



## Cross Country - Middle Distance: A Sample Introductory Program

The program outline is an example .. it assumes a significant degree of preparedness; **athletes starting out will need to pursue a modified program.**

### Week 1

- 1.1 LSD Run; 20 - 30 minutes.
- 1.2 Fartlek: 35-40 minutes: 10 / 20 / 5 / 10 / 5 / 20 / 10 .. write surges on your hand ("fast" surges in seconds .. approx.)
- 1.3 Easy Run: 10 mins;  
 Speed Drills: 15 mins;  
 2 x 6 x 40-50m fast striding, walk back (w/b) recovery; rolling starts: "Tall, Tall, Tall"  
 Easy Run: 10 mins.
- 1.4 Sunday(?): 40-50 Mins. LSD; include 4 x 2 min. surges.  
**Pool Session** (Recovery activities).

All sessions assume an appropriate **warm-up** and **warm down** ... ideas presented separately  
 (Jog/Stretch/Drills/Accelerations/Stretch)

### Build up gradually

Don't make excuses .. go for the run .. **do the drills** .. it will pay off for **YOU**.

You will not improve by not running.

Take care where you run .. stay away from main roads .. running partner(s) for safety.

### Week 2

- 2.1 LSD Run: 30-40 Mins. Stride out faster the last 3 mins.
- 2.2 Speed Session:  
 10 Min. Easy Run.  
 2 x 4 x 20F/20C/20F .. spikes if you wish (w/b+1)  
 2-4 x 120m; build to 90-95% final 50m (w/b+1)  
 10 Min. Easy Run.
- 2.3 Fartlek: 40-45 Mins.  
 Surges to "fast" pace: 10 / 20 / 10 / 5 / 10 / 5 / 10 / 20 / 10
- 2.4 Hills: 2 x 4 x 150m (80-90%); w/b; 4-6 mins; (3-5% gradient)  
 Jog 10 minutes. **Pool Session** .. easy, **recovery** swim / stretch

**Quality**  
 is more important than Quantity

Try to work a little harder each week

Don't just think about it: **DO IT !!**

Everyone is busy

Plan your time

Don't Procrastinate

(put it off or, make excuses)

**By Failing to Prepare  
 You are Preparing to Fail**

F = "Fast"  
 C = "Controlled"

What does w/b+1 mean?

If you are willing and able to complete the introduction, we can plan for further progression

Meaning? w/b; 4-6 mins.

8 Sessions .. 2 Weeks (14 Days) ... therefore, 6 Recovery-Rest Days.  
 (e.g. **Run** .. Rest .. **Run** .. **Run** .. Rest .. **Run** .. Rest, *or*, **Run** .. **Run** .. Rest .. **Run** .. Rest .. **Run** .. Rest)

**Think ahead .. Plan your time !!** .. I am only a phone call away.

Your Recovery Sessions (Rest Days) are your most important training sessions;

You grow stronger when you are resting.

Rest Days may be complete rests **or** an alternative activity (recreational or sporting).

Discuss your intentions (your weekly / monthly program).

Your aim must be to establish a lifestyle routine that contributes everyday to success.

**It is not just about working harder .. it's about working smarter.**

There is time for almost everything **if** you plan your time.

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**This program is an example ONLY.**

**Every athlete is an experiment of one**

Your program needs to be adapted to your needs,  
 but, all programs should provide for patient progression.

**SPEED** is fundamental to advanced performance in most sports;  
 most understand this ..... few take advantage.



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# Cross Country / Middle Distance Programs

(6 Weeks)



***Tough times don't last; Tough People Do !!***

It is important to recognise that every athlete is an experiment of one;  
Any general training outline will have to be adapted to the goal(s), training age, time and resource constraints  
that confront individual athletes.

