

# 4-WEEK RUNNING PLAN WALK TO RUN



Are you a walker looking to step up to running? This four-week plan designed by Weight Watchers programme director and resident exercise scientist Martha Lourey-Bird is the ideal way to start

## MEET YOUR TRAINER MARTHA LOUREY-BIRD

Successful athlete Martha has been involved in the fitness industry for two decades. She passionately believes exercise is for everyone, whatever your fitness level and no matter how busy your routine.

**INTENSITY** Intermediate  
**DURATION** 4 weeks  
**AVG. WORKOUT** 30 minutes

## WHO IS THIS PLAN FOR?

This programme is designed for people who can comfortably walk for 30 minutes at a brisk pace at least three days per week. Running is a great way to get a cardio workout and really give your weight loss a boost. The beauty of it is that just about anybody can give running a go, even if you've never tried it before. Maybe you do regular walking and want to step it up. Combine it with healthy food choices and you'll get great results.

## WHAT TO EXPECT

By the end of this four-week plan you'll be running for 30 minutes. There are also some resistance and stretch days, and some own choice days to ensure variety and a whole-body plan that gets results.

## WALK TO RUN: *plan overview*

	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat	Sun
Week one	30 min walk including 1 x 1-3 min run	Resistance and stretch	30 min walk including 3 x 1-3 min run	Optional rest day	30 min walk including 1 x 3-5 min run	Rest day or own choice of activity	30 min walk including 3 x 3-5 min run
Week two	Resistance and stretch	30 min walk including 1 x 5-10 min run	Optional rest day	30 min walk including 1 x 10 min run	Resistance and stretch	30 min walk including 1 x 10-15 min run	Rest day or own choice of activity
Week three	15 min walk 15 min run	Resistance and stretch	15 min walk 15 min run	Resistance and stretch	10 min walk 20 min run	Rest day or own choice of activity	10 min walk 20 min run
Week four	Resistance and stretch	5 min walk 25 min run	Optional rest day	5 min walk 25 min run	Resistance and stretch	30 min run	Own choice of activity

## WEEK ONE

### MONDAY

Welcome to day one of your walk to run plan. This week is all about introducing you to running through small bouts. Walk for 30 minutes, adding in a 1-3 minute burst of continuous running. The walk should be brisk, ie moderate-to-high intensity.

**TIP:** For your run burst, choose a landmark in the distance or a destination you know will take you 1-3 minutes to get to. That way you have a goal to run towards.

### TUESDAY

Today is a resistance and stretch day. Do some resistance training like free weights or body weight training. Do some stretch-based activity like yoga or pilates. You can tack the stretch session onto the end of your resistance training workout if convenient.

### WEDNESDAY

Get set for some more running bursts today. Walk for 30 minutes, adding in three 1-3 minute bursts of continuous running. The walk should be brisk.

### THURSDAY

Today is an optional rest day. Take the day off if you need it. But if you're keen

for more try something different, or any activity you enjoy.

### FRIDAY

Walk for 30 minutes, adding in one 3-5 minute burst of continuous running. The walk should be brisk, ie moderate-to-high intensity.

**TIP:** See if you can cover more distance in 30 minutes than you did at the start of the week. Do the same route and aim to add a little more.

### SATURDAY

Today is either a rest day or a day to do your own choice of activity, like a gym class. Remember 'rest' just means no planned training, so don't forget to keep your incidental exercise up by staying on your feet, walking places or enjoying a team sport or a family bike ride.

### SUNDAY

It's the end of week one and time to up the ante again. Walk for 30 minutes, adding in three 3-5 minute bursts of continuous running. The walk should be brisk, ie moderate-to-high intensity.

**TIP:** Reward your tired feet with a foot spa or new pair of running socks to celebrate your achievement. You're getting fitter!

## BEFORE YOU START

Get clearance from your GP before starting if you haven't exercised in a long time, are very overweight or have an existing medical condition.

## WARM UP AND COOL DOWN

Warm up for 5 minutes before every run by starting off at a slower pace or lighter intensity. To cool down after the session, do a range of static stretches. Whether you're a keen runner or a beginner, stretching needs to be a part of your routine every time you run. Remember to breathe deeply while you stretch, and keep still during each hold. Stretch to the point of mild discomfort only. Start with a 12-15 second stretch. Over time increase to 15-30 seconds.





