



STRONGER ENDURANCE. SHARPER FOCUS. UNSTOPPABLE YOU.

APEX RUN STRONG

RUNNING & CONDITIONING

APEX SPORTS & FITNESS • OFFICIAL TRAINING SYSTEM



TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	3
Explanations	4
Warm-Up Protocol	5
Active Recovery Menu	6
Strength Sessions	7
Week One	8
Week Two	9
Week Three	10
Week Four	11
Week Five	12
Week Six	13
Week Seven	14
Week Eight	15
Week Nine	16
Week Ten	17
Conclusion — What's Next	18
Safety & Disclaimer	18

Introduction

MISSION: Build a bigger engine, faster legs, and a body that doesn't break down.

A 10-week polarized running plan: most of your mileage is genuinely easy, and two days per week are genuinely hard. That split — not daily medium-effort grinding — is how runners at every level improve fastest. Two short strength sessions protect your tendons and joints and make every stride more economical.

What You'll Gain

- A measurably faster 5K–10K and a long run that climbs from 4 km to 15 km
- Interval and tempo speed built progressively, not recklessly
- Running-specific strength that cuts injury risk
- Pacing discipline — the skill that separates trained runners from joggers

LENGTH	DAYS / WEEK	SESSION TIME	LEVEL
10 Weeks	5 (3 runs + 2 hybrid)	30–70 min	Beginner–Intermediate

READ THIS FIRST

Stick to the programming as written before you customize it. If you miss a session, pick it up at your next opportunity — never stack two hard days together to “catch up,” and never add extra volume to tire yourself out. The plan is dosed deliberately; adding more usually slows your results.

Explanations & How to Read the Tables

RPE & RIR (How Hard Each Set Should Be)

Sets are prescribed by **RPE** (Rate of Perceived Exertion, 1–10) or **RIR** (Reps In Reserve). RPE 8 = you could have done about 2 more clean reps; RIR 2 means the same thing. On strong days you'll need more weight to hit the target; on tired days, less. That's autoregulation working — trust it.

Supersets

Exercises marked as a superset are performed back-to-back with no rest between them, then you rest after the pair. If your gym is too busy to hold two stations, run them as straight sets instead — finish all sets of one exercise, then move on. Don't let logistics derail the session.

Rest Periods

Rest periods are listed per exercise and **tighten as the weeks progress** — that's a deliberate conditioning stimulus. The exception is the main strength lifts: their rest stays long throughout, because cutting rest on heavy compounds turns a strength exercise into an endurance exercise and defeats its purpose.

Tempo

Perform every rep controlled: the lifting (concentric) portion can be explosive, but lower the weight slowly and under control. If you can't control the negative, the weight is too heavy.

The Weight Used Column

Every table ends with a blank **WEIGHT USED** column. Print the plan (or copy the layout into your notes) and log your top weight each session. Beating last week's number — by a rep or a small load increase — is the entire progression engine of this program.

Scaling

Every exercise can be scaled and doing so is not failure — it's precision. Common swaps: assisted or band pull-ups for strict pull-ups; split squats holding support for pistol squats; kettlebell deadlifts for barbell deadlifts; incline push-ups for dips. Keep the movement pattern, reduce the difficulty, progress over time.

Paces & The Talk Test

Easy runs: full-sentence conversation pace — if you can only gasp words, slow down. Tempo: “comfortably hard,” about the effort you could hold for an hour racing. Intervals: current 5K effort, controlled and repeatable. The last rep should look like the first.

Warm-Up Protocol

Warming up is compulsory. Every session begins with 5–10 minutes of low-intensity aerobic work (jog, bike, row, jump rope, or shadow work) until you've built a light sweat, followed by the dynamic circuit below. The goal is blood flow, joint lubrication, and rehearsing the day's movement patterns — not fatigue.

