



**YOUR  
TRIATHLON**

**TRAINING  
GUIDE**

**WE ARE  
MACMILLAN.  
CANCER SUPPORT**



# THANKS SO MUCH

**Thank you for joining Team Macmillan. We think you're amazing for having the dedication and commitment to take part in this event.**

At the finish, the sense of achievement will be huge, knowing that you've not only completed your challenge but you've helped people affected by cancer too. And yet completing a triathlon is no mean feat, so you'll need to put in some serious training. But don't worry – we're here to guide you in the right direction.



# GET STARTED

Before starting out it's a good idea to see your doctor for a medical or health assessment, particularly if you smoke, you're overweight or there's a history of heart disease in your family.

#### **Slow and steady wins the training race**

The length and duration of your first training session depends on how fit you are. The best approach is to start slowly and build up over time. Your muscles and joints will take a while to get used to the activity so by not overdoing it in the first few days you'll reduce your risk of injury and enjoy your training experience more.

Whatever your reason for taking part in your challenge event, it's important to set yourself goals. This will give you something to aim for, which will keep you motivated. And don't forget that every step you take will help us help someone affected by cancer.

#### **Eat well**

Diet will be important during training, so it's worth identifying your nutritional goals and coming up with a healthy eating plan. This will tone your muscles, improve your health and ensure your body has enough energy to keep up the extra exercise.

**i** Make sure you're eating a good mix of carbohydrates and stay well hydrated. You may also find eating a carbohydrate snack two to three hours before you train will help keep your energy levels topped up.

# TEAM MACMILLAN TRAINING SCHEDULE



The sooner you start training the better. We've produced two 10-week schedules but if you've time for more training, spread it out over a longer period. If you're running a different distance to the Sprint or Olympic, the schedules can be easily adapted.

You can also visit our online training zone for a more training advice. Visit [www.tzones.realbuzz.com/macmillan](http://www.tzones.realbuzz.com/macmillan)



Turn over for your Sprint triathlon training guide.

# SPRINT TRIATHLON TRAINING GUIDE

## Week 1

### Monday (run and flexibility)

Easy jog, target between 5–10 minutes. Finish with leg stretches. **Don't worry about pace, look to complete the session**

### Tuesday (swim)

Target 5 lengths of 25 metres, ideally completed non-stop.

### Wednesday (bike)

20 minutes, easy effort, just spinning the pedals.

### Thursday Rest

**Complete rest day, don't be tempted to cram in an extra session.**

### Friday (swim)

Same as Tuesday.

### Saturday Rest

### Sunday (run and flexibility)

10 minutes very slow pace run.

## Week 2

### Monday Rest

**Recovery day after Sunday's longer run.**

### Tuesday (swim)

Target 5 lengths of 25 metres, ideally completed non-stop.

**Focus on stretching out with a long stroke.**

### Wednesday (run and flexibility)

10 minutes jogging, ideally continuous.

### Thursday (swim)

20 minutes over a flat course.

### Friday (swim)

Easy, recovery swim, focusing on a strong leg kick.

### Saturday Rest

### Sunday (run and flexibility)

10 minutes continuous jog/run. Try and complete it non-stop, irrespective of pace.

## Week 3

### Monday (bike)

20 minutes even pace.

### Tuesday (swim)

Move up to completing 200 metres, with recovery breaks if necessary.

**Concentrate on technique, not pace.**

### Wednesday Rest

### Thursday (run)

10 minutes continuous jogging.

### Friday (swim)

Same as Tuesday, ideally with no recovery breaks.

### Saturday Rest

### Sunday (run)

Same as Tuesday, ideally with no recovery breaks.

## Week 4

### Monday (bike)

15 minutes easy cycle, focus on spinning the legs, not pushing hard.

**Easy bike session doubles up as a recovery from yesterday's longer run.**

### Tuesday (swim)

Target 250 metres, take recovery breaks if necessary.

### Wednesday Rest

**Sole rest day this week, so avoid any temptation to do extra training or exercise.**

### Thursday (run and flexibility)

15 minutes slow pace run.

### Friday (bike)

20 minutes cycle.

### Saturday (swim)

Same as Tuesday.

### Sunday (run and flexibility)

15 minutes slow pace run. **First week with 2 sessions each for swimming, cycling and running.**

## Week 5

### Monday (swim)

Target 300 metres with rest breaks as you feel necessary.

### Tuesday Rest

**Complete rest day.**

### Wednesday (run and flexibility)

15 minutes continuous run.

