



unbound running

Welcome

Everyone here at RacingThePlanet wishes you the best in preparing for the race ahead. We want to see you as fit and healthy as you can possibly be at the start line!

The race ahead will be tough. Every competitor will be challenged. Committing to consistent, structured exercise and planning will put you in the best possible position to overcome anything the race has to offer, and to make it through all 250km so we can see you crossing the finish line with pride.

All the best with your training, and we'll see you at check-in!

On behalf of Unbound Running, welcome! You're about to travel to some beautiful places, enjoy some great company by the campfire, and have one of the most unique athletic experiences going.

This plan is designed to help prepare you for these specific races. You won't just be working on strength and endurance, you'll be getting ready for time off road, with a pack, from early starts into dark nights. Take confidence from knowing that the training ahead will give you the best chance to get the most out of your race.

Good luck, and happy running...

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ferg-Edh".

Disclaimer

Each athlete must bear sole responsibility for their own health and fitness, and for the training and dietary regime that they choose to adopt.

While this plan has been designed to help athletes preparing for RacingThePlanet races, they are guides that each athlete takes sole responsibility for interpreting and applying.

Please seek appropriate medical guidance before undertaking this, or any other, physical endeavour. Stop exercising and seek medical attention if at any point you feel unwell, or experience any unusual or sharp pains.

Don't undertake exercise while under the influence of drugs or alcohol. Do not exercise either when taking painkillers or if you feel painkillers are necessary before or after exercise.

Be conscious of calorie, fluid and electrolyte intake during training and racing, and seek guidance if unsure how to remain appropriately hydrated and fuelled during training and races.

Introduction

The following training plan has only one aim: to improve your fitness to complete RacingThePlanet multi-day races. Each day of the plan has a specific activity for the day. The plan does not know you or your background, but assumes that you have been undertaking regular, disciplined exercise for 4-8 hours per week for at least the past 6 months. The plan aims to improve your fitness in the areas that matter to competing in the self-sufficient environment of the RacingThePlanet events:

+ Physical fitness: this involves endurance (keeping moving for longer), and stamina (moving more strongly for longer), but also strength (carrying weight) and agility (moving on uneven terrain).

+ Mental fitness: this means becoming able to accept and deal with the strain caused by the increased physical stress of exercising with load, while taking decisions that will allow for consistent effort over multiple days.

+ Craft: this means choosing and testing gear and nutrition, developing stretching and nutritional routines that will help you continue to operate well in race conditions.

Each month of the plan has an area to focus on for your body, mind, and craft, to help you get the most out of training and to develop relevant race skills. They are not comprehensive, but they're a good start!

All your sessions are based on time, not distance. Your body responds to stress over time – it has no idea how far you might have gone, only how long it has been working for. As you get fitter, you will go further in the same amount of time on the same terrain. This plan involves working on different terrain, and this or other stresses might mean two similar sessions cover very different distances. This is absolutely as it should be.

A major concern for training a fit athlete is over-training. Your fitness encourages you to test yourself in training, increasing injury risk but delivering minimal fitness gains. This is mitigated by spending the bulk of your training time at an 'easy, gentle' level of exertion. This engages your cardiovascular system and starts to build endurance at minimal risk of impact injury. Easy means easy: while you should be focused on the task at hand, it's important that you could still hold a full conversation at this effort level.

You will then have some faster efforts and some involving hills. These help you to become more efficient in your movement, and will help develop strength that will aid all your exercise. These higher levels of exertion should be those at which you could talk in sentences, but only just.

Longer efforts will acclimatise you to carrying weight over distance; focus on purposeful, consistent effort for the full session. As running with load is introduced, expect that your pace will change for the same effort and do not exert yourself so hard that you compromise subsequent sessions. You may be fit enough to go further or faster on a given day, but that may not help make you faster or stronger over time. The plan is designed to maximise gains from training, and so avoids sessions that increase injury risk with reduced marginal training benefit. Consistent, uninjured training matters more than any one session: train to compete, don't compete in training.