EXERCISE	REPS	PURPOSE
World's Greatest Stretch	5 / side	Hips, hamstrings, T-spine in one move
Deep Squat Hold + Reach	5 x 5 sec	Ankle & hip mobility, squat pattern
Leg Swings (front & side)	10 / leg	Dynamic hip range
Band Pull-Apart	15	Rear delts, shoulder health
Band Over-and-Back	10	Shoulder mobility — go slow, never force
Push-Up to Down-Dog	8	Shoulders, core, hamstrings
Dead Bug	8 / side	Core bracing pattern
Pogo Hops	20	Ankle stiffness, elastic priming

After the circuit, perform 2–3 ramping sets of the day's first main lift, starting with the empty bar and adding weight each set. You should reach your first working set warm, primed, and not tired.

Active Recovery Menu

Active recovery days are where adaptation happens. The aim is movement that speeds recovery and burns additional calories *without* adding meaningful fatigue. If you are constantly sore, you are not progressing — these sessions keep you fresh enough to hit the hard days hard. Pick **one** option per active recovery day.

Option A — Aerobic Restoration

Long, low-intensity work at a conversational pace (you can talk in full sentences or breathe through your nose throughout). Choose run, cycle, row, swim, or hike — ideally something that flushes the muscles you trained hardest this week.

LEVEL	DURATION
Beginner	20–30 minutes
Intermediate	40–60 minutes
Advanced	60–90 minutes

Option B — Mobility & Reset

20–30 minutes of unhurried mobility: foam rolling the day's tight spots, hip and shoulder openers, and 5 minutes of slow nasal breathing to finish. Best used the day after your heaviest session.

Option C — Mixed Modality

Pick three easy activities and rotate through them — for example bike / row / brisk walk. Beginner: 5 minutes each. Intermediate: 10 minutes each. Advanced: 15 minutes each. Effort stays easy throughout; variety keeps it interesting, not harder.

Option D — Loaded Walk (Ruck)

Load a sturdy backpack and walk at a brisk pace — never run under load. New to it: 20–35 lb for 30–45 minutes. Experienced: 45 lb+ for up to 60–90 minutes. Build weight or time, not both at once, and stop if your posture breaks down.

Strength Sessions A & B

Performed after the easy run (Session A, Monday) and after the tempo (Session B, Thursday). Short and consistent — durability, not soreness, is the goal.

STRENGTH A — LOWER FOCUS

EXERCISE	SETS	REPS	REST	WEIGHT USED
Goblet Squat	3	10	75s	
Single-Leg Romanian Deadlift	3	8 / side	75s	
Step-Up	3	8 / side	75s	
Standing Calf Raise	3	15	60s	
Side Plank	3	30 sec / side	45s	

STRENGTH B — POSTURE & CORE

EXERCISE	SETS	REPS	REST	WEIGHT USED
Hip Thrust or Glute Bridge	3	12	75s	
Dumbbell Row	3	10 / side	75s	
Reverse Lunge	3	8 / side	75s	
Seated Calf Raise	3	15–20	60s	
Plank + Dead Bug	3	40 sec + 8/side	45s	

Progression: add a small load when all sets feel controlled two weeks running. Log weights in the tracking column.

WEEK ONE

PHASE: BASE

Establish the rhythm. Every easy run truly easy.

DAY	SESSION	DETAILS	DONE / NOTES
Mon	Easy Run + Strength A	30–40 min conversational + Strength A	
Tue	Intervals	WU 10–15 min & drills; 6 x 400 m @ 5K effort — 90 s jog recovery; CD 10 min	
Wed	Recovery	Active Recovery menu — Option A or B	
Thu	Tempo + Strength B	WU 10 min; 15 min continuous comfortably hard; CD 10 min + Strength B	
Fri	Rest	Full rest or 20-min walk	
Sat	Long Run	4 km — easy, conversational throughout	
Sun	Rest / Optional	Walk, swim, or full rest	

WEEK TWO

PHASE: BASE

Same structure — nudge paces only if the talk test and last week's log say you're ready.