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Name:

Sample Only

**SAMPLE Training Program: 2 Weeks .. Activities need to be adjusted to the readiness of each athlete**

**Week 1**

**Comments**

1.1 LSD Run; 30 - 40 minutes.

Build up gradually

1.2 Fartlek: 40 minutes: 20 / 30 / 15 / 30 / 15 / 30 / 20

Don't make excuses; go for the run; **learn** and do the **drills** .. it will pay off for **YOU**.

Write surges (90%) on the back of your hand

1.3 Easy Run: 10 mins;  
Speed Drills: 20 mins;  
2 x 6 x 50m fast striding, walk back (w/b) recovery;  
Easy Run: 10 mins.

You will not improve by not running.

Rolling / Falling starts: *Tall, Tall, Tall*

Take care where you run; do not run alone; stay off main roads.

1.4 Sunday: 30-50 Mins. include 4 x 2 min. surges.  
Pool Session.

Sessions must be modified to suit your level of preparedness.

**Week 2**

2.1 LSD Run: 30-40 Mins. Stride out faster the last 3 mins.

Try to work a little harder (smarter) each week.

2.2 Speed Session: 10 Min. Easy Run.  
2 x 4 x 25F/25C/25F .. spikes.  
2-4 x 120m; build to max. final 70m  
10 Min. Easy Run.

Don't just think about it .. **DO IT !!**

F = "Fast"; C = "Controlled"

**Today's Preparation  
Determines  
Tomorrow's Achievements**

2.3 Fartlek: 40 Mins.  
Surges to "fast" pace: 20 / 30 / 10 / 40 / 10 / 40 / 30 / 20

Busy?

2.4 Hills: 2 x 3 x 150m (90%); w/b; 4 mins.  
Jog 10 minutes.

Hill = 2-4% gradient; fast, form running

Everyone is busy  
Plan **YOUR** time  
Use **YOUR** time

2.5 LSD Run: 50-60 Mins.  
Pool Session.

**By failing to prepare  
You are preparing to fail**

9 sessions / 2 weeks (14 days) .. therefore 5 rest days. Plan your time; I am only a phone call away.

**Regular Support Activities**

**Everyday:** 3 x 30-40 Bent Knee Sit-Ups / Crunchers / variations; 15 Mins. Stretching.

**Every second day:** 2 x 20-40 Push-Ups; 10 mins. Drills: A-Skip; B-Skip; Alt. Butt Kicks; Alt. Fast Leg; Combinations.

Experienced runners should extend themselves .. do more, not less.

The activities listed are in addition to, **not** instead of other sports.  
**plan** your week; you will surprise yourself; **try not to run alone.**

This is a simplified version of what I would program for you; if you have the courage to step into the unknown I will help ... *the harder (and smarter) you train, the harder it is to surrender.*

*I would expect you to accept the challenge of my program .. discussed YES, but ignored NO.*

**Don't focus on what you lack .. make the most of what you have !!**



Name:

Every athlete is an experiment of one ... each athlete needs a program that will enhance their skills and attends to areas they need to develop to improve their performance.

The following 3 week program assumes 3-5 preparatory runs over two weeks, a basic knowledge of key drills, and familiarity with fundamental training language ... if in doubt don't be afraid to ask.

There is time for everything if you plan .. family priorities, school, social life, other sports ... but, you have to learn to plan ahead. The old saying: *if you want get something done, see a busy person.*

Having said this, it is of great importance that young (all) athletes ensure they have appropriate rest and recovery periods; this may mean complete rest, it may also mean pursuing an alternative activity. Talk to your coach about your needs and your plan.

