

The plan

TRAIN FOR YOUR FIRST TRI

THESE PLANS WILL TAKE YOU FROM ZERO TO TRIATHLON HERO IN THREE MONTHS

Meet the expert

Phil Mosley

Coaching editor of *Triathlon Plus*, Mosley is an experienced coach and elite athlete with a sports degree from the University of Chichester



IF YOU'RE planning on doing your first triathlon this spring, you need to start training now. There are two 12-week training plans here, ideal for getting you fit for either a sprint or an Olympic-distance triathlon.

For first-timers, Olympic and sprint distance triathlons are perfect introductions to the world of triathlon. A sprint triathlon (750m swim, 20km bike, 5km run) is often more intense, whereas an Olympic triathlon is twice the distance, and requires more endurance. Whichever race you decide upon, these plans will give you the fitness you need to complete your first triathlon.

These plans assume you're a relative newcomer to all three triathlon disciplines, but if you're already strong at one aspect of triathlon, be it swimming, cycling or running, there's no reason why you can't do more than I've suggested for that sport. For example, if you're a

strong swimmer, you could do as much as double the distance I've set. Just balance it, so you've got enough energy left to focus on your weaker disciplines throughout the week. Make sure you check out the Key.

I've given you instructions on how to structure your swim training, but I'd rather you went to coached training sessions (such as sessions run by your local tri club), or at least paid to go on a video swim analysis session for the day. I've also included a few open-water swim sessions, and if your target race is open water, the more you can practise the better. Swimming in a lake, river or ocean feels totally different from your local pool.

Aside from that, all you need to do is train. You may find you can't always fit the session in on the day I've suggested, but you can always swap the sessions around. Just try not to catch up any sessions you miss, because it can make you too tired, as well as increasing your injury risk.

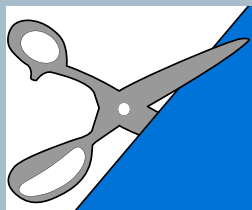
To do these plans, you should be able to:

- 1 Swim 200m non-stop, preferably front crawl
- 2 Ride your bike for at least 45 minutes
- 3 Run non-stop for 20 minutes

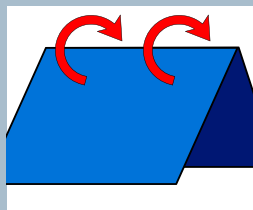


How it works

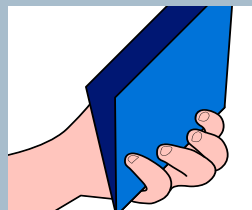
Get your guide ready to go



Cut out the guide following the dotted outline



Fold the guide in quarters using the fold guides



Now carry it with you for reference while training





Triathlon PLUS
YOUR
12-WEEK
PLAN

Your first triathlon

SPRINT DISTANCE

FOLD1

	WEEK 01	WEEK 02
Mon	Type Swim Distance 500m Instructions 10x25m, alternating 25m fc, 25m breast+30secs rests. 5x50m kick, alternating 25m Z2, 25m Z4+30secs rests	Type Swim Distance 600m Instructions 10x25m, alternating 25m fc, 25m breast+30secs rests. 10x25m, alternating 25m pull, 25m pull ankles+30secs rests. 100m kick in Z3
Tue	Type Run Time 20mins Instructions Steady run in Z2 or Z3	Type Run Time 20mins Instructions Steady run in Z2 or Z3
Wed	Type Swim Distance 500m Instructions 10x25m, alternating 25m fc, 25m bi+30secs rests. 5x50m, alternating 25m fc, 25m breast+30secs rests.	Type Swim Distance 550m Instructions 10x25m alternating 25m fc, 25m breast+30secs rests. 200m kick alternating 25m on back, 25m kick on front. 4x25m alternating 25m pull ankles, 25m pull
Thur	Type Run Time 20mins Instructions 10mins in Z2, 4 mins in Z4 (+1min rest), 5mins in Z2	Type Run Time 20mins Instructions 10mins in Z2, 5 mins in Z4 (+1min rest), 4mins in Z2
Fri	REST DAY	REST DAY
Sat	Type Brick Time 1 hour Instructions Bike to run session. Cycle 50mins in Z2, into run 10 mins in Z3	Type Brick Time 1 hour Instructions Bike to run session. Cycle 50mins in Z2, into run 10 mins in Z3
Sun	Type Bike Time 1 hour Instructions Steady bike, road or MTB. Z2	Type Bike Time 1 hour Instructions Steady bike, road or MTB. Z2

YOUR FIRST TRIATHLON:

INTENSITY TRAINING ZONES

USING THESE training zones will help you train at the right intensity for each session. This helps me to develop specific aspects of your fitness, as well as making sure you don't overdo it. You can either estimate your intensity, using the training zone descriptions, or use a heart-rate monitor for a more precise measure. If you use a heart-rate monitor, use the percentages provided, and subtract them from your observed maximum heart rate to calculate your Zones. Tools like cycle power meters and GPS watches will also help track your training progress, but they're not essential for these plans.

