up, then: Jog 25 minutes	Brisk 5 minute warm-up, then: Jog 25 minutes
8	Brisk 5 minute warm-up, then: Jog 28 minutes	Brisk 5 minute warm-up, then: Jog 28 minutes	Brisk 5 minute warm-up, then: Jog 28 minutes
9	Brisk 5 minute warm-up, then: Jog 30 minutes	Brisk 5 minute warm-up, then: Jog 30 minutes	Brisk 5 minute warm-up, then: Jog 30 minutes Final workout - congratulations!

Running is hard but worth it.

Slow and steady finishes the race.

It is all about shoes.

Find something to motivate you.

Set long and short term goals.