### Thursday (bike)

25 minutes continuous cycle. **Stepping up cycling.**

### Friday (swim)

Same as Monday, focusing on a relaxed, efficient stroke.

### Saturday Rest

**Rest day before bigger effort on run session tomorrow.**

### Sunday (run and flexibility)

15–20 minutes very easy pace run/jog. **Stepping up running.**

## Week 6

### Monday (swim)

Target 400 metres with recovery breaks as needed.

**Week 6 peaks across all three disciplines, before recovery week 7.**

### Tuesday (bike)

25 minutes continuous cycle.

### Wednesday (run and flexibility)

15–20 minutes continuous run.

### Thursday Rest

### Friday (bike)

30 minutes cycle session, easy pace throughout. **Longest cycle to date.**

### Saturday (swim)

Same as Monday.

### Sunday (run and flexibility)

20 minutes continuous run/jog. **Longest run to date.**

## Week 7

### Monday Rest

Week 7 focuses on recovery and easier sessions before 2nd build-up.

### Tuesday (swim)

Easy 15 minutes relaxed swim with focus on technique.

### Wednesday (run and flexibility)

15 minutes continuous run.

### Thursday (bike)

25 minutes cycle.

### Friday (swim)

Same as Tuesday.

### Saturday (run and flexibility)

15–20 minutes easy run.

Avoid temptation to add in more training.

Rest should be rest!

### Sunday Rest

Reduced sessions and volume in week 7 before next build-up.

## Week 8

### Monday (run and flexibility)

25 minutes very easy pace run. You should be feeling fresh after week 7 recovery and rest day yesterday.

### Tuesday (swim)

Target 500 metres, aiming for continuous swimming.

### Wednesday Rest

### Thursday (bike)

45–50 minutes cycle.

Make sure you spin the legs in an easy gear for the last 5 minutes to keep your legs fresh for tomorrow.

### Friday (run and flexibility)

Same as Monday.

### Saturday (swim)

Same as Tuesday but try and complete the distance non-stop.

### Sunday (bike)

Long, easy, relaxed cycle ride, 50 minutes. Moving up across all disciplines this week.

## Week 9

### Monday (swim)

600 metres is the target. Try and minimise any recovery breaks.

### Tuesday (run and flexibility)

25–30 minutes run, select a flat route.

### Wednesday (bike)

Repeat last Sunday's 50 minute ride.

### Thursday Rest

### Friday (run and flexibility)

Same as Tuesday, looking to consolidate rather than improve on speed or distance.

### Saturday (bike)

45 minutes cycle.

Choose a different route, ideally with a few hills for interest.

### Sunday (swim)

Target 600–700 metres. Big swimming week this week, aim for continuous swimming without rest breaks.

## Week 10

### Monday (bike)

60 minutes cycle. 2nd peak week for training volumes.

### Tuesday (run and flexibility)

30 minutes run.

### Wednesday Rest

Complete rest day.

### Thursday (swim)

750 metres.

Take recovery breaks if needed but try and minimise them.

### Friday (run and flexibility)

Same as Tuesday, a little faster if possible.

### Saturday (bike)

50 minutes cycle, easy and relaxed.

Keep the intensity low ready for swim session tomorrow.

### Sunday (swim)

Same as Thursday. Go all out to complete the swim without breaks.

## Week 11

### Monday Rest

Complete rest day after maximum week in week 10.

### Tuesday (run and flexibility)

25 minutes run.

### Wednesday (swim)

600–700 metres non-stop swim.

### Thursday (bike)

50 minutes cycle, comfortable speed.

### Friday (swim)

Repeat Wed session, with technique focus throughout.

### Saturday Rest

Check bike over for roadworthiness

### Sunday (bike and run)

45 minutes easy cycle, followed by 20 minutes easy run. Keep the intensity low throughout and practice the transition from bike to run.

## Week 12

### Monday Rest

### Tuesday (swim)

Final swim session, 500 metres comfortable. Exit the pool feeling like you could do a lot more.

### Wednesday (bike)

Final bike session, 40 minutes with plenty of spinning.

### Thursday Rest

### Friday (run and flexibility)

20 minutes light jog/run. As with the swim, finish the run feeling like you could do more.

### Saturday Rest

Optional light flexibility session if you wish.

### Sunday

Race day, enjoy the experience! Stay relaxed during the swim and ease into the race at your pace.



Turn over for your Olympic triathlon training guide.