At this stage, your training should mainly be within Z1 to Z4.

Z1 Recovery

60 to 65% of max. Easy pace, feels nice and light

Z2 Steady

65 to 75% of max. Fairly easy pace. Easy enough so that you could breathe just through your nose if you wanted to

Z3 Tempo

75% to 80% of max. Fairly hard, but sustainable pace

Z4 Race tempo

80 to 90% of max. Hard pace, sustainable, but requires real focus

Z5 Red line

90% to 100% max. Very hard, requires real focus, not sustainable for long

KEY

MTB Off-road bike **FC** Front crawl **BACK** Backstroke **BREAST** Breaststroke
PULL FC with pull-buoy float **PULL ANKLES** FC with pull-buoy between ankles **KICK** Kicking on front & holding float **FISTS** FC with closed fists
BI Bilateral breathing (every 3 strokes) **W/U** Warm up **W/D** Warm down

STAY IN THE TRAINING ZONE WITH **TRIATHLON PLUS**

	WEEK 03	WEEK 04
Mon	Type Swim Distance 600m Instructions 8x25m as (1-2: fc head up, 3-4 pull, 5-6 fists, 7-8 fc)+30secs rests. 200m kick alternating 25m in Z2, 25m in Z4. 8x25m alternating fc/back/pull/fc+30secs rests	RECOVERY WEEK Type Swim Distance 500m Instructions 10x25m, alternating 25m fc, 25m bi+30secs rests. 5x50m kick, alternating 25m Z2, 25m Z4+30secs rests
Tue	Type Run Time 20mins Instructions Steady run in Z2 or Z3	REST DAY
Wed	Type Swim Time 700m Instructions 8x25m alternating 25m fc, 25m breast. +30secs rest. 8x25m alternating 25m fists, 25m breast, 25m fc head up, 25m fc. +30secs rest. 200m kick	Type Swim Distance 400m Instructions 300m fc non-stop, 1minute rest. 100m breast
Thur	Type Run Time 20mins Instructions 10mins in Z2, 6 mins in Z4 (+1min rest), 3mins in Z2	Type Run Time 20mins Instructions Steady run in Z2.
Fri	REST DAY	REST DAY
Sat	Type Brick Time 1 hour Instructions Bike to run session. Cycle 50mins in Z2, into run 10 mins in Z3	Type Brick Time 1 hour Instructions Bike to run session. Cycle 50mins in Z2, into run 10 mins in Z3
Sun	Type Bike Time 1 hour Instructions Steady bike, road or MTB. Z2	Type Bike Time 1 hour Instructions Steady bike, road or MTB. Z2

