

# COUCH TO SUPERSPRINT

- IN JUST 8 WEEKS! -



*Never raced before? No problem. This beginners' plan will get you over the finish line and enjoying some serious bragging rights!*

**RAPID REFUELLING**  
Turn to page 77 for delicious recipes that restore energy quick-smart.

**TRAINING PLAN**  
COACH DERMOTT HAYES



**T**ell most folk down the gym that you're considering a triathlon and they'll tell you how hard it is. Or how they had a mate who entered one, only to end up lost in a lake and eaten by a killer shark (or something). The truth of it is that provided you can swim, bike and run a little already, taking on a supersprint (the shortest tri distance) is within your grasp.

This 400m swim, 10km bike and 2.5km format is a perfect way to begin, and the really good news? You don't have to train every day for hours and hours. This training plan from Dermott Hayes of London's RG Active is designed to allow you to carry on with real life and gradually builds until you're able to complete the full race distance in each discipline, which will give you the confidence come race day to know you can complete it. We've also included some interval training sessions that help to focus on improving your speed and making the longer sessions more comfortable.

The second half of the plan includes some brick sessions,

which get you to practise the feeling of going from swim to bike or bike to run. Don't skip on these – they're essential training unless you want jelly legs!

If you find that you're not quite ready for some of the sessions then you can reduce either the duration or intensity to begin with and then build up, and if you feel that you would like to add more time or intensity to the sessions in order to make them harder, that's okay too. Plus, if you have a race time in mind, go ahead and be more analytical with timed targets each session.

For most of you, though, this plan will be about completing not competing – so make it fun and focus on finishing your first race feeling strong!

**TRAINING PLAN NOTES**

Within this plan you'll find aerobic sessions, which promote long-term base fitness. There are also interval swims, which you can add drills to if you have some that you want to work on. Always do a short warm-up and cool-down (200m) before and after each swim and rest for 10–30secs in between intervals

Similarly, interval bike and run sessions will see you working at different levels of intensity. ▶

**COACH'S TIPS GETTING STARTED**



**FIT IT IN**

Spend time thinking about how you can plan your training into your lifestyle. It shouldn't feel like a burden – so can you cycle or run your commute, for example?



**GET MOTIVATED**

Set some targets for yourself. A triathlon is based on finish time, so it's worth thinking about some realistic but slightly challenging times to keep motivation up!



**GEAR UP**

Get kitted out. You don't need to spend thousands of pounds on equipment, but having gear that does the job is very important, especially a well maintained bike.



**PROGRESS**

Understand the objective of each session and stick to the plan. Rather than repeat sessions that you like doing, you must challenge yourself and keep progressing.

## ▶ TRAINING PLAN - WEEKS 1 TO 4

MONDAY • TUESDAY • WEDNESDAY • THURSDAY • FRIDAY • SATURDAY • SUNDAY

**WEEK 1** - TIME TO GET STARTED! OUR PLAN BEGINS ON A MONDAY, BUT YOU CAN START ON ANY DAY OF THE WEEK

<b>SWIM</b> 2 x 50m 2 x 75m 2 x 100m All performed at a moderate to vigorous intensity. Rest for 10-30secs after each interval (based on fatigue)	<b>REST DAY</b>	<b>BIKE</b> Repeat x 6 • 1km at a vigorous intensity • 500m at a moderate intensity	<b>RUN/WALK</b> 500m walk at a moderate intensity • 500m run at a vigorous intensity • 500m walk at a moderate intensity	<b>REST DAY</b>	<b>BIKE</b> Ride for 10km at a moderate to vigorous intensity on a mostly flat route	<b>REST DAY</b>
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**WEEK 2** - STILL ONLY FOUR TRAINING DAYS, BUT A SLIGHT INCREASE IN VOLUME

<b>SWIM</b> 1 x 150m 1 x 125m 1 x 100m 1 x 75m 1 x 50m All performed at a moderate to vigorous intensity	<b>RUN/WALK</b> 300m walk at a moderate intensity • 700m run at a vigorous intensity • 300m walk at a moderate intensity	<b>REST DAY</b>	<b>RUN</b> Repeat x 3 • 400m at a vigorous intensity • 200m at near max effort • 400m at a moderate intensity	<b>REST DAY</b>	<b>BIKE</b> Ride for 13km at a moderate to vigorous intensity on a mostly flat route	<b>REST DAY</b>
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**WEEK 3** - FIVE SESSIONS THIS WEEK AND A LITTLE MORE INTENSITY, ESPECIALLY IN THE RUN