Finally: training is the application of deliberate stress so that you heal stronger. Make the most of your hard work by following it with rehydration, refuelling and rest.

Good luck, and happy running...

Training Plan: 24 Weeks: Introducing Structured Exercise

The initial phase of training should allow you to integrate a high volume of regular exercise into your daily routine. Small, frequent sessions allow you to get used to preparing to train, and allow your body to adapt to cycles of stress and recovery. The body gets stronger *after* the stimulus, so make sure you refuel, rehydrate, and relax after each session.

Training Focus

Body: take the easy runs easy, and be conservative when introducing loaded effort

Mind: don't cheat - get off tarmac when you should; your joints need to get used to uneven ground

Craft: find your race pack and shoes now - use them for weighted runs; change if they cause abrasions

Session		Notes
24	Mon	Rest
	Tue	30m easy run (a pace at which you can hold a full conversation)
	Wed	60m easy run, include 5 strides of 20 seconds in the last 10 minutes
	Thu	30m easy run
	Fri	60m non-load bearing exercise (yoga, cycling, swimming, etc)
	Sat	30m progression run - 10m easy, 10m harder, 10m tempo (pace at which a sentence is just possible)
	Sun	1hr hike, with 4kg race rucksack, (carry water, spare jackets, etc), not on tarmac, no running
23	Mon	Rest
	Tue	am: 30-40m easy run; pm: 30-40m easy run
	Wed	am: 30-60m swim/cycle/yoga; pm: 40m intervals - easy run, with 4 sets of 2m at tempo pace, 1m recovery
	Thu	60m easy run
	Fri	am: 30-60m swim/cycle/yoga; pm: 30-40m easy run
	Sat	40m run, include 5 strides of 20 seconds in the last 10 minutes
	Sun	2 hr hike, with 6kg rucksack, no tarmac, no running
22	Mon	Rest
	Tue	am: 35-45m easy run; pm: 30-40m run
	Wed	am: 30-60m swim/cycle/yoga; pm: 45m hills - easy run, include 5 sets of 2m uphill, jog down recovery
	Thu	am: 30-40m easy run; pm: 30-40m easy run
	Fri	am: 30-60m swim/cycle/yoga; pm: 30m easy run with 4kg rucksack - focus on form not pace
	Sat	50m easy run, finding hills to run while keeping your effort level consistent
	Sun	3hr hike, 8kg rucksack, off road, moving as purposefully as possible without running
21	Mon	Rest
	Tue	45m easy run - include 5x 20s strides in the last 10 minutes
	Wed	am: 30-60m swim/cycle/yoga; pm: 30m easy run
	Thu	45m easy run
	Fri	am: 30-60m swim/cycle/yoga; pm: 30m easy run with 6kg rucksack - focus on form not pace
	Sat	30m easy run
	Sun	1 hr hike, wearing an 10kg rucksack, not on tarmac, moving purposefully without running

Training Plan: 20 Weeks: Introducing Load

Running with load increases psychological stress more than physical stress – but it does increase both. Take loaded runs very conservatively: they remain easy training runs not full effort sessions. Find an effort level that allows for consistency, and keep a strong, tall upper body while moving.

Training Focus

Body: respect the increase in pack weight; aim for constant, purposeful effort

Mind: expect, recognise, and adapt to the mental strain of full body fatigue from pack sessions

Craft: trial the quantity and frequency of food and electrolytes intake on your long hikes

