

12 Week Long Course Swimrun Training Plan

Who's this training plan for?

This training plan is for those who have completed a short distance swimrun and are ready to try a longer race, or for those with experience in long endurance racing and are interested in taking on a challenge for their first swimrun. Ideally before beginning this plan, you are able to run 8 miles and swim 2000 yards continuously and comfortably. This training plan should prepare you for Long Course distances, 20-30 miles total with finish times between 6-8 hours. See suggestions below on how to tailor your endurance workouts depending on the overall distribution of running and swimming miles in your target event.

How do I use this training plan?

This training plan is designed to be flexible for your unique schedule. Each week you should complete approximately 2-3 runs, 2-3 swims, 1 swimrun, and 1-2 strength and agility sessions. Some days will have 2 workouts. We encourage generally alternating run days and swim days in order to rest certain muscles while working others, completing your swimrun workout and long run on consecutive days to build endurance, and doing at least 50% of your runs on trail. Rest *at least* 1 day every 1-2 weeks. Check out the [Train](#) page for videos on swimrun-specific exercises.

*The length and build rate of your long workouts in the second half of the program will depend on the amount of running and swimming in your target event. Aim for roughly 10-15% volume increase weekly, with your longest workouts three weeks before the race. Your longest run and swim workouts should reflect 80% of the total distances you'll do on race day in each discipline, with terrain that mimics what you will run at target event. Pull as indicated in the swim workouts if planning on using a pull buoy; otherwise, swim or kick depending on your race plan.

**Your longest back to back long run and training swimrun should take a total of *at least* 100% of your target finish time. (If target finish time is 8 hours, two days of back to back long workouts should equal at least 8 hours.) There is significant psychological edge to be gained from training on tired arms and legs to simulate the physical and mental fatigue of the second half of the race, and completing an effort *greater* than race day over two consecutive workout days.

How do I monitor exercise intensity?

For those without a heart rate monitor strapped to your chest or a \$500 sport watch, we recommend using Rate of Perceived Exertion (RPE) outlined above to monitor your pace. For those who monitor heart rate, we've included how to translate RPE to percentage Max Heart Rate (%MHR).

Abbreviations

mi = miles, yd = yards, s = seconds, min = minutes, mod = moderate, wu = warm-up, cd = cool down, inc = including, rep = repeats, alt = alternating, OWS = open water swim

Exercise Intensity	RPE	%MHR	Activity Level
Easy: Warm-up and Recovery	1	50-60%	Daily activities other than sleeping
	2	60-70%	Feels like you can do this activity for hours. Able to hold a conversation.
	3		
Moderate: Aerobic	4	70-80%	Breathing is more noticeable. Able to hold a short conversation.
	5	80-90%	Breathing is hard. Able to say a short sentence.
	6		
Hard: Threshold and Anaerobic	7	90-100%	Breathing is deep and forceful. Able to say 3 words, but not wanting to talk.
	8		
	9		Difficult to maintain this intensity. Can barely speak a word.
	10		Out of breath. Unable to talk. A bear or a shark is chasing you.