**Rest is your most important training session** .. you grow stronger when in recovery, not when in exhaustion.

So, your weekly cycle for a start might be: Run / Rest / Run / Rest / Rest / Run / Rest (3 runs / sessions .. 7 days)

**Week 1**

- 1.1 25 Mins. LSD
- 1.2 Time Trial: XC Course .. repeatable course; 2-5 km.  
(Record your initial time .. aim to improve performance over the next three weeks)
- 1.3 25 Mins. Fartlek: 10 / 15 / 10 / 15 / 10 / 15 / 10  
(10 = Surges in seconds to 80-90% effort)
- 1.4 30 Mins. LSD, or Rest

**Be Prepared to Progress Patiently**

**Week 2**

- 2.1 30 Mins. Fartlek: 30 / 20 / 10 / 20 / 30; (80-90%)
- 2.2 30 Mins. LSD
- 2.3 *Speed Session:* Easy Run: 10 mins; Speed Drills: 15 mins;  
2 x 6 x 50m fast striding (80-90%) - falling, rolling or 3 pt. starts;  
walk back (w/b) recovery .. racing flats or spikes for fast striding only.  
Easy Run: 10 mins.
- 2.4 40 Mins. LSD

**Quality** (and **regularity**) is more important than quantity.

**Week 3**

- 3.1 40 Mins. Fartlek: 10 / 10 / 20 / 20 / 30 / 20 / 20 / 10 / 10
- 3.2 *Speed Session:* Easy Run: 10 mins; Speed Drills: 15 mins;  
2 x 6 x 50m fast striding (80-90%), Falling or Rolling starts;  
walk back (w/b) recovery .. racing flats or spikes for fast striding **only**.  
Easy Run: 10 mins.
- 3.3 Time Trial: XC Course .. same course as 1.2; same time of day.  
Ensure a full rest day precedes the Time Trial.
- 3.4 45 Mins. LSD

**Warm-Ups**

At least three (3) sessions each week should commence with 10-15 minutes of basic running form drills (**completed perfectly**). (e.g. A-Skip, Alt. Butt Kicks, Combinations)

DFK stretches: select and apply as required.

Some jogging and accelerations (50-70m); work towards pace you will sustain in the session ahead.

**Training Diary**  
(Sample available)

Keep a simple record of your runs and activities.

Plan each week (in advance) then, enter actual details and adjust your plans as needed.

**How Did You Go?**

Don't be too judgmental .. that is, don't say things like: *"I'm hopeless"*

*Measure and Evaluate* ... example:

**Trial 1: 14:28 = 868 seconds**  
**Trial 2: 13:14 = 794 seconds**  
**Improvement: 74 seconds**

**74 ÷ 868 x 100 = 8.5% improvement**  
**Well Done!!!**

**Take Care !!**

Do **NOT** run alone, on or near highways, nor in locations that may not be secure.

Be sure responsible people know where you are, and, what you intend.

## Weekly Training Plan

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Weeks to next key competition:

Date	Plan	Distance	Actual Training / Comments
Monday			<input style="width: 40px; height: 25px;" type="text"/>
Tuesday			<input style="width: 40px; height: 25px;" type="text"/>
Wednesday			<input style="width: 40px; height: 25px;" type="text"/>
Thursday			<input style="width: 40px; height: 25px;" type="text"/>
Friday			<input style="width: 40px; height: 25px;" type="text"/>
Saturday			<input style="width: 40px; height: 25px;" type="text"/>
Sunday			<input style="width: 40px; height: 25px;" type="text"/>

Comments should be brief but as precise as possible: e.g. 4 km. Easy Run; or, w/u – 2 x 3 x 150 @ 90%, w/b, 8 mins. w/d Record times where appropriate.  
The diary has many uses, but should **not** dominate your life .. 5 mins./day.

Your Rating of your Session(s): 5, 4, 3, 2, 1, 0  
Only award 4, 4.5, or 5 if it was "magic"

## Weekly Training Plan (Sample)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Weeks to next key competition: \_\_\_\_\_