Session		Notes
20	Mon	Rest
	Tue	am: 40-50m easy run; pm: 30-45m run
	Wed	am: 60m swim/cycle/yoga; pm: 30m easy run with 8kg rucksack - focus on form not pace
	Thu	60-75m easy run
	Fri	am: 60m swim/cycle/yoga; pm: 45m intervals - easy run, with 4 sets of 3m at tempo pace, 1m recovery
	Sat	60m easy run, finding hills to run while keeping your effort level consistent
	Sun	3hr hike, 10kg rucksack, off road, undulating route, hiking strongly, jog downhills only
19	Mon	Rest
	Tue	am: 45-60m easy run; pm: 30-45m easy run
	Wed	am: 60m swim/cycle/yoga; pm: 30m easy run with 10kg rucksack - focus on form not pace
	Thu	75-90m easy run
	Fri	am: 60m swim/cycle/yoga; pm: 45m hill run - easy, including 6x2m uphill, walking down to recover
	Sat	60m run, include 5 strides of 20 seconds in the last 10 minutes
	Sun	3hr hike, 10kg rucksack, off road, undulating route, hiking strongly, jog downhills only
18	Mon	Rest
	Tue	am: 45-60m easy run; pm: 30-45m easy run
	Wed	am: 60m swim/cycle/yoga; pm: 60m easy run, finding hills to run while keeping your effort level consistent
	Thu	75-90m easy run
	Fri	am: 60m swim/cycle/yoga; pm: 45m easy run
	Sat	45m easy run with 10kg rucksack - focus on form not pace
	Sun	3hr 30m hike, 10kg rucksack, off road, undulating route, hiking strongly, jog downhills only
17	Mon	Rest
	Tue	45m easy run - include 5x 20s strides in the last 10 minutes
	Wed	am: 30-60m swim/cycle/yoga; pm: 30-45m easy run
	Thu	45m easy run
	Fri	am: 30-60m swim/cycle/yoga; pm: 30m easy run with 10kg rucksack - focus on form not pace
	Sat	30m easy run
	Sun	1 hr hike, wearing an 10kg rucksack, not on tarmac, moving purposefully without running

Training Plan: 16 Weeks: Disciplined Recovery

As the volume and intensity of training increases, so does the importance of recovery: where you can, avoid leaving stressful activities for your rest day. Prioritise sleep, reduce alcohol, and do not artificially restrict calorie intake. Use the Week 14 back-to-back to consider how you will deal with the peculiar fatigue created by multi-day efforts and prepare for subsequent training.

Training Focus

Body: keep your rest days as stress-free as possible, and ideally off your feet

Mind: start getting used to early morning exercise: ideally start your long hikes at c. 7am

Craft: research and test a head torch (even if it's on a lit sidewalk to begin with)

Session		Notes
16	Mon	Rest
	Tue	am: 45-60m easy run; pm: 30-45m easy run
	Wed	am: 60m swim/cycle/yoga; pm: 45-60m easy run with 10kg rucksack - focus on form not pace
	Thu	75-90m easy run
	Fri	am: 60m swim/cycle/yoga; pm: 45m intervals - easy run, with 3 sets of 5m at tempo pace, 2m recovery
	Sat	60m run, include 5 strides of 20 seconds in the last 10 minutes
	Sun	4hr hike, 10kg pack, off road; steepest hills available, jog downhill
	15	Mon
Tue		am: 45-60m easy run; pm: 30-45m easy run
Wed		am: 60m swim/cycle/yoga; pm: 60m easy run with 10kg rucksack - focus on form not pace
Thu		90m easy run
Fri		am: 60m swim/cycle/yoga; pm: 45m hill run - easy, including 8x2m up steepest hill, walking down
Sat		60m run, include 5 strides of 20 seconds in the last 10 minutes
Sun		4hr hike, 10kg pack, off road; hike uphill, jog downhill, alternate 1m run, 3m hike on flat
14		Mon
	Tue	am: 45-60m easy run; pm: 30-45m easy run
	Wed	am: 60m swim/cycle/yoga; pm: 60m easy run, include 5x 20s strides
	Thu	90m easy run
	Fri	am: 60m swim/cycle/yoga; pm: 45m easy run
	Sat	2.5hr hike, 10kg pack, off road; hike uphill, jog downhill; hike/run, alternating same time, max 5m each
	Sun	2.5hr hike, 10kg pack, off road; hike uphill, jog downhill; hike/run, alternating same time, max 5m each
	13	Mon
Tue		45m easy run - include 5x 20s strides in the last 10 minutes
Wed		am: 30-60m swim/cycle/yoga; pm: 45m easy run
Thu		45m easy run
Fri		am: 30-60m swim/cycle/yoga; pm: 30m easy run with 10kg rucksack
Sat		30m easy run
Sun		1 hr hike, wearing an 10kg rucksack, not on tarmac, moving purposefully without running

Training Plan: 12 Weeks: Stress Familiarisation

This plan has introduced long days with a pack, and now raises the proportion of time spent running with one. Form remains crucial, and training efforts should allow you to recover properly. If you feel unable to maintain the quality of your training, ensure you have sufficient sleep, hydration, and calorie intake and consider taking an additional rest day if needed.

