

triathlete

8-WEEK SPRINT TRIATHLON TRAINING PLAN

RATE OF PERCEIVED EXERTION (RPE) TRAINING

- ZONE 1: Gentle rhythmic breathing. Pace is easy and relaxed. The intensity is a jog, or very easy swim or bike spin.
- ZONE 2: Breathing rate and pace increase slightly. You should still be comfortable but with slightly deeper breathing. Running and cycling pace remains comfortable and conversation is possible.
- ZONE 3: Become aware of breathing a little harder. Pace is moderate with a stronger swimming, cycling or running rhythm. This is "feel good" fast. It is slightly more difficult to hold conversation.
- ZONE 4: Starting to breathe hard, pace is fast and beginning to get uncomfortable and should be challenging to maintain. This effort is approaching an all-out 15-minute swim, or 30-minute bike and run pace.
- ZONE 5: Breathing is deep and forceful and you may notice a second significant change in breathing pattern. Pace is all-out sustainable for one to five minutes. Mental focus is required and it should feel moderately uncomfortable.

KEY

' = minutes

" = seconds

RPM = revolutions per minute or cadence

ZONE = perceived effort zone (see table at left)

(") = indicates rest in between intervals

NOTE: For the swim workouts (e.g.,

"16x25"), either yards or meters are

acceptable, depending on your pool. A "25"

is one length and a "50" is down and back.

WEEK 1: Build Consistency

MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT	SUN
Day off.	SWIM 16x25 (30"). Pace these evenly and start slow. Zone 1.	RUN 5x(2' walk/3' run in Zone 1), flat terrain.	BIKE 30' flat terrain, Zone 1 at 80–90 RPM.	Day off.	SWIM 10x50 (45"), Zone 1.	RUN 6x(1.5' walk/3.5' run in Zone 1), flat terrain.

FOCAL POINT: Be conservative with your effort in week 1 but strong in your conviction to complete the schedule this week. Start sessions easy to warm up. BIKE TIP: RPM stands for revolutions per minute, which is your cadence. To determine RPM without a cycling computer, simply count the amount of times your right knee comes up in the pedal stroke for 30 seconds, then double that number.

WEEK 2: Build Consistency

MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT	SUN
Day off.	SWIM 24x25 (30"). Pace these evenly. Zone 2.	BIKE 30' flat terrain as 15' Zone 1, 15' Zone 2 at 80–90 RPM.	RUN 2x10' (2' walking rest), flat terrain, Zone 1.	Day off.	SWIM 12x50 (35"). Pace these evenly. Zone 1.	BIKE 45' rolling terrain as 15' Zone 1, 30' Zone 2 at 80–90 RPM.

FOCAL POINT: You are already increasing your fitness at this point. Each session is a stepping stone to the following week, so take pride in executing the workouts well from start to finish. Take your rest days as scheduled and eat well.

WEEK 3: Build Consistency

MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT	SUN
Day off.	SWIM 8x75 (40"). Pace these evenly. Zone 2.	RUN 20' rolling terrain as 10' Zone 1, 10' Zone 2.	BIKE 55' flat terrain as 20' Zone 1, 35' Zone 2 at 85–95 RPM.	Day off.	SWIM 4x100 (45"), Zone 2. 6x50 (30"), just a little faster in Zone 3.	RUN 30' flat terrain, Zone 1.

FOCAL POINT: Always be moving forward physically and mentally with no coasting. When riding uphill, flat or downhill, pay attention to the pressure on your pedals, which is energy pushing the bike forward. When running and swimming, think about even rhythm and cadence pushing you forward. Mentally focus always on doing your best work, best effort and positive self-talk in sessions.

WEEK 4: Increase Endurance

MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT	SUN
Day off.	SWIM 12x75 (20") as 6 in Zone 2, 6 in Zone 3.	RUN 40' rolling terrain as 15' Zone 1, 25' Zone 2.	BIKE 70' rolling to hilly terrain as 20' Zone 1, 50' Zone 2 at 85–95 RPM.	Day off.	SWIM 10x100 (25"), Zone 2.	BIKE 45' flat terrain, Zone 1 at 90–100 RPM. Make a quick transition into running shoes (less than 3'). RUN 20' off the bike, flat terrain, Zone 2.

FOCAL POINT: As you reach the midpoint of this program, reconnect with why you want to do a triathlon. What do you like about sport and what makes you feel good when you are out there training? The answers to these questions are what will get you through the most challenging days, and they are what you will draw upon on race day.