6

Date	Plan	Distance	Actual Training / Comments	
Monday	Intervals		4.30 p.m. 2 x 3 x 150; 80-85%; w/b; 6-8 mins. <i>Times could be recorded if known</i> Felt relaxed. Form good. Some tightness in left calf. Sit-Ups (SU); Push-Ups (PU) .. develop your own abbreviations	
Have your coach / family assist you with your plan ... communication.				3
Tuesday	LSD 40 mins. Football Training	9	7.00 a.m. LSD Run. River Course. Felt relaxed. Drills. Sit-Ups (SU); Push-Ups (PU)	
Wednesday	Rest		Stretching	
Keep a record of <b>all performances</b> , and " <b>pb's</b> ", and, <b>split times</b> in races and on various courses you use in training; running is a measureable sport .. use the measurements.				3
Thursday	Fartlek 40	9	7.00 a.m. Fartlek: 10 / 10/ 20 / 30 / 20 / 10 / 10 River course. Slow Jog between surges. Getting stronger.	
Comments on sleep, diet, other obligations, e.g. to other sports, social, school, or family commitments are appropriate ... write down your plan (summary form) .. change on a needs basis.  Keep in mind .. <b>You are not the only one involved in your program</b> .. <b>Your family, your coach, your teachers</b> ; keep everyone informed. <b>Communication is critical</b> if you want people to keep helping <b>YOU</b> .				
			Cold.  Football Training Sit-Ups (SU); Push-Ups (PU)	3.5
Friday	LSD 30		Rest .. Football tomorrow Sit-Ups (SU); Push-Ups (PU); Drills. (Make-up LSD: Sunday)	
Saturday	Football		a.m. v. Dragons. Won by 15 points.  p.m. Easy 3k Jog; Stretching	4
Sunday	Rest / Pool	8	LSD: 40 mins. Easy (Make-Up) Run .. <b>Pool</b> session (30 mins.) Some stiffness after football .. Pool session helped. Extra stretching	3.5

Comments should be brief but as precise as possible: e.g. 4 km. Easy Run; or, w/u - 2 x 3 x 150 @ 90%, w/b, 8 mins. w/d Record times where appropriate.  
The diary has many uses, but should **not** dominate your life .. 5 mins./day.

Your Rating of your Session(s): 5, 4, 3, 2, 1, 0



Name:

If you have progressed to Week 4, completing the sessions, you have not only done well, but are learning to plan your time.  
But, remember ....

**Rest** is your **most important training session** .. you grow stronger when in recovery, not when in exhaustion.

So, your weekly cycle might have advanced to: e.g. Run / Rest / Run / Rest / Run / Run / Rest (4 runs / sessions .. 7 days)  
(or, some variation thereof)

The aim in the next 3 weeks is to maintain progress (patiently) and produce significantly better performances on the courses on which you trial; and, perform in an improved manner in cross country races.

Please remember that cross country races are held on different courses, in different weather, with different race strategies; comparative times are not possible with anywhere near the same precision as track races.

**but,**

If times on your “control” courses are improving, you can look forward to better race performances.  
(A “control” course or session is one over which you have control in terms of distance, terrain ... it is a precisely repeatable course which can enable you to assess your progress. As a general rule “control” sessions should be undertaken every 3-4 weeks; i.e. allow time for training to produce improvement.)

**Week 4**

**If it was easy ... everyone would be doing it**

- 4.1 50 Mins. Fartlek: 10 / 20 / 30 / 40 / 40 / 30 / 20 / 10 .. *It's getting tougher !!*
- 4.2 50-60 Mins. LSD
- 4.3 Hills\*: 2 x 3 x 150m; 2-4% gradient; (2% = 2m in 100m); have a set “Hills” course on which you can measure your performance.  
First “hill” runs: 90%; w/b; 8-10 mins. between sets.
- 4.4 40 Mins. LSD, or Rest and/or Pool Session

\* Hill sessions should be coach-supervised

By now you will appreciate the important role diary entries can provide; comparison, motivation, conscience (*go for the run*).

