

## **Dutch Start to Run Program**

**The training schedules of the Dutch running program can be found on the next page.**

The Dutch Athletics Federation (Atletiekunie) created two Start to Run schedules promoting active living, health, and injury prevention:

1. The **Standard 5K Start to Run Schedule** is 6 weeks long. It helps participants to progress toward running 5 km two to three times per week as part of a regular fitness routine. Participants increased their high-intensity physical activity by an average of 152 minutes/week when measured 4.5 months after the 6-week program ended<sup>1</sup>;
2. The **Modified 3K Start to Run Schedule** was created for individual with osteoarthritis. Weight-bearing physical activities, if done right, can help improve joint health and movement. This 7-week program was tested, and the evaluation shows it offers a comfortable and safe progression towards running 3 km continuously<sup>2</sup>. Avoiding too much load on the joints is a key factor to obtain positive outcomes in this program.

**Proven injury prevention strategies for running** are incorporated into this program:

- Using progressive “walk/run” sequences in the training sessions;
- Increasing the intensity slowly over 6 to 7 weeks;
- Running on alternating days to give a 48-hour rest period for the legs;
- Limiting each running session to 30 minutes;
- Limiting running sessions to two to three times per week;
- Including a 10 to 15-minute active warm-up before each running session to prepare muscles and joints;
- Conducting a cooling-down period using stretching exercises at the end of each workout;
- Alternating “fast running” with “slower running” in a session to optimize fitness;
- Offering individual and group training sessions, providing social and personal motivation.

A planned progression in intensity over many weeks is key to providing time for muscles, bones and joints to adapt. The research examined the efficiency of these two schedules. Both offer positive health outcomes and low injury rates (9 to 11%) compared to other running programs (>20%)<sup>3</sup>.

Bones, joints, muscles and tendons become more fragile before becoming stronger and efficient with running. This transformation is slow and takes between 6 and 24 months. For this reason, starting to run and adopting a routine of running weekly can significantly increase the risk of injuries, especially during the first year<sup>4</sup>. The risk of injury reduces with experienced recreational runners. However, the risk of injury increases with competitive runners<sup>3</sup>. Changes in running training load in the past weeks often cause a new injury<sup>3</sup>. Training load changes include changes in distance, intensity, frequency or recovery periods. For this reason, it is important to maintain the injury prevention strategies listed above. Novice runners could also add trunk and hip exercises to protect themselves from injuries<sup>5</sup>. A balanced running routine protects joints structures<sup>6</sup>.

**Screening Prior to the Running Program:** Individuals are invited to pass a self-fitness health check prior to starting a running program. This screening is called the Get Active Questionnaire ([https://csep.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/GETACTIVEQUESTIONNAIRE\\_ENG.pdf](https://csep.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/GETACTIVEQUESTIONNAIRE_ENG.pdf)). This screening will identify if a consult with a health care professional is needed prior to start a running program.

## Dutch Start to Run Program

### The Standard 5 km Start to Run Program - Training Schedule

Week	Training in Group Day 1	Training on your own Day 3	Training on your own Day 5 (Optional)
1	Runs: 8 to 12 x 1 min (zone 1) Walk between runs = 3 min	Runs: 4 to 6 x 1 min (zone 1) Walk between runs = 1 min	Runs: 3 to 5 x 2 min (zone 1) Walk between runs = 2 min
2	Runs: 8 to 10 x 2 min (zone 1) Walk between runs = 3 min	Runs: 3 to 5 x 2 min (zone 1) Walk between runs = 2 min	Runs: 3 to 5 x 3 min (zone 1) Walk between runs = 3 min
3	Runs: 3 to 4 x 5 min (zone 1 + R) Walk between runs = 3 min	Runs: 2 x 5 min (zone 1 + R) Walk between runs = 3 min	Runs: 2 x 7 min (zone 1 + R) Walk between runs = 3 min
4	Runs: 10-10-12 min (zone 2) Walk between runs = 10 min	Runs: 1 x 15 min (zone 1)	Runs: 2 x 10 min (zone 1 + R) Walk between runs = 5 min
5	Runs: 3 x 10 min (zone 2) Walk between runs = 5 min	Runs: 3 x 10 min (zone 1) Walk between runs = 3 min	Runs: 10-8-6-4-2 min (zone 2) Walk between runs = 5-4-3-2 min
6	Test run of running 3-4 km continuously (20 to 25 minutes)		