DAY	SESSION	DETAILS	DONE / NOTES
Mon	Easy Run + Strength A	30–40 min conversational + Strength A	
Tue	Intervals	WU 10–15 min & drills; 7 x 400 m @ 5K effort — 90 s jog; CD 10 min	
Wed	Recovery	Active Recovery menu — Option A or B	
Thu	Tempo + Strength B	WU 10 min; 15 min continuous comfortably hard; CD 10 min + Strength B	
Fri	Rest	Full rest or 20-min walk	
Sat	Long Run	5 km — easy, conversational throughout	
Sun	Rest / Optional	Walk, swim, or full rest	

WEEK THREE

PHASE: BASE

Same structure — nudge paces only if the talk test and last week's log say you're ready.

DAY	SESSION	DETAILS	DONE / NOTES
Mon	Easy Run + Strength A	30–40 min conversational + Strength A	
Tue	Intervals	WU 10–15 min & drills; 8 x 400 m @ 5K effort — 90 s jog; CD 10 min	
Wed	Recovery	Active Recovery menu — Option A or B	
Thu	Tempo + Strength B	WU 10 min; 20 min continuous comfortably hard; CD 10 min + Strength B	
Fri	Rest	Full rest or 20-min walk	
Sat	Long Run	6 km — easy, conversational throughout	
Sun	Rest / Optional	Walk, swim, or full rest	

WEEK FOUR

PHASE: BUILD

Reps lengthen. Hold the same effort, not a faster one.

DAY	SESSION	DETAILS	DONE / NOTES
Mon	Easy Run + Strength A	30–40 min conversational + Strength A	
Tue	Intervals	WU 10–15 min & drills; 5 x 600 m @ 5K effort — 2 min jog; CD 10 min	
Wed	Recovery	Active Recovery menu — Option A or B	
Thu	Tempo + Strength B	WU 10 min; 20 min continuous comfortably hard; CD 10 min + Strength B	
Fri	Rest	Full rest or 20-min walk	
Sat	Long Run	7 km — easy, conversational throughout	
Sun	Rest / Optional	Walk, swim, or full rest	

WEEK FIVE

PHASE: BUILD

Same structure — nudge paces only if the talk test and last week's log say you're ready.

DAY	SESSION	DETAILS	DONE / NOTES
Mon	Easy Run + Strength A	30–40 min conversational + Strength A	
Tue	Intervals	WU 10–15 min & drills; 6 x 600 m @ 5K effort — 2 min jog; CD 10 min	
Wed	Recovery	Active Recovery menu — Option A or B	
Thu	Tempo + Strength B	WU 10 min; 25 min continuous comfortably hard; CD 10 min + Strength B	
Fri	Rest	Full rest or 20-min walk	
Sat	Long Run	8 km — easy, conversational throughout	
Sun	Rest / Optional	Walk, swim, or full rest	

WEEK SIX

PHASE: BUILD

Same structure — nudge paces only if the talk test and last week's log say you're ready.

DAY	SESSION	DETAILS	DONE / NOTES
Mon	Easy Run + Strength A	30–40 min conversational + Strength A	
Tue	Intervals	WU 10–15 min & drills; 4 x 800 m @ 5K effort — 2–3 min jog; CD 10 min	
Wed	Recovery	Active Recovery menu — Option A or B	
Thu	Tempo + Strength B	WU 10 min; 25 min continuous comfortably hard; CD 10 min + Strength B	
Fri	Rest	Full rest or 20-min walk	
Sat	Long Run	10 km — easy, conversational throughout	
Sun	Rest / Optional	Walk, swim, or full rest	

WEEK SEVEN

PHASE: SHARPEN

Peak volume approaching — protect sleep and fueling.

DAY	SESSION	DETAILS	DONE / NOTES
Mon	Easy Run + Strength A	30–40 min conversational + Strength A	
Tue	Intervals	WU 10–15 min & drills; 5 x 800 m @ 5K effort — 2–3 min jog; CD 10 min	
Wed	Recovery	Active Recovery menu — Option A or B	
Thu	Tempo + Strength B	WU 10 min; 30 min continuous comfortably hard; CD 10 min + Strength B	
Fri	Rest	Full rest or 20-min walk	
Sat	Long Run	12 km — easy, conversational throughout	
Sun	Rest / Optional	Walk, swim, or full rest	

WEEK EIGHT

PHASE: SHARPEN

Same structure — nudge paces only if the talk test and last week's log say you're ready.

