

Triathlon Training for Runners

When tackling your first triathlon, you should set your sights on a sprint or Olympic-distance event. The distances are a bit different—sprint includes 0.5-mile swim, 12-mile bike, 3-mile run, while an Olympic includes 0.93-mile swim, 24.8-mile bike, 6.2-mile run—but the training required for these two races is very similar. In fact, an appropriate training plan for an Olympic-distance triathlon is simply a sprint-distance training plan with a few extra weeks added on.

What follows is a flexible, 12-week training plan that can be used for either a sprint or an Olympic event. Begin with Week 1 and continue through Week 8 to prepare for a sprint—or through Week 12 to get ready for an Olympic-distance race. The plan consists of six workouts per week, as well as one optional run. In each workout, pay attention to your perceived effort to complete the run, bike or swim at the proper pace.

SCHEDULE

	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
WEEK 1	OFF or RUN 30 min (Zone 2)	SWIM Warm up: 100 yd (Zone 1) Drills: 4 x 25 yd* Main set: 100 yd (Zone 3) Cool down: 100 yd (Zone 1)	BIKE 30 min (Zone 2)	RUN 30 min (Zone 2)	SWIM Warm up: 100 yd (Zone 1) Drills: 4 x 25 yd* Main set: 100 yd (Zone 3) Cool down: 100 yd (Zone 1)	BIKE 30 min (Zone 2)	RUN 35 min (Zone 2)
WEEK 2	OFF or RUN 30 min (Zone 2)	SWIM Warm up: 100 yd (Zone 1) Drills: 4 x 25 yd* Main set: 2 x 100 yd* (Zone 3) Cool down: 100 yd (Zone 1)	BIKE 30 min (Zone 2) + RUN 10 minutes (Zone 2)	RUN 35 min (Zone 2)	SWIM Warm up: 100 yd (Zone 1) Drills: 4 x 25 yd* Main set: 2 x 100 yd* (Zone 3) Cool down: 100 yd (Zone 1)	BIKE 35 min (Zone 2)	RUN 40 min (Zone 2)
WEEK 3	OFF or RUN 35 min (Zone 2)	SWIM Warm up: 100 yd (Zone 1) Drills: 4 x 25 yd* Main set: 3 x 100 yd* (Zone 3) Cool down: 100 yd (Zone 1)	BIKE 35 min (Zone 2) + RUN 10 minutes (Zone 2)	RUN 40 min (Zone 2)	SWIM Warm up: 100 yd (Zone 1) Drills: 4 x 25 yd* Main set: 3 x 100 yd* (Zone 3) Cool down: 100 yd (Zone 1)	BIKE 40 min (Zone 2) + RUN 10 min (Zone 2)	RUN 45 min (Zone 2)
WEEK 4	OFF or RUN 20 min (Zone 2)	SWIM Warm up: 100 yd (Zone 1) Drills: 4 x 25 yd* Main set: 4 x 75 yd* (Zone 4) Cool down: 100 yd (Zone 1)	BIKE Warm up: 10 min (Zone 1) Workout: 6 x (1 min Zone 5 + 2 min Zone 1) Cool down: 10 min (Zone 1) + RUN 10 min (Zone 2)	RUN 40 min (Zone 2)	SWIM Warm up: 100 yd (Zone 1) Drills: 4 x 25 yd* Main set: 3 x 100 yd* (Zone 3) Cool down: 100 yd (Zone 1)	BIKE 50 min (Zone 2) + RUN 10 min (Zone 2)	RUN 30 min (Zone 2) + 10 min (Zone 3)

* Rest 30 seconds after each set

	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
WEEK 5	OFF or RUN 40 min (Zone 2)	SWIM Warm up: 100 yd (Zone 1) Drills: 4 x 25 yd* Main set: 5 x 75 yd* (Zone 4) Cool down: 100 yd (Zone 1)	BIKE 40 min (Zone 2)	RUN Warm up: 10 min (Zone 1) Workout: 6 x (1 min Zone 4 + 2 min Zone 1) Cool down: 5 min (Zone 1)	SWIM Warm up: 100 yd (Zone 1) Drills: 4 x 25 yd* Main set: 4 x 100 yd* (Zone 3) Cool down: 100 yd (Zone 1)	BIKE 45 min (Zone 2) + 10 min (Zone 3) + RUN 10 min (Zone 2)	RUN 50 min (Zone 2)
WEEK 6	OFF or RUN 40 min (Zone 2)	SWIM Warm up: 100 yd (Zone 1) Drills: 4 x 25 yd* Main set: 6 x 75 yd* (Zone 4) Cool down: 100 yd (Zone 1)	BIKE Warm up: 10 min (Zone 1) Workout: 3 x (4 min Zone 4 + 3 min Zone 1) Cool down: 10 min (Zone 1) + RUN 10 min (Zone 2)	RUN 40 min (Zone 2)	SWIM Warm up: 100 yd (Zone 1) Drills: 4 x 25 yd* Main set: 5 x 100 yd* (Zone 3) Cool down: 100 yd (Zone 1)	BIKE 60 min (Zone 2) + RUN 10 min (Zone 2)	RUN 40 min (Zone 2) + 10 min (Zone 3)
WEEK 7	OFF or RUN 45 min (Zone 2)	SWIM Warm up: 100 yd (Zone 1) Drills: 4 x 25 yd* Main set: 4 x 100 yd* (Zone 3) Cool down: 100 yd (Zone 1)	BIKE 45 min (Zone 2)	RUN Warm up: 10 min (Zone 1) Workout: 3 x (4 min Zone 4 + 3 min Zone 1) Cool down: 5 min (Zone 1)	SWIM Warm up: 100 yd (Zone 1) Drills: 4 x 25 yd* Main set: 4 x 150 yd* (Zone 3) Cool down: 100 yd (Zone 1)	BIKE 50 min (Zone 2) + 10 min (Zone 3) + RUN 10 min (Zone 2)	RUN 60 min (Zone 2)
WEEK 8	OFF or RUN 30 min (Zone 2)	SWIM Warm up: 100 yd (Zone 1) Drills: 4 x 25 yd* Main set: 6 x 75 yd* (Zone 4) Cool down: 100 yd (Zone 1)	BIKE Warm up: 10 min (Zone 1) Workout: 3 x (5 min Zone 4 + 3 min Zone 1) Cool down: 10 min (Zone 1)	RUN 20 min (Zone 1) + 10 min (Zone 3)	SWIM Warm up: 100 yd (Zone 1) Main set: 400 yd (Zone 2) Cool down: 100 yd (Zone 1)	OFF	Sprint Triathlon! or SWIM 400 yd (Zone 2) + BIKE 30 min (Zone 3) + RUN 20 min (Zone 2)