**Preparation and Cold-Down:** Each session starts with 10 to 15 minutes of active warm-up exercises (e.g. walking gradually faster/ standing exercises). After each session, there is a cooling-down with stretching exercises.

**Definitions:** **zone 1** = easy running; **zone 1+R** = easy jogging with a focus on relaxed jogging (controlling the breathing); **zone 2** = running faster

### The Modified 3 km Running Program Training Schedule (for individuals with osteoarthritis)

Week	Training in Group Day 1	Training on your own Day 3	Training on your own Day 5 (Optional)
1	Runs: 1-1-2-1-1-2 min (zone 1) Walk between runs = 3 min	Runs: 6 x 2 min (zone 1) Walk between runs = 2 min	Runs: 1-2-3-2-1 min. (zone 1) Walk between runs = 3 min
2	Runs: 1-2-3-2-4 min. (zone 1) Walk between run = 2 min	Runs: 4 x 3 min (zone 1) Walk between runs = 2 min	Runs: 2-3-2-3 min (zone 1) Walk between runs = 2 min
3	Runs: 2-4-5 min. (zone 1) 3 x 2 min. (zone 2) Walk between runs = 2 min	Runs: 5 x 3 min (zone 1) Walk between runs = 2 min	Runs: 6 x 2 min (zone 2) Walk between runs = 3 min
4	Runs: 4-5-6 min. (zone 1) 3 x 2 min (zone 2) Walk between run = 2 min	Runs: 4 x 5 min (zone 1) Walk between runs = 2 min	Runs: 1-2-3-1-2-3 min. (zone 2) Walk between runs = 2 min
5	Runs: 3 x 8 min (zone 1) Walk between runs = 3 min	Runs: 4 x 6 min (zone 1) Walk between runs = 2 min	Runs: 6 x 3 min (zone 2) Walk between runs = 2 min
6	Runs: 5-10-15 (zone 1) Walk between runs = respectively 2 and 4 min.	Runs: 4 x 4 min. (zone 2) Walk between runs = 2 min	Runs: 6-5-4-2 min. (zone 1,1,2,2) Walk between runs = 2 min
7	3 kms of consecutive running		

**Preparation and Cold-Down:** Each session starts with 10 to 15 minutes of active warm-up exercises (e.g. walking gradually faster/ standing exercises). After each session, there is a cooling-down session with stretching exercises.

**Definitions:** **zone 1** = easy running; **zone 2** = running faster

**Reference:** 1.Ooms L, et al. (2013). Effectiveness of Start to Run, a 6-week training program for novice runners, on increasing health-enhancing physical activity: A controlled study. BMC Public Health. (13) 697. 2.Holla JFM, et al. (2018). Running with rheumatism: a 7-week training program for novice runners with inflammatory rheumatic disease. Abstract OP0291-PARE. 15 Jun 2018. 3.Fredette A, et al. (2022). The association between running injuries and training parameters: a systematic review. J Athl Train. 57(7):650-671. 4.Fokkema T, et al. (2019). Prognosis and prognostic factors of running-related injuries in novice runners: a prospective cohort study. J of Sc and Med in Sport. (22):250-26). 5. Leppanen M, et all (2023). Hip and core exercise programme prevents running-related overuse injuries in adult novice recreational runners - a three-arm RCT. (0): 1-11. 6. Alexander JLN, et all (2022). Running Myth: Recreational running causes knee osteoarthritis. BJSM. 56(6):357-358

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