DAY	SESSION	DETAILS	DONE / NOTES
Mon	Easy Run + Strength A	30–40 min conversational + Strength A	
Tue	Intervals	WU 10–15 min & drills; 3 x 1000 m @ 5K effort — 3 min jog; CD 10 min	
Wed	Recovery	Active Recovery menu — Option A or B	
Thu	Tempo + Strength B	WU 10 min; 30 min continuous comfortably hard; CD 10 min + Strength B	
Fri	Rest	Full rest or 20-min walk	
Sat	Long Run	13 km — easy, conversational throughout	
Sun	Rest / Optional	Walk, swim, or full rest	

WEEK NINE

PHASE: SHARPEN

Biggest week. Next week we cut back and absorb it.

DAY	SESSION	DETAILS	DONE / NOTES
Mon	Easy Run + Strength A	30–40 min conversational + Strength A	
Tue	Intervals	WU 10–15 min & drills; 4 x 1000 m @ 5K effort — 3 min jog; CD 10 min	
Wed	Recovery	Active Recovery menu — Option A or B	
Thu	Tempo + Strength B	WU 10 min; 20 min continuous comfortably hard; CD 10 min + Strength B	
Fri	Rest	Full rest or 20-min walk	
Sat	Long Run	15 km — easy, conversational throughout	
Sun	Rest / Optional	Walk, swim, or full rest	

WEEK TEN

PHASE: TAPER

Volume down ~40%. Finish fresh; time-trial at the weekend if racing fitness is the goal.

DAY	SESSION	DETAILS	DONE / NOTES
Mon	Easy Run + Strength A	30–40 min conversational + Strength A	
Tue	Intervals	WU 10–15 min & drills; 4 x 400 m relaxed-fast strides; CD 10 min	
Wed	Recovery	Active Recovery menu — Option A or B	
Thu	Tempo + Strength B	WU 10 min; 15 min smooth comfortably hard; CD 10 min + Strength B	
Fri	Rest	Full rest or 20-min walk	
Sat	Long Run	8 km easy OR 5K time-trial — easy, conversational throughout	
Sun	Rest / Optional	Walk, swim, or full rest	

Conclusion — What's Next

Completing Apex Run Strong is the beginning, not the finish line. In the final week, retest your key markers and compare them to Week 1 — the numbers will tell you exactly what improved and what to target next.

Retest Checklist

- 5K time-trial vs. your Week 1 baseline (run one in Week 1 if you haven't)
- Long-run distance completed comfortably
- Resting heart rate trend across the block
- Strength loads on goblet squat and single-leg RDL

Take 3–5 easy days after your retest, then either run this program again at higher loads or rotate to another Apex program to develop a new quality. Strength, engine, and physique are built over years of consistent blocks — stack them.

STAY IN THE FIGHT

Questions, form checks, or exercise substitutions? Reach out through the Apex Sports & Fitness website and connect with other athletes running the same programs.

Safety, Recovery & Disclaimer

This program is a general training framework, not individualized medical advice. Consult your physician before starting, particularly if you have (or have a family history of) heart disease or high blood pressure, have experienced chest pain, smoke, are obese, or have a bone or joint problem that could be aggravated by exercise. Do not begin if your healthcare provider advises against it. If you feel faintness, dizziness, pain, or shortness of breath at any time, stop immediately. If you sustain an injury, seek medical advice before continuing. Use of the information in this program is solely at your own risk.

Recovery Rules

- **Sleep 7–9 hours.** It is the single most powerful recovery tool you have.
- **Watch your markers:** rising resting heart rate, poor sleep, low mood, and joint soreness that lingers all signal under-recovery.
- **Back off when** performance drops across multiple sessions — add food and sleep before adding work.
- **Deload weeks are mandatory.** They are programmed in; do not skip them or fill them with extra training.
- **Daily extras that cost nothing:** 10 minutes of stretching in the evening, foam rolling, walks, and time with people who recharge you. Mental recovery counts.

FUEL THE WORK

Training is half the equation. Pair this program with the **Apex Fuel System** nutrition framework to support performance, recovery, and body composition.