2026 ASICS Credit Union Cherry Blossom 5K Intermediate Training Program

Coach Yasmin

WEEK 1 (01/25 – 01/31)

OVERVIEW: The Credit Union Cherry Blossom is pleased to bring you this 5K Intermediate Training Program, thanks to the support of ASICS, Gatorade, Wegmans and PR Run & Walk. Are you a new-to-intermediate runner looking to build consistency over the winter months and start the spring with a strong 5K time? Then Coach Yasmin's 5K Intermediate Training Program is the program for you! Choose this program if you're comfortable running 2-3 miles at a time, 2-3 times per week. You'll spend 10 weeks building towards running 4 days a week and incorporating speed work to help you stay strong and get faster on race day. The workouts are time-based to fit your unique schedule and accommodate your current level of training.

Join the CUCB Strava Club

Share your training experience: Join the CUCB Strava Club. **New to Strava?** Create a free Strava account and follow the link above to join the club. You'll find our updates in the club's Posts section, where you can comment and ask questions.

Need Assistance or Personalized Guidance? Reach out to Coach Yasmin via email at 5kcoach@cherryblossom.org.

Monday (01/25)

Workout: REST + Mobility/Stretching/Walking

Tip: Welcome to your training program! This plan begins with 3 key workouts a week and progresses to four. The rest of the days are either rest, walking, optional easy running, or cross training. It's okay to listen to your body and move around your key workouts to fit your schedule, but try to keep them evenly spaced throughout the week and try not to miss these workouts week to week. And it's always better to do less than to do nothing at all.

Tuesday (01/26)

Workout: Key workout #1:

Goal: 2-3 mile Easy Run

Tip: Today is your first key workout. Take it easy on this first run by running at conversational pace or 60-70% of your maximum heart rate. A common approach to estimate your maximum age-related heart rate is to subtract your age from 220. For example, for a 40-year-old person, the estimated maximum age-related heart rate would be calculated as 220-40 = 180 beats per minute (bpm). The 65% level would be 180 x 0.65 = 117 bpm. There are also online calculators based on field tests. If you are unsure about what your heart rate training zones should be, send an email to CoachYasmin at 5kcoach@cherryblossom.com and she will try to help you determine what those ranges should be.

Wednesday (01/27)

Workout: Cross-training (20-25 minutes)

Tip: Cross-training is any non-running activity that gets your heart pumping. Think brisk walking, swimming or biking, e.g. Try to choose something you already normally do and enjoy. (Ex., if you do not normally lift weights, now isn't the time to start lifting heavy).

Thursday (01/28)

Workout: Key workout #2:

Goal: 5-10 minute warm-up jog/run. 4×400 meters at faster than current 5K pace. 5-10 minute cool-down jog/run.

Tip: This workout is designed to improve speed. Start the interval at a fast but controlled effort, then increase speed to faster than your most recent 5K pace with each interval. If you don't have a recent 5K pace, test out your goal pace here and adjust based on feel. Take 30-second walking or slow jogging breaks in between the sprints to recover. If you don't have access to a track, use a smart watch to track 0.25 miles. If you don't already have one, consider using a

sports watch and/or an app to track your training. Visit PR Run & Walk, our official retail partner, to find a vast selection of watches.

Friday (01/29)

Workout: Rest or 20-minute Easy Run

Tip: Rest days are important to let your body recover. You may consider taking a rest day today, if needed or desired.

Saturday (01/30)

Workout: Key workout #3:

Goal: 30-40 minute Easy Run

Tip: For this first week, the "long" run will be at conversational pace. Ideally, you should run at a pace that allows you to hold a conversation with someone. We'll work on getting to race day pace as the plan progresses.

Sunday (01/31)

REST DAY

Tip: Find a specialty running shoe store to get properly fitted for a pair of shoes. Experts at PR Run & Walk can help you find a pair that's right for you. They have the latest running shoes and apparel, including ASICS, our official shoe and apparel sponsor. Do not try to train in cross trainers or in an old pair of running shoes. The wrong shoes can lead to injury.

WEEK 2 (02/01 – 02/07)

Overview: One week down – way to go! Feeling a little sore after last week's workouts? That's normal especially if you're just getting back into running after the holidays. The most important thing is to listen to your body. You'll also start running tempo runs this week. A tempo run is usually sustained for a longer period of time or distance, usually around 15-30 minutes or a specific number of miles. Share your thoughts on your training so far on our CUCB Strava Club.

Monday (02/01)

Workout: REST + Mobility/Stretching/Walking

Tip: Monday is a great time to look ahead at the week and plan out when and where you'll complete your runs. Make sure to figure out how you'll fit in key workouts. It's okay to move them around as long as you aim not to do all your key workouts back-to-back to give your body time to rest.

Tuesday (02/02)

Workout: Key workout #1:

Goal: 2-3 mile Easy Run

Tip: Check in with your body about how today's run feels. You may be sore, but overall you should feel confident in your building mileage and consistency after a few days of rest.