Week	Runs	Swims	Swimrun	Strength and Agility	
B U I L D I N G B A S E	1	Aerobic 4 mi RPE 4-5 Speed 6x30s hill rep w/ 20 min wu/cd RPE 8 uphill, RPE 2 downhill Long 8 mi RPE 2-3	Technique 45 min inc drills RPE 3 Aerobic 2000 yd inc 8x100 pull RPE 4-5	45 min 3 runs/2 swims RPE 2-3	Mobility/stability (2 30-min sessions) 10 min core/combined 10 min upper body 10 min lower body
	2	Aerobic 5 mi RPE 4-5 Tempo 15 min w/ 20 min wu/cd RPE 7 Long 9 mi RPE 2-3	Technique 45 min inc drills RPE 3 Aerobic 3000 yd inc 10x150 pull RPE 4-5	60 min 3 runs/2 swims RPE 2-3	Mobility/stability (2 30-min sessions) 10 min core/combined 10 min upper body 10 min lower body
	3	Aerobic 6 mi RPE 4-5 Speed 6x60s hill rep w/ 20 min wu/cd RPE 8 uphill, RPE 2 downhill Long 10 mi RPE 2-3	Technique 45 min inc drills RPE 3 Aerobic 3500 yd inc 8x200 yd pull RPE 4-5	75 min 4 runs/3 swims RPE 2-3	Mobility/stability 10 min core/combined 20 min upper body 20 min lower body Agility 10 min core 15 min plyometrics
	4	Aerobic 6-8 mi RPE 4-5 Long 10-12 mi RPE 2-3	Technique 45 min inc drills RPE 3 Aerobic 2500 yd pull RPE 4-5 Long 3000 yd pull RPE 2-3		Mobility/stability 10 min core/combined 15 min upper body 15 min lower body Agility 10 min core 15 min plyometrics

Abbreviations

mi = miles, yd = yards, s = seconds, min = minutes, mod = moderate, wu = warm-up, cd = cool down, inc = including, rep = repeats, alt = alternating, OWS = open water swim

Week	Runs	Swims	Swimrun	Strength and Agility	
S P E E D	5	<p>Aerobic 5 mi RPE 4-5</p> <p>Speed 2 mi inc 4x [30s easy/30s med/30s all out] w/ 20 min wu/cd RPE 3-10</p> <p>Long 10-12 mi RPE 2-3</p>	<p>Speed 2500 yd inc 16x100 alt hard/easy RPE 3-8</p> <p>Aerobic 3000 yd inc 6x250 pull hypoxic¹ (breath every 3-4-5-4-3 by 50s) RPE 4-5</p> <p>OWS 3000 yd pull RPE 2-3</p>	<p>90 min 4 runs/3 swims RPE 3-4</p>	<p>Strength/agility 10 min core/combined 20 min upper body 10 min lower body 15 min plyometrics</p> <p>Strength 10 min core/combined 20 min upper body 20 min lower body</p>
	6	<p>Aerobic 5 mi RPE 4-5</p> <p>Tempo Hills 3x [3 min cont hill climb] w/ 20 min wu/cd RPE 7 uphill, RPE 2 downhill</p> <p>Long 12-14 mi or 60% total run distance* RPE 2-3</p>	<p>Speed 2500 yd inc 8x150 alt hard/easy RPE 3-8</p> <p>Aerobic 3000 yd inc 8x300 pull RPE 4-5</p> <p>OWS 4000 yd pull inc 10x200 mod, easy between sets RPE 2-5</p>	<p>2 hours 5 runs/4 swims RPE 3-4</p>	<p>Strength/agility 10 min core/combined 20 min upper body 10 min lower body 15 min plyometrics</p> <p>Strength 10 min core/combined 20 min upper body 20 min lower body</p>
	7	<p>Aerobic 6 mi RPE 4-5</p> <p>Speed 6x [30s easy/30s mod/30s hard], 5x [1 min easy/1 min hard] w/ 20 min wu/cd RPE 3-10</p> <p>Long 13-15 mi or 70% total run distance* RPE 2-3</p>	<p>Speed 3000 yd inc 10x [100 mod/50 hard/50 easy] RPE 3-8</p> <p>Aerobic 3000 yd inc 6x350 pull alt hypoxic¹ (breath every 3-4-5-6-5-4-3 by 50s) RPE 4-5</p> <p>OWS 4000-6000 yd pull or 70% total swim distance* RPE 2-3</p>	<p>2.5 hours 6 runs/5 swims RPE 3-4</p>	<p>Strength/agility 10 min core/combined 20 min upper body 10 min lower body 15 min plyometrics</p> <p>Strength 10 min core/combined 20 min upper body 20 min lower body</p>
	8	<p>Aerobic 6 mi</p> <p>Tempo 4x [2 min RPE 7/ 3 min RPE 3] w/ 20 min wu/cd</p> <p>Long 10 mi RPE 2-3</p>	<p>Speed 3000 yd inc 6x [200 mod/100 hard/50 easy] RPE 3-8</p> <p>OWS 3000 yd pull RPE 2-3</p>	<p>45-60 min 3 runs/2 swims RPE 2-3</p>	<p>Mobility/stability (2 50-min sessions) 10 min core/combined 20 min upper body 20 min lower body</p>