Training Focus

Body: research and use a 5-10 minute stretching routine *after* all your longer runs and hikes

Mind: cultivate the self-discipline needed to control long run efforts from first to last

Craft: break out all of your race gear, buy what you don't have and reduce weight wherever you can

Session		Notes
12	Mon	Rest
	Tue	am: 60m easy run; pm: 30-45m easy run
	Wed	am: 60m swim/cycle/yoga; pm: 60m easy run with 10kg rucksack - focus on form not pace
	Thu	90m easy run
	Fri	am: 60m swim/cycle/yoga; pm: 45m intervals - easy run, with 6 sets of 3m at tempo pace, 2m recovery
	Sat	60m run, include 5 strides of 20 seconds in the last 10 minutes
	Sun	2hr hike, 10kg pack, off road; steepest hills available, jog downhill; jog for 10m intervals, 5m hike on flat
11	Mon	Rest
	Tue	am: 60m easy run; pm: 30-45m easy run
	Wed	am: 60m swim/cycle/yoga; pm: 60m easy run with 10kg rucksack - focus on form not pace
	Thu	90m easy run
	Fri	am: 60m swim/cycle/yoga; pm: 45m hill run - easy, including 8x2m up steepest hill, walking down
	Sat	60m run, include 5 strides of 20 seconds in the last 10 minutes
	Sun	4hr hike, 10kg pack, off road; steepest hills available, jog downhill; jog for 10-15m, 5m hike on flat
10	Mon	Rest
	Tue	am: 60m easy run; pm: 30-45m easy run
	Wed	am: 60m swim/cycle/yoga; pm: 60m easy run, include 5x 20s strides
	Thu	90m easy run
	Fri	am: 60m swim/cycle/yoga; pm: 45m easy run
	Sat	90m easy run with 10kg rucksack - focus on form not pace
	Sun	2hr hike, 10kg pack, off road; steepest hills available, jog downhill; jog for up to 20m, 5m hike on flat
9	Mon	Rest
	Tue	45m easy run - include 5x 20s strides in the last 10 minutes
	Wed	am: 30-60m swim/cycle/yoga; pm: 45m easy run
	Thu	45m easy run
	Fri	am: 30-60m swim/cycle/yoga; pm: 30m easy run with 10kg rucksack
	Sat	30m easy run
	Sun	1 hr hike, wearing an 10kg rucksack, not on tarmac, moving purposefully without running

Training Plan: 8 Weeks: Training Peak

Long, loaded hikes ending in extended easy runs are designed to mimic the stress of a long race day. Take the opportunity to ensure your calorie plan is sufficient, and make sure the loaded runs retain good form with high cadence. Objectively consider whether your days will be faster running the entire day or with a run/hike plan; take confidence in your decision, and implement it with discipline.

Training Focus

Body: consider a sports massage every 1-2 weeks, focus on hamstrings, quads and lower back

Mind: objectively determine the optimal run/hike balance for your race: prioritise consistency

Craft: consider and set a post-run routine for camp: eg rehydrate, refuel, stretch, change clothes