Wednesday (02/03)

Workout: Cross-training (20-25 minutes)

Tip: Consider taking a Yoga class to get your body ready for the hard work ahead. Yoga can help increase your flexibility and help you avoid lingering pains and issues.

Thursday (02/04)

Workout: Key workout #2:

Goal: 30-minute Tempo Run

Tip: These are sustained-effort training runs that are typically run at about 80-85% of your maximum heart rate. Start by running 5-10 minutes at a comfortable pace, progress to a faster pace for 10-20 minutes, then bring your heart rate down with an easy run for the last 5-10 minutes. The pace should be challenging yet manageable to help develop and increase your anaerobic (lactate) threshold, as well as increase speed.

Friday (02/05)

Workout: Rest or optional 20-minute Easy Run

Tip: This Friday run is always optional – remember, more isn't always better. Listen to your body and if you're feeling good, add in the extra miles. If not, rest will help just as much.

Saturday (02/06)

Workout: Key workout #3:

Goal: 35-45 minute Easy Run

Tip: How do you decide how many minutes to run? Check in halfway through. If you're feeling good, see what it feels like to push towards 45. If you're tired, aching, or sore, be comfortable with hitting 35 and calling it a day. Listen to your body and decide what's best for you.

Sunday (02/07)

REST

Tip: Great work this week! Take this day to rest, recover and get your body ready for next week.

WEEK 3 (02/08 – 02/14)

OVERVIEW: Welcome to Week 3! Tell us how you're doing by sending an email over to 5kcoach@cherryblossom.org. This is a great week to troubleshoot paces and decide if this program is right for you. If you need more or less, the beginner and advanced programs might be a good option, so don't hesitate to reach out. Join the CUCB Strava Club to share your training experiences.

Monday (02/08)

Workout: REST + Mobility/Stretching/Walking

Tip: You're almost 1/4th of the way through your training program! You may start to feel like your easy runs are too easy and that you should be getting faster, but continue to let RPE (Rate of Perceived Exertion) and heart rate dictate your pace on easy runs, and focus on speed in your Thursday track workouts.

Tuesday (02/09)

Workout: Key workout #1:

Goal: 2-3 mile Easy Run

Tip: Don't worry about your pace; take it easy and enjoy today's run!

Wednesday (02/10)

Workout: Cross-training (20-25 minutes)

Tip: While running builds muscular endurance, it's still important to work on physical strength outside of running. You may want to incorporate moderate upper body weights as part of race preparation. Upper body strength can aid your running form and increase muscle strength.

Thursday (02/11)

Workout: Key workout #2:

Goal: 5-10 minute warm-up jog/run, 5X400 meters at faster than current 5K pace, 5-10 minute cool-down jog/run.

Tip: This workout is designed to improve speed. Start the interval at a fast but controlled effort, then increase speed to faster than your 5K goal pace with each interval. Take 30 second walking breaks in between the sprints to recover. If you don't have access to a track, use a smart watch to track 0.25 miles.

Friday (02/12)

Workout: Rest or optional 20-minute Easy Run

Tip: Consider reading articles about nutrition and how to adequately fuel your runs.

Saturday (02/13)

Workout: Key workout #3:

Goal: 40-50 minute Easy Run

Tip: Run with a friend, or consider joining a local running group if possible. Our CUCB Strava Club may help you find one, or you can look for a running club in your area at the RRCA website. Engage in conversation to maintain an easy pace on today's run. If running alone, enjoy the scenery but stay alert to your surroundings.

Sunday (02/14)

REST

Tip: You may need more sleep as your body adapts to running. Don't be afraid to tell your friends and family that sleeping is training too! 😳

WEEK 4 (02/15 – 02/21)

OVERVIEW: Hello Week 4! You should start to feel stronger now. This week introduces longer distances and time frames, but make sure to adjust your mileage in relation to what you've already been doing (not the training you 'hoped' you'd have done by now!)

Monday (02/15)

Workout: Rest + Mobility/Stretching/Walking

Tip: YouTube and various fitness apps are a great resource for mobility for runners. You'll find exercises that help your muscles fire in a coordinated way so that you can keep running pain and injury free for longer.

Tuesday (02/16)

Workout: Key Workout #1:

Goal: 3-4 mile Easy Run

Tip: The days are getting lighter and spring is on the way, but still not quite here! When running early in the morning or at night, wear reflective garments so drivers can see you from afar.

Wednesday (02/17)

Workout: Cross-training (30-35 Minutes)

Tip: Cross training is awesome for building more aerobic fitness without putting too much strain on the same muscles you use for running. But listen to your body and take a break if you feel building fatigue or if the load is already far higher than your usual workout routine.