GET IN THE ZONE

The workouts in all three disciplines are based on a five-zone intensity system.

ZONE	PERCEIVED EFFORT	PACE
1 <i>Low Aerobic</i>	<i>Very Easy</i>	<i>Warm-up pace</i>
2 <i>Moderate Aerobic</i>	<i>Easy</i>	<i>Easy-run pace or swim/bike equivalent</i>
3 <i>Threshold</i>	<i>Comfortably Hard</i>	<i>Half-marathon race pace or swim/bike equivalent</i>
4 <i>VO2max</i>	<i>Hard</i>	<i>5k race pace or swim/bike equivalent</i>
5 <i>Speed</i>	<i>Very Hard</i>	<i>1-mile race pace or swim/bike equivalent</i>



	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
WEEK 9	OFF or RUN 45 min (Zone 2)	SWIM Warm up: 100 yd (Zone 1) Drills: 4 x 25 yd* Main set: 3 x 200 yd* (Zone 3) Cool down: 100 yd (Zone 1)	BIKE 45 min (Zone 2)	RUN 10 min (Zone 1) + 15 min (Zone 3) + 10 min (Zone 1)	SWIM Warm up: 100 yd (Zone 1) Drills: 4 x 25 yd* Main set: 500 yd (Zone 2) Cool down: 100 yd (Zone 1)	BIKE 60 min (Zone 2) + 5 min (Zone 4) + RUN 10 min (Zone 2)	RUN 60 min (Zone 2)
WEEK 10	OFF or RUN 45 min (Zone 2)	SWIM Warm up: 100 yd (Zone 1) Drills: 4 x 25 yd* Main set: 4 x 200 yd* (Zone 3) Cool down: 100 yd (Zone 1)	BIKE 10 min (Zone 1) + 15 min (Zone 3) + 10 min (Zone 1)	RUN 45 min (Zone 2)	SWIM Warm up: 100 yd (Zone 1) Drills: 4 x 25 yd* Main set: 4 x 600 yd* (Zone 2) Cool down: 100 yd (Zone 1)	BIKE 75 min (Zone 2) + RUN 10 min (Zone 2)	RUN 60 min (Zone 2)
WEEK 11	OFF or RUN 45 min (Zone 2)	SWIM Warm up: 100 yd (Zone 1) Drills: 4 x 25 yd* Main set: 5 x 200 yd* (Zone 3) Cool down: 100 yd (Zone 1)	BIKE 50 min (Zone 2)	RUN 10 min (Zone 1) + 15 min (Zone 3) + 10 min (Zone 1)	SWIM Warm up: 100 yd (Zone 1) Drills: 4 x 25 yd* Main set: 4 x 800 yd* (Zone 2) Cool down: 100 yd (Zone 1)	BIKE 75 min (Zone 2) + 5 min (Zone 4) + RUN 10 min (Zone 2)	RUN Warm up: 10 min (Zone 2) Workout: 6 x (1 min Zone 4 + 4 min Zone 2) Cool down: 10 min (Zone 1)
WEEK 12	OFF or RUN 30 min (Zone 2)	SWIM Warm up: 100 yd (Zone 1) Drills: 4 x 25 yd* Main set: 6 x 75 yd* (Zone 4) Cool down: 100 yd (Zone 1)	BIKE 10 min (Zone 1) + 15 min (Zone 3) + 10 min (Zone 1) + RUN 10 min (Zone 3)	RUN 30 min (Zone 1) + 10 min (Zone 3)	SWIM Warm up: 100 yd (Zone 1) Main set: 400 yd (Zone 3) Cool down: 100 yd (Zone 1)	OFF	OLYMPIC DISTANCE TRIATHLON!

* Rest 30 seconds after each set