Abbreviations

mi = miles, yd = yards, s = seconds, min = minutes, mod = moderate, wu = warm-up, cd = cool down, inc = including, rep = repeats, alt = alternating, OWS = open water swim

Week	Runs	Swims	Swimrun	Strength and Agility	
RACE READY	9	<p>Aerobic 7 mi RPE 4-5</p> <p>Tempo Hills 6x [3 min hill climb] w/ 20 min wu/cd RPE 7 uphill, RPE 2 downhill</p> <p>Long 14-18 mi or 80% total run distance** RPE 2-3</p>	<p>Technique 45 min including drills RPE 3</p> <p>Aerobic 2500 yd including 6x150 pull hypoxic¹ (breath every 3-5-7 by 50s) RPE 4-5</p> <p>OWS 5000-7000 yd pull or 80% total swim distance* RPE 2-3</p>	<p>3 hours** 7 runs/6 swims - simulate race segments, at race pace RPE 3-5</p>	<p>Mobility/Stability 10 min core/combined 10 min upper body 10 min lower body</p>
	10	<p>Aerobic 8 mi RPE 4-5</p> <p>Speed Hills 8x [60s easy/60s mod/60s hard] w/ 20 min wu/cd *focus on fast downhill RPE 3-9</p> <p>Long 12 mi RPE 2-3</p>	<p>Speed 2000 yd inc 8x [50 mod/50 hard/50 easy] RPE 3-9</p> <p>Aerobic 3000 yd including pull 5x [200 mod/200 race pace/100 easy] RPE 3-6</p> <p>OWS 4000 yd pull including 5x [200 race pace/200 easy] RPE 3-6</p>	<p>2 hours 5 runs/ 4 swims - simulate race segments; alternating easy with race pace RPE 3-5</p>	<p>Mobility/Stability 10 min core/combined 10 min upper body 10 min lower body</p>
	11	<p>Aerobic 5 mi RPE 4-5</p> <p>Neural Maintenance 8x [45 sec stride accelerations/ 2 min easy] w/ 20 min wu/cd RPE 2-10</p> <p>Long 8 mi RPE 2-3</p>	<p>Aerobic 3000 yd including pull 6x [300 mod/100 easy] RPE 3-5</p> <p>OWS 3000 yd pull with middle 1000 yd race pace RPE 4-6</p>	<p>60 min 6 runs/5 swims - with race partner, focus on transitions RPE 3-4</p>	<p>Mobility/Stability 10 min core/combined 10 min upper body 10 min lower body</p>
	12	<p>Aerobic 4 mi inc 4x30s mod in last mile RPE 3-5</p> <p>OPTIONAL Aerobic 3 mi 4x30s stride accelerations in last mile</p>	<p>Aerobic 2000 yd inc 8x25 hard and 8x100 pull alt mod/easy RPE 2-7</p> <p>Technique 30 min including drills RPE 3</p>	<p>20-30 min - check gear - fine tune transitions with partner</p> <p>RACE</p>	<p>Mobility/stretching Post-race 15-20 min</p>

¹ Hypoxic breathing – DO NOT HOLD YOUR BREATH, but slowly exhale at a rate consistent with the number of strokes

Abbreviations

mi = miles, yd = yards, s = seconds, min = minutes, mod = moderate, wu = warm-up, cd = cool down, inc = including, rep = repeats, alt = alternating, OWS = open water swim