<b>SWIM</b> 4 x 50m 3 x 75m 2 x 100m All performed at a moderate to vigorous intensity	<b>REST DAY</b>	<b>BIKE</b> Repeat x 6 • 1km at a vigorous intensity • 500m at a moderate intensity	<b>RUN/WALK</b> 1km run at a vigorous intensity • 500m walk at a moderate intensity • 1km run at a vigorous intensity	<b>REST DAY</b>	<b>BIKE</b> Ride for 15km at a moderate to vigorous intensity on a slightly hilly route	<b>RUN/WALK</b> 2km run at a vigorous intensity • 500m walk at a moderate intensity
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**WEEK 4** - YOU'RE HALFWAY! BY NOW, YOU'LL BE FEELING FITTER AND THE SESSIONS SHOULD FEEL GOOD

<b>SWIM</b> 1 x 200m 1 x 150m 1 x 100m All at a moderate to vigorous intensity • 4 x 50m at a vigorous intensity	<b>RUN/WALK</b> Repeat x 3 • 200m walk at a moderate intensity • 800m run at a vigorous intensity	<b>REST DAY</b>	<b>RUN</b> Repeat x 4 • 400m at a vigorous intensity • 200m at near max effort • 400m at a moderate intensity	<b>REST DAY</b>	<b>BIKE</b> Ride for 15km at a moderate to vigorous intensity on a mostly flat route	<b>REST DAY</b>
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## ▶ TRAINING PLAN - WEEKS 5 TO 8

MONDAY • TUESDAY • WEDNESDAY • THURSDAY • FRIDAY • SATURDAY • SUNDAY

**WEEK 5** - YOUR FIRST BRICK SESSION THIS WEEK. MAKE SURE YOU HAVE ALL YOUR KIT TO HAND!

<b>SWIM</b> 400m at a moderate to vigorous intensity • 6 x 50m at a vigorous intensity	<b>BRICK</b> Repeat x 2 • 6km bike at a vigorous intensity • 1km run at a vigorous intensity	<b>REST DAY</b>	<b>BIKE</b> Repeat x 4 • 2km at a vigorous intensity • 500m at a moderate intensity	<b>RUN/WALK</b> 1.2km run at a vigorous intensity • 300m walk at a moderate intensity • 1.2km run at a vigorous intensity	<b>REST DAY</b>	<b>BIKE</b> Ride for 15km at a moderate to vigorous intensity on a slightly hilly route
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**WEEK 6** - STEPPING IT UP A LITTLE THIS WEEK. NOT LONG NOW UNTIL RACE DAY

<b>SWIM</b> 6 x 50m at a vigorous intensity • 4 x 100m at a slightly less vigorous intensity	<b>BRICK</b> 2 x 250m swim at a vigorous intensity • 15km bike at a vigorous intensity	<b>REST DAY</b>	<b>RUN</b> Repeat x 6 • 200m at a vigorous intensity • 200m at max effort • 200m at a moderate intensity	<b>RUN/WALK</b> 2km run at a vigorous intensity • 500m walk at a moderate intensity • 1km run at a vigorous intensity	<b>REST DAY</b>	<b>BIKE</b> 18km at a moderate to vigorous intensity on a mostly flat route. • Include 2 x 4km at a vigorous intensity
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**WEEK 7** - YOUR FINAL BIG TRAINING WEEK. KEEP AN EYE ON NUTRITION TOO, REFUEL PROPERLY

<b>SWIM</b> 4 x 50m at a vigorous intensity • 400m at a slightly less vigorous intensity • 4 x 50m at a vigorous intensity	<b>BRICK</b> Repeat x 2 • 6km bike at a vigorous intensity • 1.5km run at a vigorous intensity	<b>REST DAY</b>	<b>BIKE</b> Repeat x 3 • 4km at a vigorous intensity • 500m at a moderate intensity	<b>RUN/WALK</b> 2.5km run at a vigorous intensity • 500m walk at a moderate intensity	<b>REST DAY</b>	<b>BIKE</b> 18km at a moderate to vigorous intensity on a mostly flat route. • Include 2 x 4km at a vigorous intensity
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**WEEK 8** - RACE WEEK! YOU'LL TAKE IT EASIER IN TRAINING, THEN GO SMASH IT AT THE EVENT. GOOD LUCK!