# OLYMPIC TRIATHLON TRAINING GUIDE

## Week 1

**Monday (swim)**  
Easy 500 metres.

**Tuesday (bike)**  
40 minutes, steady.

**Wednesday** Rest  
2 rest days in week 1  
as your body gears up.

**Thursday (run and flexibility)**  
30 minutes steady pace.

**Friday (swim)**  
Same as Monday.

**Saturday** Rest

**Sunday (bike)**  
Longer ride, 50 minutes.  
Just take it at a steady pace.

## Week 2

**Monday** Rest  
Recovery day after Sunday's  
longer run.

**Tuesday (swim)**  
Minimum 500 metres,  
aim for 600.

**Wednesday**  
(run and flexibility)  
40 minutes steady.  
Include stretches at the end.

**Thursday (bike)**  
45 minutes steady pace.

**Friday** Rest

**Saturday (run and flexibility)**  
30–40 minutes steady.

**Sunday (bike)**  
60 minutes steady pace.

## Week 3

**Monday (run and flexibility)**  
15 minutes very easy jog just  
to warm up and good all round  
flexibility session afterwards.

**Tuesday (swim)**  
Minimum 600 metres steady.

**Wednesday (bike)**  
45–60 minutes steady.

**Thursday** Rest  
Single rest day this  
week as sessions build.

**Friday (swim)**  
750 metres taken very easy.  
Swim volume builds.

**Saturday (bike)**  
Same as Wednesday.

**Sunday (run)**  
45 minutes taken very easy.  
Week 3 is the first week  
with each discipline  
on consecutive days.

## Week 4

**Monday** Rest  
Try and minimise any  
non-training activities  
to get the full benefit  
from the rest day.

**Tuesday (swim)**  
750 metres easy.

**Wednesday (bike)**  
60 minutes steady.

**Thursday (run)**  
45–60 minutes steady.

**Friday (run and flexibility)**  
15 minutes very easy jog just  
to warm up and good all round  
flexibility session afterwards.

**Saturday (swim)**  
Target 1000 metres taken  
very easily.  
Big swim push this week.

**Sunday (bike)**  
60 minutes steady.  
Avoid pushing after  
yesterday's bigger swim.

## Week 5

**Monday (run and flexibility)**  
25 minutes easy jog and  
good all round flexibility  
session afterwards.

**Tuesday (swim)**  
750 metres steady.

**Wednesday** Rest  
Complete day off – don't  
be tempted to do more.

**Thursday (swim)**  
Same as last Saturday's 1000  
metre session.

**Friday (bike)**  
60 minutes steady.

**Saturday** Rest

**Sunday (run and flexibility)**  
45 minutes steady and focus  
on leg stretches afterwards.

## Week 6

**Monday (bike)**  
70 minutes easy.

**Tuesday (run and flexibility)**  
30 minutes brisk.

**Wednesday (swim)**  
1000 metres easy.

**Thursday (bike)**  
Steady 60 minutes.  
2nd of 3 bike outings  
this week.

**Friday (swim)**  
1200 metres very easy.  
Pushing up on the swim.

**Saturday** Rest  
Do nothing! Big day tomorrow

**Sunday (Brick – bike and run)**  
45 minutes steady bike  
immediately followed  
by 30 minutes steady run.  
First brick session.  
Take the bike steady  
and ease into the run.

### Week 7

#### Monday (bike and flexibility)

20 minutes very easy just turning the legs over. Good leg stretch afterwards.

#### Tuesday (swim)

1000–1200 metres.

If you feel fresh, go for the longer distance, if a little tired, aim for the shorter one.

#### Wednesday (run)

50 minutes easy pace.

#### Thursday (bike)

25 minutes cycle.

#### Friday (swim)

Same as Tuesday, targeting the longer distance if possible.

#### Saturday Rest

#### Sunday (Brick – bike, run and flexibility)

45 minutes steady bike immediately followed by 40 minutes steady run.

### Week 8

#### Monday (run and flexibility)

Easy 20 minutes and leg stretches.

#### Tuesday (swim)

1200 metres steady.

#### Wednesday (bike)

Easy 60–70 minutes.

Try to push up on the bike.

#### Thursday Rest

Total rest.

#### Friday (run)

50 minutes easy/steady.

#### Saturday Rest

#### Sunday (Brick – swim and bike)

1000 metres swim steady immediately followed by 45 minutes bike.

First swim and bike brick session. Take the start of the bike section at an easy pace.

### Week 9

#### Monday (run and flexibility)

40 minutes taken very easy.