**Quality** (and **regularity**) is more important than quantity.

**Week 5**

- 5.1 50 Mins. Fartlek: 30 / 10 / 20 / 10 / 30 / 10 / 20 / 10
- 5.2 50 Mins. LSD + Pool Session
- 5.3 *Speed Session*: Easy Run: 10 mins; Speed Drills: 15 mins;  
4 x 6 x 50m fast striding (80-90%) - falling, rolling or 3pt. starts;  
walk back (w/b) recovery .. racing flats or spikes for fast striding only.  
Easy Run: 10 mins.
- 5.4 50 Mins. LSD

**Champions are distinguished by differences: different things they do, and, things they do differently.**

**Week 6**

- 6.1 40 Mins. Fartlek: 10 / 15 / 20 / 10 / 10 / 20 / 15 / 10 .. fast surges
- 6.2 Hills: 2 x 3 x 150m; 2-4% gradient; use your “control” hills course  
90%; w/b; 8-10 mins. between sets. How did your times compare to 4.3?  
Easy Run: 10 mins.
- 6.3 50-60 Mins. LSD
- 6.4 40 Mins. LSD + Pool session.

**Week 7: Cross Country Course Time Trial, or, Race;** if you have done the work, you are ready to show the improvement **your efforts** have produced.

**Warm-Ups**

At least three (3) sessions each week should commence with 10-15 minutes of basic running form drills (completed perfectly). (e.g. A-Skip, Alt. Butt Kicks, Combinations)

DFK stretches: select and apply as required.

Some jogging and accelerations (50-70m); work towards pace you will sustain in the session ahead.

**Fartlek**

Don't be a slave to the time surges; use them as a guide.

If you see a slope .. surge; see an SEC pole, surge to it.

**You** are in control; challenge yourself patiently, but unless you try something you have not yet mastered, you will never grow.

**Take Care !!**

Do **NOT** run alone, on or near highways, nor in locations that may not be secure.

Be sure responsible people know where you are, and, what you intend.



Name:

**Vacation Training Program: 2 Weeks ..** Activities need to be adjusted to the readiness of each athlete

**Week 1**

**What is: LSD? Fartlek?**  
Not sure .. Don't be afraid to ask.

- 1.1 LSD Run; 30 - 40 minutes. Continuous, easy run.
- 1.2 Easy Run: 10 mins;  
3 x 6 x 50m fast striding, walk back (w/b) recovery;  
Easy Run: 10 mins.
- 1.3 Fartlek: 40 minutes: 10 / 20 / 10 / 20 / 10 / 20 / 10

Write surges (80-90% of top pace) on the back of your hand

**Week 2**

- 2.1 LSD Run: 30-40 Mins. Stride out faster the last 3 mins.
- 2.2 Fartlek: 30 Mins.  
Surges to "fast" pace: 10 / 20 / 30 / 20 / 10
- 2.3 LSD Run: 40 Mins.

This is a simplified version of what I would program for you.

**It does not take long to complete the sessions.**  
**The hardest part is often just making the effort.**  
**Think ahead .. Plan your runs .. Fit them in to your lifestyle**

**Build up gradually**  
Don't make excuses; go for the run; it will pay off for YOU.  
**You will not improve by not running.**  
Take care where you run; **do not run alone;** stay off main roads.  
Sessions must be modified to suit your level of preparedness.

Try to work a little harder (smarter) each week.  
Don't just think about it .. DO IT !!  
**Today's Preparation Determines Tomorrow's Achievements**  
Busy? Everyone is busy  
Plan YOUR time  
Use YOUR time  
**By failing to prepare You are preparing to fail**

**Don't focus on what you lack .. make the most of what you have !!**

Do **not** run on consecutive days: i.e. RUN .. Rest .. RUN .. Rest .....

Keep a record (**diary**) of the training you complete

Over the past few weeks you have improved significantly  
... don't let the progress you have made slip away.

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*Cross Country*

**Tough Times Don't Last**

*North West Athletics*

*www.nwaswimaths.com*



**Tough Times Don't Last  
Tough People Do**

*North West Athletics*

Benita



**Never Give Up**



Name:

**Three Training Sessions .. Daily schedule: Run / Rest / Run / Rest / Rest / Run / Rest**

**1. LSD** (Long Slow Distance): 20-25 Mins.  
 See if you can run for 20-25 minutes without stopping; no real speed .. don't race; run together as a **team**, if possible

I would ask you to arrange for at least one Mum or Dad to accompany you .. **lead** in a car.