Session		Notes
8	Mon	Rest
	Tue	am: 60m easy run; pm: 30-45m easy run
	Wed	am: 60m swim/cycle/yoga; pm: 60m easy run with 10kg rucksack
	Thu	90m easy run
	Fri	am: 60m swim/cycle/yoga; pm: 45m intervals - easy run, with 5 sets of 4m at tempo pace, 2m recovery
	Sat	60m run, include 5 strides of 20 seconds in the last 10 minutes
	Sun	2hr hike, 10kg pack, off road; steepest hills available, jog downhill; jog for up to 30m, 5m hike on flat
	7	Mon
Tue		am: 60m easy run; pm: 30-45m easy run
Wed		am: 60m swim/cycle/yoga; pm: 60m easy run with 10kg rucksack - focus on form not pace
Thu		90m easy run
Fri		am: 60m swim/cycle/yoga; pm: 45m hill run - easy, including 6x3m uphill, walking down to recover
Sat		60m run, include 5 strides of 20 seconds in the last 10 minutes
Sun		5hr hike, 10kg pack, off road; race nutrition; jog downhill; easy run last hour only
6		Mon
	Tue	am: 60m easy run; pm: 30-45m easy run
	Wed	am: 60m swim/cycle/yoga; pm: 60m easy run, include 5x 20s strides
	Thu	90m easy run
	Fri	am: 60m swim/cycle/yoga; pm: 45m easy run
	Sat	2hr hike, 10kg pack, off road; steepest hills available, hike up, sustainable easy run the rest
	Sun	2hr hike, 10kg pack, off road; steepest hills available, hike up, sustainable easy run the rest
	5	Mon
Tue		45m easy run - include 5x 20s strides in the last 10 minutes
Wed		am: 30-60m swim/cycle/yoga; pm: 45m easy run
Thu		45m easy run
Fri		am: 30-60m swim/cycle/yoga; pm: 30m easy run with 10kg rucksack
Sat		30m easy run
Sun		1 hr hike, wearing an 10kg rucksack, not on tarmac, moving purposefully without running

Training Plan: 4 Weeks: Psychological Preparation and Taper

Use the long hikes to think about the race ahead – early starts, making breakfast, packing kit, and heading out. Retain your stretching routine, and consider how you will make sure you refuel and rehydrate after each day to recover for the day to come. Look forward to having a fantastic race, moving purposefully every day through some of the most beautiful places on the planet. Enjoy!

Training Focus

Body: enjoy the taper – keep eating and drinking healthily to minimise stress on the body

Mind: look back at your training: take confidence in your new fitness and readiness for the race ahead

Craft: minimise travel stress: pack early, double check gear, stay hydrated and healthy while travelling

Session		Notes
4	Mon	Rest
	Tue	am: 60m easy run; pm: 30-45m easy run
	Wed	am: 60m swim/cycle/yoga; pm: 60m easy run with 10kg rucksack
	Thu	90m easy run
	Fri	am: 60m swim/cycle/yoga; pm: 45m intervals - easy run, with 8 sets of 1m at fast pace, 1m recovery
	Sat	75m run, include 5 strides of 20 seconds in the last 10 minutes
	Sun	2hr hike, 10kg pack, off road; steepest hills available, hike up, sustainable easy run the rest
	3	Mon
Tue		am: 60m easy run; pm: 30-45m easy run
Wed		60m interval run; easy, with 4x 5m tempo pace with 2m recovery between them
Thu		am: 60m easy run; pm: 30-45m easy run
Fri		am: 60m swim/cycle/yoga; pm: 45m easy run
Sat		2hr hike, 10kg pack, off road; steepest hills available, hike up, sustainable easy run the rest
Sun		6hr hike, 10kg pack, off road; race nutrition; hike first 4 hours, easy run last 2 hours only
2		Mon
	Tue	60m easy run
	Wed	60m hike, 10kg, not on tarmac; no running
	Thu	45m run, gentle pace but over some hills
	Fri	60m non load bearing exercise (swimming, cycling, yoga, etc)
	Sat	30m run, gentle and conversational pace
	Sun	1hr hike, 10kg, not on tarmac; hike up, jog down; easy run efforts for no more than 4m of every 5m
	1	Mon
Tue		30m run, gentle pace, off tarmac
Wed		45m interval run; easy with 3x 3m tempo with 2m recoveries
Thu		30m run, gentle pace
Fri		Rest
Sat		Race!
Sun		Race!