TRAININGZONE

SPRINT DISTANCE

	WEEK 05	WEEK 06	WEEK 07	WEEK 08
Mon	Type Swim Distance 700m Instructions 10x50m, alternating 50m fc, 50m pull+30secs rests. 4x50m kick, alternating 25m Z2, 25m Z4+30secs rests	Type Swim Distance 700m Instructions 10x50m, alternating 25m fc, 25m breast+30secs rests. 4x50m kick, alternating 25m Z2, 25m Z4+30secs rests	Type Swim Distance 800m Instructions 8x50m as (1-2: fc head up, 3-4 pull, 5-6 fists, 7-8 fc)+30secs rests. 200m kick alternating 25m in Z2, 25m in Z4. 4x25m alternating fc/back/pull/fc.+30secs rests	RECOVERY WEEK Type Swim Distance 500m Instructions 10x25m, alternating 25m fc, 25m bl.+30secs rests. 5x50m kick, alternating 25m Z2, 25m Z4.+30secs rests
Tue	Type Run Time 25 mins Instructions Steady run in Z2	Type Run Time 25 mins Instructions Steady run in Z2	Type Run Time 25 mins Instructions Steady run in Z2	REST DAY
Wed	Type Swim Distance 700m Instructions 10x50m, alternating 50m pull, 50m bi.+30secs rests. 200m alternating 50m fc, 25m kick	Type Swim Distance 800m Instructions 10x50m, alternating 25m fc, 25m bi.+30secs rests. 6x50m, alternating 50m pull, 50m breast.+30secs rests	Type Swim Distance 800m Instructions 6x50m alternating 50m fc, 50m breast.+30secs rest. 8x25m alternating 25m fists, 25m breast, 25m fc head up, 25m fc.+30secs rest. 100m kick	Type Swim Distance 600m Instructions 400m fc non-stop. 1 minute rest. 200m breast
Thur	Type Run Time 25 mins Instructions 10mins in Z2, 2x4 mins in Z4 (+2mins rest), 5mins in Z2.	Type Run Time 25 mins Instructions 10mins in Z2, 4x2 mins in Z4 (+1mins rest), 4mins in Z2	Type Run Time 25 mins Instructions 10mins in Z2, 8 mins in Z4, 7mins in Z2	Type Run Time 20 mins Instructions Steady run in Z2
Fri	REST DAY	REST DAY	REST DAY	REST DAY
Sat	Type Brick Time 1 hour 15 Instructions Bike to run session. Cycle 1 hour in Z2, into run 15mins in Z3	Type Brick Time 1 hour 15 Instructions Bike to run session. Cycle 1 hour in Z2, into run 15mins in Z3	Type Brick Time 1 hour 15 Instructions Bike to run session. Cycle 1 hour in Z2, into run 15mins in Z3	Type Brick Time 1 hour Instructions Bike to run session. Cycle 50mins in Z2, into run 10mins in Z3
Sun	Type Bike Time 1 hour 15 Instructions Steady bike, road or MTB. Z2. Include 3x3min efforts in Z4, with at least 3min recoveries in Z2	Type Bike Time 1 hour 15 Instructions Steady bike, road or MTB. Z2. Include 3x3min efforts in Z4, with at least 3min recoveries in Z2	Type Bike Time 1 hour 15 Instructions Steady bike, road or MTB. Z2. Include 3x3min efforts in Z4, with at least 3min recoveries in Z2	Type Bike Time 1 hour Instructions Steady bike, road or MTB. Z2
	WEEK 09	WEEK 10	WEEK 11	WEEK 12
Mon	Type Swim Distance 1,000m Instructions 4x100m, alternating 50m fc, 50m pull.+30secs rests. 2x100m kick, alternating 25m Z2, 25m Z4.+30secs rests. 4x100m, alternating 50m fc, 50m pull.+30secs rests	Type Swim Distance 1,000m Instructions 8x100m, alternating 25m fc, 25m breast.+30secs rests. 4x50m kick, alternating 25m Z2, 25m Z4.+30secs rests	Type Swim Distance 800m Instructions 8x50m as (1-2: fc head up, 3-4 pull, 5-6 fists, 7-8 fc).+30secs rests. 200m kick alternating 25m in Z2, 25m in Z4. 4x25m alternating fc/back/pull/fc.+30secs rests	RECOVERY WEEK Type Swim Distance 1,000m Instructions 4x100m, alternating 50m fc, 50m pull.+30secs rests. 2x100m kick, alternating 25m Z2, 25m Z4.+30secs rests. 4x100m, alternating 50m fc, 50m pull.+30secs rests
Tue	Type Run Time 35 mins Instructions Steady run in Z2	Type Run Time 35 mins Instructions Steady run in Z2	Type Run Time 35 mins Instructions Steady run in Z2	REST DAY
Wed	Type Swim Distance 800m Instructions 4x100m, alternating 50m pull, 50m bi.+30secs rests. 400m alternating 50m fc, 25m kick	Type Swim Distance 800m Instructions 10x50m, alternating 25m fc, 25m bi.+30secs rests. 6x50m, alternating 50m pull, 50m breast.+30secs rests	Type Swim Distance 800m Instructions 6x50m alternating 50m fc, 50m breast.+30secs rest. 8x25m alternating 25m fists, 25m breast, 25m fc head up, 25m fc.+30secs rest 100m kick	Type Swim Distance 750m Instructions Swim open water if possible – up to 750m, depending on the distance you'll be racing
Thur	Type Run Time 30 mins Instructions 15mins in Z2, 2x4mins in Z4 (+2mins rest), 5mins in Z2	Type Run Time 30 mins Instructions 15mins in Z2, 4x2mins in Z4 (+1mins rest), 4mins in Z2	Type Run Time 30 mins Instructions 15mins in Z2, 8mins in Z4, 7mins in Z2	Type Run Time 30 mins Instructions 15mins in Z2, 4mins at top of Z4, 10mins in Z2
Fri	REST DAY	REST DAY	REST DAY	REST DAY
Sat	Type Brick Time 1 hour 30 Instructions Bike to run session. Cycle 1 hour 15mins in Z2, into run 15mins in Z3	Type Brick Time 1 hour 30 Instructions Bike to run session. Cycle 1 hour 15mins in Z2, into run 15mins in Z3	Type Brick Time 1 hour 30 Instructions Bike to run session. Cycle 1 hour 15mins in Z2, into run 15mins in Z3	Type Bike Time 45 mins Instructions Steady bike, road or MTB. Z2
Sun	Type Bike Time 1 hour 30 Instructions Steady bike, road or MTB. Z2. Include 5x3min efforts in Z4, with at least 3min recoveries in Z2	AM Type Bike Time 1 hour 30 Instructions Steady bike, road or MTB. Z2. Include 5x3min efforts in Z4, with at least 3min recoveries in Z2. PM Type Swim Time 20 mins Instructions Open-water swim. Get in your wetsuit and try swimming. Use this time to acclimatise, don't worry about the training distance and don't go alone	AM Type Bike Time 1 hour 30 Instructions Steady bike, road or MTB. Z2. Include 5x3 minute efforts in Z4, with at least 3 minute recoveries in Z2. PM Type Swim Distance 500m Instructions Swim 500m open water in your wetsuit, in company	RACE DAY