<b>SWIM</b> 8 x 50m at a vigorous intensity	<b>REST DAY</b>	<b>BIKE</b> 5 x 1km at a vigorous to max effort	<b>REST DAY</b>	<b>RUN/WALK</b> Repeat x 2 • 200m walk at a moderate intensity • 800m run at a vigorous intensity	<b>REST DAY</b>	<b>RACE DAY!</b> 400m swim • 10km bike • 2.5km run
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**FIVE STEPS TO SUCCESS**  
A quintet of sessions and strategies to storm your first triathlon ▶

# ► FIVE STEPS TO SUCCESS

TRAINING FOR YOUR FIRST TRIATHLON'S EASIER THAN YOU THINK. JUST BE CONSISTENT, CUT DRAG AND MAXIMISE YOUR COMMUTE...

**Y**esteryear, triathlon attracted the most extreme of endurance athletes – women and men who'd think nothing of training for upwards of 25hrs per week while ticking off a full-time job.

They still exist, of course, and regularly tame extreme tris like the Norseman. Chapeau to them all but, in 2021, triathlon's more accessible than ever. Hence, our couch to supersprint training plan. To complement the plan, here are five key ways to make your debut multisport journey an enjoyable, successful one...

## THERE IS MORE THAN TRI

The majority of triathletes can't and, quite rightly, won't spend their every free spare moment training. It's the fast-track to singledom. For your first race, the ideal is to train around 5hrs per week. This could break down as five sessions with two focused on the longest discipline (bike), two on your weakest and one on your strongest.

## MAXIMISE THE COMMUTE

Sidestepping the Covid pandemic, the past decade had seen a significant rise in the amount of people cycling to work. According to Transport for London, for instance, in the year 2000 the morning peak saw motorists entering central London outnumber cyclists by 11 to 1. By 2014 that ratio had shrunk to 1.7 to 1. In 2018, for the first time on record, the average daily kilometres cycled in London exceeded four million. That's great news for health and the environment. It's also the perfect platform to boost your triathlon training time. If your bike commute's five miles, for example, you can always add an extra mile or two each way to maximise the training effect. Or you could run in and catch the bus home. Or, when fitness improves, run in and run home, making the first effort more intense and the second a recovery run.

## FREE SPEED

You, the triathlete, makes up over 80% of the frontal area on the bike. The faster

*“Beginners are advised to start with an affordable and aerodynamic set of clip-ons”*

you ride, the greater the air resistance, reaching a figure up to 90% of total drag. By reducing the width and height of the object – you – scything through the air, you'll save time for free. In other words, you can race faster for no extra effort. The ultimate aerodynamic effect comes from a triathlon bike. However, beginners are advised to start with something more affordable and accessible – namely a pair of clip-on aerobars. They clamp onto your existing handlebars, ensuring not only a lower profile, but also a narrower one thanks to bringing your hands and shoulders in.

You can also save time on the run leg with similarly slipstreaming advice. When it comes to clothing, avoid flapping as this simply adds drag. And pin your race number flush or use NoPinz to save further seconds.

## CHLORINE OVER NEOPRENE?

Unless your background's swimming, there's a strong case that your first triathlon should be pool-based. Swimming in a pool will mean you not only follow the black line, but also avoid the melee of a mass start. A multitude of new skills will make your multisport debut a draining – albeit memorable – occasion, so save the extra challenge of open-water swimming for race two when you're more experienced. It also means you can focus on training in the pool. If, however, you do sign up to an open-water triathlon, ideally train in the open-water once a week before your race.

## CORE BENEFITS

Swimming, cycling and running is all about propelling yourself forward as sustainably fast as possible. To achieve this lofty aim requires keeping a nice taut core for your limbs to work around. Simple bodyweight strength and conditioning work can be ticked off from home and will boost performance and reduce injury. Even squeezing in a couple 15min efforts each week will pay off. **220**