### What we mean by...

**Low intensity:** No hard breathing, you're able to talk and sing easily.

**Moderate intensity:** Puffing slightly, you're able to have a conversation, but not sing.

**High intensity:** You're huffing and puffing, and only able to talk briefly.

## WEEK THREE

### MONDAY

Welcome to week three! You should be feeling more like a runner now and ready for some more continuous running. Walk for 15 minutes then run for 15 minutes continuously. The walk should be brisk, ie moderate-to-high intensity.

**TIP:** If you want more of a challenge, try adding in speed bursts between every second street corner, or between alternating lamp posts or telegraph poles.

### TUESDAY

Today is a resistance and stretch day.

### WEDNESDAY

Do a repeat of day one of this week. See if you can go further, or if you feel any better. Walk for 15 minutes then run for 15 minutes continuously. The walk should be brisk.

**TIP:** Time for a change of scenery! Plot a new route or add some different terrain into your session today.

**TIP:** It's nearly the end of week two. Plan a reward to celebrate the halfway mark. Grab a coffee with a friend or buy something that makes you feel like a runner, such as a water bottle.

### SUNDAY

Either rest or do your own choice of activity, like a gym class. Remember to keep up your incidental exercise.

**TIP:** Don't forget your reward! Rewards keep you motivated and give you something to look forward to. The reward might be the feeling of accomplishment for running further than you ever have before.

## WEEK TWO

### MONDAY

Today is a resistance and stretch day.

### TUESDAY

Today we're going to run for a bit longer. Walk for 30 minutes, adding in a 5-10 minute burst of continuous running. The walk should be brisk, ie moderate-to-high intensity.

### WEDNESDAY

Today is an optional rest day.

### THURSDAY

It's time to start the transition into becoming a runner! Walk for 30 minutes, adding in a 10-minute burst of continuous running. A good option is to walk for 10 minutes, run for 10 minutes, then walk for 10 minutes. Walk briskly.

### FRIDAY

Today is a resistance and stretch day.

### SATURDAY

Walk for 30 minutes, adding in a 10-15 minute burst of continuous running. The walk should be brisk.



### THURSDAY

Today is a resistance and stretch day.

### FRIDAY

You're getting closer to that 30-minute run! Walk for 10 minutes then run for 20 minutes continuously. The walk should be moderate-to-high intensity.

**TIP:** Try to find your pace for the run. It should be a rhythm you can fall into and continue for the 20 minutes. If you have energy left towards the end, pick up the pace and finish strongly.

### SATURDAY

Today is either a rest day or a day to do your own choice of activity, like joining a gym class. Remember to keep up your incidental exercise.

### SUNDAY

It's the final day of week three and you should be feeling fitter than ever! Walk for 10 minutes then run for 20 minutes continuously. The walk should be moderate-to-high intensity.

**TIP:** Finish the week big! See if you can cover more distance in the same time today. Focus on how good you're feeling. It'll motivate you for next week.

PHOTOGRAPHY GETTY IMAGES



## WEEK FOUR

### MONDAY

Welcome to week four. By the end of this week you'll be running for 30 minutes without stopping. Today is a resistance and stretch day.

### TUESDAY

We're adding some more run time. Walk for 5 minutes then run for 25 minutes continuously. The walk should be moderate to high intensity.

**TIP:** If you have some fuel in the tank today, try adding in a hill or a set of stairs to create some variety and intensity. These obstacles can make all the difference in improving your fitness.

### WEDNESDAY

Today is an optional rest day. Take the day off if you need it. But if you're keen for more, try something different, or any activity you enjoy.

### THURSDAY

Nearly there! Today we do another 25-minute run. Walk for 5 minutes then run for 25 minutes continuously. The walk should be moderate-to-high intensity.

**TIP:** Add some speed play with

music. Alternate your speed between songs by going a little faster every second track.

### FRIDAY

Today is a resistance and stretch day.

### SATURDAY

It's day six and time to hit the final run of the week. And that means a full 30-minute run – it's goal time! Run for 30 minutes continuously.

**TIP:** Keep a steady pace for this run. See how you go and start adding in speed bursts and terrain for future runs once you have the distance down pat.

### SUNDAY

Today is the day to do your own choice of activity, like joining a gym class, doing a sport, or anything else that takes your fancy. You could even go for another run now you're a bona fide runner.

**TIP:** Don't forget it's reward day! You've finished the walk-to-run plan and that should be celebrated. If you like being a 'runner' then you might like to enter a 5km running event, or try a 10km run plan. ☺