Focus on upper body stretches today.

#### Tuesday (swim)

1200 metres steady.

#### Wednesday (bike)

60–70 minutes steady.

#### Thursday (run)

50 minutes steady.

#### Friday Rest

#### Saturday (bike)

Very easy 15 minutes, just turning the legs over.

Keep the pace down, save the effort for tomorrow.

#### Sunday (run)

10K race.

Prepare exactly as if it was your real race day.

### Week 10

#### Monday (swim and flexibility)

1200 metres starting very slowly and building back to a steady pace after 600 metres.

Stretch legs afterwards.

#### Tuesday (run)

45 minutes brisk.

Step the pace up for this session.

#### Wednesday (bike)

60 minutes steady.

#### Thursday (run)

45 minutes steady.

Keep the pace steady, 3 runs this week.

#### Friday Rest

#### Saturday (swim)

1200–1400 metres easy pace.

Longest swim session.

#### Sunday (Brick – run and bike)

60 minutes steady bike immediately followed by 40 minutes steady run.

### Week 11

#### Monday Rest

#### Tuesday (swim and flexibility)

500 metres easy.

Avoid the temptation to do more.

#### Wednesday (run)

Steady 45 minutes.

#### Thursday Rest

#### Friday (swim)

Steady 1000–1200 metres.

#### Saturday (run)

Easy 45 minutes.

#### Sunday (bike)

Easy 50 minutes.

### Week 12

#### Monday (swim)

800 metres easy.

#### Tuesday (bike)

30–40 minutes steady.

#### Wednesday Rest

#### Thursday (run and flexibility)

20 minutes jog, spend the extra time on stretching.

#### Friday (run)

20 minutes light jog/run.

#### Saturday (bike)

Very easy 15 minutes, just turning the legs over.

Keep the pace down, save the effort for tomorrow.

#### Sunday

Race day.

Relax and enjoy the experience.



# INJURY PREVENTION TIPS

After weeks of training you may start to feel a few twinges and niggles. But don't worry this can be perfectly normal as you start to work harder. Here are some tips to help keep injuries to a minimum.

## **Equip yourself**

You will need a variety of equipment for your triathlon. This includes a pair of good-quality running trainers, a wetsuit and a bike. Make sure that everything you buy is suitable for your event and you incorporate them into your training. We recommend that you buy your trainers at a specialist running store and have your bike fitted at a specialist cycling store.

## **Warm up and stretch**

Inflexibility is one of the main reasons we get injuries and this can increase as our bodies become tired. So it's vital to include a warm up and regular stretching as part of your training programme. And don't forget – only stretch after your muscles have warmed up.

## **Have enough rest**

Rest is as important as training. It's vital that you allow your body adequate time to recover, particularly from hard sessions. Don't even consider training with injuries or if you're feeling ill or rundown as this may only delay recovery.

## **Treat yourself to a sports massage**

A sports massage can help speed up recovery from long runs and is an essential component of injury management – as well as making you feel great. Most physiotherapists provide sports massage. Or find the details of qualified sports masseurs or sports therapists in your area in gyms, leisure centres or running stores.

## **Strengthen up**

Many training injuries are caused by abnormal biomechanics and muscle imbalances, most of which are made worse by running. Doing regular core and lower-limb strengthening may help lessen the risk of injury and should be incorporated into your training programme early on. Ask physiotherapists, sports masseurs and gym instructors to show you exercises that will suit you.

## **Never train with an injury**

Most aches and pains can be treated with ice and rest. But if your pain doesn't subside or gets worse, seek the advice of a qualified physio or sports therapist before you start training again.

## **Be safe**

It's important to stay safe during training, so always follow the rules. When cycling, wear a helmet even if you're not on the road, and wear a wetsuit in open water. You'll also need to follow these safety rules during your race so it's better to adopt them during in training.



# ANY TECHNICAL QUESTIONS?

## **Why do I need to warm up before I train?**

You need to warm up before any physical activity so that you prevent muscle tears, strains and pulls. Warming up increases breathing and heart rate, leading to increased blood flow to the working muscles. As your body temperature rises, muscles, tendons and ligaments become more pliable and ready for the stretching and exercise which follows. A decent warm-up should last around 8–12 minutes. For running, this could consist of a slow jog followed by more jogging at a gradually increased intensity.

## **Why should I stretch and what should I do?**

Once you've warmed up, it's important to stretch. This is to give yourself even more protection against pulls, strains and tears, as well as helping to prevent stiffness after your run. Muscles are like metal – bend them when cold and they're likely to crack or break; warm them up and they're much more pliable.