Do 5 mins. of drills before you start: e.g. A-Skip, Alt. Butt Kicks; Combinations ... 3-4 mins. rest, then start the run, together ..

Have no more than 1 drink in the 25 minutes, and drink on the run; don't stop.

Drinking on the run is something important to practice; you never know, next year you might all go in the Nike Women's Classic (April): 5.4 km. in Melbourne; **if** you are still running then I will arrange for you to enter.

But, don't drink too often (every 2 km. or 10-12 mins.) is more than enough; a good mouthful or several sips.

Be sure to have at least one day of no running before the next run; two days is fine; plan when, where and who you will run with in advance; don't leave it to the last moment.

**Talk everything over with your parents !!**

**2. Interval Runs**

**2.1** 3 x 50m; rolling start (5m) .. 80-90%; w/b  
 3 x 40m; 3 pt. start; maximum efforts; w/b +2-3 mins.  
 3 x 50m; rolling start (5m) .. 80-90%; w/b  
 OR

**2.2** 2 x 120m; rolling start (5m) .. 60-70%; w/b  
 1 x 150m; rolling start (5m) .. 60-70%; w/b  
 2 x 120m; rolling start (5m) .. 60-70%; w/b

**3. Pool Session(s)** (separate sheet)

*Let's see how those stretches have improved.*

**Avoid the heat of the day;** try early morning jogs (or, evening).

**Pool Sessions** can/should be used:

- a) as an alternative to runs in the hot weather;
- b) as recovery from runs or alternative activities.

To **all** sessions (run/pool) .. bring your water bottle and a towel (goggles, cap, fins, bouyancy to pool sessions).

**Build up gradually**

Don't make excuses; go for the run; it will pay off for **YOU**.

**You will not improve by not running.**

Take care where you run; **do not run alone;** stay off main roads.

Involve your parents; runs **must** be supervised.

Try to work a little harder (smarter) each week.

Don't just think about it .. **DO IT !!**

**Today's Preparation  
Determines  
Tomorrow's Achievements**

Busy? Everyone is busy  
Plan **YOUR** time  
Use **YOUR** time

Details are a guide only; keep a record of what you attempt and achieve.

**All** sessions, especially Intervals, should be preceded by a thorough **warm-up:**

**15 Minutes**

Drills / (short) Jog / 2-3 Accelerations (40-60m)

include 3-4 stretches as you warm-up

**It does not take long to complete the sessions.**

**The hardest part is often just making the effort.**

**Think ahead .. Plan your runs  
Fit them in to your lifestyle**

## Measuring Your Progression

- Procedure:**
1. Select a repeatable course (e.g. a course, 1.5 km. – 5.0 km) that you can repeat in the same detail/manner at a future date .. i.e. a session YOU control.
  2. Run the course (Trial 1), recording your time in minutes and seconds; e.g. 14:28.
  3. Convert the time to seconds; e.g. 14:28 = 868 seconds.
  4. Train regularly and progressively for a 2-3 week period.
  5. Complete the same course (Trial 2) .. similar time of day, similar weather, ...
  6. **Aim (work) to improve** .. calculate your improvement (see below).

**Running** (and Swimming): it's not whether you win or lose .. it's **YOU** against the stopwatch.  
You (assisted by fellow athletes and by your determination) seeking  
**performance progression and personal excellence.**

### *How Did You Go?*

"Split Times(?)" will help

Don't be too judgmental .. that is, don't say things like: "*I'm hopeless*"

*Measure and Evaluate* ... example:

*Trial 1: 14:28 = 868 seconds*

*Trial 2: 13:14 = 794 seconds*

*Improvement: 74 seconds*

$$74 \div 868 \times 100 = 8.5\% \text{ improvement}$$

*Well Done!!!*

There is no set performance progression percentage that you should seek; but, try to improve (usually Trial 2 is the biggest improvement).

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