

the beginner's guide to *running*

Go from 30 minutes of walking to 30 running in just four weeks with this easy plan designed by fitness editor **Martha Lourey-Bird**.

Don't let fear stand in the way of your fitness goals – running is the ideal way to get a great cardio workout and really give your weight loss a boost. And the beauty of it is just about anybody can give running a go, even if you've never tried it before.

By starting off small and building your stamina, you'll go from walking to running in just four short weeks with our program. Before beginning, ensure you can comfortably walk for 30 minutes at a brisk pace at least three days per week, as outlined in our October issue (see box).

Avoid muscle soreness

Make sure you warm up for every session by starting off at a slower pace. Wear the right clothes, such as supportive sneakers and a sports bra. Also, stick to running on smooth level surfaces to help prevent injury. Remember to cool down after your walk or run with a range of static stretches, especially for the lower body, holding each stretch for 10 to 30 seconds until you feel some resistance. Ideal moves include quad stretches for the front of the thigh, hamstring stretches for the back of the thigh and calf muscles, and abductor stretches for the outer thigh and bottom.

Mix up your routine

The *National Physical Activity Guidelines for Adults* recommend exercising for at least 30 minutes on most days of the week for health and fitness. On the days when you haven't got a walk or run scheduled, keep active by doing a non-cardio workout such as a Pilates, Pump or yoga class, or a session with hand weights or a fit ball at home. This will help keep you motivated and offer a well rounded exercise routine for optimum results.

Stretch tip

Take the time to stretch after every exercise session. The best time for this is when your muscles are still warm, just as you're finishing your workout. Stretching when warm helps to prevent injury, improves posture and can reduce next-day soreness.

WEEK ONE

Week day Beginner

Monday	30 minute brisk walk including 1 x 1–3 minute burst of running
Wednesday	30 minute brisk walk including 3 x 1–3 minute bursts of running
Friday	30 minute brisk walk including 1 x 3–5 minute burst of running
Sunday	30 minute brisk walk including 3 x 3–5 minute bursts of running

WEEK TWO

Week day Beginner

Tuesday	30 minute brisk walk including 1 x 5–10 minute burst of running
Thursday	30 minute brisk walk including 1 x 10 minute running interval
Saturday	30 minute brisk walk including 1 x 10–15 minute running interval

WEEK THREE

Week day Beginner

Monday	15 minute brisk walk and 15 minutes continuous running
Wednesday	15 minute brisk walk and 15 minutes continuous running
Friday	10 minute brisk walk and 20 minutes continuous running
Sunday	10 minute brisk walk and 20 minutes continuous running

WEEK FOUR

Week day Beginner

Tuesday	5 minute brisk walk and 25 minutes continuous running
Thursday	5 minute brisk walk and 25 minutes continuous running
Saturday	30 minutes continuous running

● Get started

Need more information? See our four-week walking program in the October 2009 issue of *Weight Watchers* magazine to get you started. If you missed it, call subscriptions on 1300 112 296 (Aus) or 0800 478 201 (NZ) to order a back issue or view the feature at www.weightwatchers.com.au/nz.