You should stretch all the major muscle groups, particularly the big muscle groups of the legs. These are: the quadriceps (front of the upper leg); the hamstrings (back of the upper leg); the calves (back of lower leg); the peroneus (side and front of lower leg); and the groin (inside of upper leg and buttocks). Stretches should be static and last for around 8–12 seconds each side. Avoid ballistic stretching or bouncing as this can lead to injury.

## **Why do I need to do a cooldown after my training and what should I do?**

Cooling down and stretching after a run will help reduce muscle stiffness and increase the rate of recovery. Cooling down helps to remove accumulated bi-products such as lactic acid and carbon

dioxide that can build up during a run. Your cool-down should consist of a very slow jog for five minutes followed by a three-minute walk and a repeat of your stretches.

## **Why do I need to vary my speed when training?**

Doing all your training at the same pace will mean you'll be able to complete the race. However, if you're aiming for a certain finishing time, you'll need to train at higher intensities than your usual pace. This will improve the capacities of your muscles, energy systems, oxygen transport and your heart, all enabling you to go faster. Speed sessions improve your body's endurance by enabling you to store more energy, increasing your lactate toleration and allowing you to run, cycle or swim for longer.

## **Why should I incorporate transitions into my training?**

It's important to mix up your training, for example go for a short run after a long bike ride. This will help to train your muscles to adapt to the different disciplines. It's common to experience 'jelly legs' after you get off your bike and start running but incorporating transitions into your training will help strengthen your muscles in preparation.

No matter how strong you are at each discipline, precious time can be lost in transitions, especially when taking off your wetsuit. Practise in advance and develop a routine so you don't waste valuable minutes. We'd even recommend trying to take off your wetsuit in the shower.

## **What is the Wall and will I hit it?**

When a runner hits the wall it means they've exhausted their body's supply of fuel, namely carbohydrate. When this runs out, your body finds it harder to release energy and has to burn fat. This is difficult to break down and takes longer to convert into energy, often forcing runners to stop and wait for the body to convert more fat into energy. Stave off the dreaded wall by increasing your body's capacity to store energy and its ability to burn fat more efficiently. You can achieve this with a combination of high-mileage runs and highintensity training.

# WHAT YOU NEED TO ACHIEVE



Taking on three different disciplines does mean a varied equipment list. Triathlon magazines and websites are full of technical must haves but you don't need everything or the most expensive equipment to train efficiently for a triathlon.

## **Must haves:**

### **Bike and safety helmet**

You will need a road worthy bike to compete in a triathlon but it doesn't have to be a road bike. If you don't own your own bike and don't wish to buy one then you can hire a bike for a short term period. Or why not borrow a friend's bike? You will be required to wear a helmet in your event and we strongly recommend you wear one in your training, it's important to always be safe.

### **Wetsuit and goggles**

Unless your event is somewhere hot then it is likely you will be required to wear a wetsuit for an open water swim. There are wetsuits available to suit all budgets including ex rental suits which are sold at a great bargain. Alternatively you can hire a wetsuit for a short term period if you don't wish to buy.

### **Running trainers**

A good quality pair of running trainers is a must. We recommend going to your nearest running shoe retailer and have a gait test, this will help give an indication of the best type of trainer for your running style.

There are many other handy items that are worthwhile to make your triathlon experience easier and a bit more comfortable such as sunglasses, puncture repair kit, padded cycling shorts or seat pad, water bottle, tri suit and a tri belt.

Visit our online triathlon training zone for recommended triathlon stockists and other desired triathlon items.

[www.tzones.realbuzz.com/macmillan](http://www.tzones.realbuzz.com/macmillan)

## Enjoy yourself

You've signed up to take part in an incredible event so make the most of the experience. Enjoy running, swimming and cycling in the great outdoors, and know that you're helping to change lives as you do it. And, if you start losing motivation or finding training tough, just take a deep breath and remember this: we couldn't do what we do without you.

## More support?

If you have any more questions about training for your triathlon, jog over to [macmillan.org.uk/triathlon](https://macmillan.org.uk/triathlon) or email us at [triathlon@macmillan.org.uk](mailto:triathlon@macmillan.org.uk)

If you have any questions about cancer or if you'd like to talk about what you're going through, please give our support line a call on **0808 808 00 00** (Monday – Friday, 9am – 8pm). Or visit us at [macmillan.org.uk](https://macmillan.org.uk)



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