WEEK 5: Increase Endurance

MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT	SUN
Day off.	SWIM 2x200 (30"). 4x100 (20"). All Zone 2.	RUN 40' rolling terrain as 15' Zone 1, 25' Zone 2.	BIKE 80' rolling to hilly terrain as 20' Zone 1, 25' Zone 2, 15' Zone 3, 20' Zone 2 at 90–95 RPM.	Day off.	SWIM 500 (2'). 5x100 (20"). All Zone 2.	BIKE 60' flat terrain, Zone 1 at 90–100 RPM. Quick transition (less than 3'). RUN 20' off the bike, flat terrain, Zone 2.

FOCAL POINT: You are tough. Training is “good” discomfort, where you develop strong coping skills for race day. Your Sunday transition run (which, in combination with the bike, is called a brick workout) is a perfect place to practice physical and mental race skills as well. Be organized and focused on starting your run immediately off the bike by having a place to drop your bike and your run shoes ready. Create your own transition area.

WEEK 6: Improve Race Fitness

MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT	SUN
Day off.	SWIM 1000 nonstop, Zone 2.	RUN 35' rolling terrain as 15' Zone 1, 10' Zone 3, 5' Zone 4, 5' Zone 2.	BIKE 60' flatter to rolling terrain as 15' Zone 1, 2x(5' Zone 3, 2.5' Zone 2, 5' Zone 4, 2.5' Zone 2), 15' Zone 1 at 90–95 RPM.	Day off.	SWIM 10x100 (20"). Swim #3, #6 and #9 faster in Zone 4, the rest in Zone 1.	BIKE 40' flat terrain as 15' Zone 1, 15' Zone 3, 10' Zone 4 at 90–100 RPM. Make a quick transition (less than 2'). RUN 20' off the bike, flat terrain as 10' Zone 4, 5' Zone 2, 5' Zone 1.

FOCAL POINT: This is your last two-week segment before you back off for race taper week. Make the most of each session, pull in all the resources and learning from the past five weeks and write down small goals you want to accomplish with each day. Be positive and calm: This is the ideal state in which to maximize your training sessions.

WEEK 7: Improve Race Fitness

MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT	SUN
Day off.	SWIM 500, Zone 1 build to Zone 2. 10x50 (20") as 25 fast/Zone 4, 25 easy/Zone 1.	RUN 35' rolling terrain as 15' Zone 1, 10' Zone 3, 5' Zone 5, 5' Zone 2.	BIKE 60' rolling to hilly terrain as 15' Zone 1, 5' Zone 3, 2.5' Zone 2, 5' Zone 4, 2.5' Zone 2, 5x(1' Zone 5, 2' Zone 1), 15' Zone 1 at 90–95 RPM.	Day off.	SWIM 5x200 (30") as #1 in Zone 1, #2–3 in Zone 2, #4 in Zone 3, #5 in Zone 4.	BIKE 30' flat terrain as 15' Zone 1, 10' Zone 3, 5' Zone 4 at 90–100 RPM. Quick transition (less than 2'). RUN 15' off the bike, flat terrain as 5' Zone 4, 5' Zone 2, 5' Zone 1.

FOCAL POINT: You have accomplished a lot! At the end of this week, look back on all your sessions. This will give you a sense of confidence that you are ready to tackle the sprint distance, and it serves as a great reminder when nerves creep up. Racing will be simply doing what you have been doing in training: swimming, biking and running!

WEEK 8: Race Week

MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT	SUN
Day off.	SWIM 200 Zone 1. 8x50 (20") as 25 fast/Zone 4, 25 easy/Zone 1. 100 Zone 1.	RUN 20' flat terrain as 12' Zone 1, 3' Zone 3, 5' Zone 1.	BIKE 30' rolling to hilly terrain as 15' Zone 1, 2x(2.5' Zone 3, 2.5' Zone 2), 5' Zone 1 at 90–95 RPM.	Day off.	BIKE 15' Zone 1 at 90–95 RPM.	Race day!

FOCAL POINT: If you are feeling excited and nervous, that is a good thing. It means that you care, and the race is important to you. This extra energy will give you a boost on race day. Follow the sessions closely and resist the urge to “test” yourself—save it up for race day! Take time to pre-organize your equipment so race day is simpler. If you can review the course, that will help ensure success. Visualize your best training efforts on the race course.