Thursday (02/18)

Workout: Key Workout #2:

Goal: 35-minute Tempo Run

Tip: Start by running 5-10 minutes at a comfortable pace, progress to a faster pace for 15-25 minutes, then bring your heart rate down with an easy run for the last 5-10 minutes. The pace should be challenging yet manageable to help develop and increase your anaerobic (lactate) threshold, as well as increase speed.

Friday (02/19)

Workout: Rest or 20-minute Easy Run

Tip: If you're not up for the 20-minute run, you might want to go for a brisk walk on your rest day. Follow it up with a few stretches to help keep your joints fluid and ready for the next few days of work.

Saturday (02/20)

Workout: Key Workout #3:

Goal: 40-50 minute Easy Run

Tip: Staying hydrated during training is very important. Consider training with the same drink that will be served on race day by drinking Gatorade, the official sports fuel provider of the Credit Union Cherry Blossom 5K.

Sunday (02/21)

REST

Tip: Rest days are built into the schedule to ensure adequate time for recovery. Bored or miss running? Go for a walk or do a low impact activity like the elliptical or easy spinning at no more than 65-70% of max HR.

WEEK 5 (02/22 – 02/28)

OVERVIEW: Halfway there! Look how far you've come. If you've been able to follow the training plan, you're well on your way to the Credit Union Cherry Blossom 5K finish line. For extra motivation, log onto our CUCB Strava Club.

Monday (02/22)

Workout: Rest + Mobility/Stretching/Walking

Tip: Halfway through the program is a great time to reflect on how your training has been going. It's okay to miss a workout here and there, but if you miss a day on your running plan, simply pick up where you left off. Cramming or 'making up' runs can often lead to injury. Email Coach Yasmin at 5kcoach@cherryblossom.org if you've had a big training gap to get a recommendation on how to adjust.

Tuesday (02/23)

Workout: Key Workout #1:

Goal: 3-4 mile Easy Run

Tip: If your goal is to PR your 5K time, this is a solid point in the program to start building additional mileage. Choose the longer end of the range on these workouts and add in those Friday easy runs if you have the stamina.

Wednesday (02/24)

Workout: Cross-training (30-35 Minutes)

Tip: Spend some time stretching, doing light upper body weights, Yoga or Pilates.

Thursday (02/25)

Workout: Key Workout #2:

Goal: 6x400 meters at faster than goal 5K pace

Tip: Your intervals should progressively get faster - consider trying out just 5 seconds beneath goal pace to start and then see if you can decrease by 5 seconds with each progressive interval. Don't forget to warm-up and cool-down with a short jog/run.

Friday (02/26)

REST Or optional 20-minute Easy Run

Tip: Days off are important to let your body recover from the hard efforts. Don't be afraid to take them — they'll help you get faster!

Saturday (02/27)

Workout: Key Workout #3:

Goal: 50-60 minute Easy Run

Tip: Finding comfortable apparel is key to running a successful race. ASICS, the official CUCB 5K Sponsor, has a variety of apparel for your running needs.

Sunday (02/28)

REST

Tip: Make sure you are making good sleep a priority. It will assist your body in the recovery process.

WEEK 6 (03/01 – 03/07)

OVERVIEW: This is a great week to start thinking about your race-day routine and order or purchase any gear you'll need. Handheld water bottles, running watches, running clothing, and new shoes are all great potential additions to get you race-day ready. If you're near a PR Run & Walk store, they'll be happy to help you find what you need.

Monday (03/01)

Workout: Rest + Mobility/Stretching/Walking

Tip: Make sure to use rest days to stay hydrated and take care of your body just as you would on a run day.

Tuesday (03/02)

Workout: Key Workout #1:

Goal: 3-4 mile Easy Run

Tip: By now these runs should start feeling comfortable! Don't push the pace — enjoy the easy miles and run longer vs. harder. This is the most sustainable way to build fitness and to keep you fresh for your Thursday workouts, where you should be going hard.

Wednesday (03/03)

Workout: Cross-training (30-35 Minutes)

Tip: Remember to keep cross-training activities light. Don't overexert or introduce too many new activities during your training.

Thursday (03/04)

Workout: Key Workout #2:

Goal: 40-minute Tempo Run

Tip: This is your second-longest tempo run of the program! It should feel comfortably uncomfortable and challenge your endurance. Tempo runs train the cardiorespiratory system and muscular systems to efficiently absorb, deliver and utilize oxygen.

Friday (03/05)

REST Or optional 20-minute Easy Run

Tip: Listen to your body - take a rest day if needed.

Saturday (03/06)

Workout: Key Workout #3:

Goal: 60-70 minute Easy Run

Tip: This might feel long today, but if you want race day to feel easy, this run is crucial! Some of the many benefits to long runs include increased endurance, increased aerobic capacity, and getting your body used to working through fatigued muscles. Keep it up!

Sunday (03/07)

REST

Tip: Practice your race day routine. Eat what you plan to eat the morning of the race and wear the clothes and shoes you plan to use on race day.

WEEK 7 (03/08 – 03/14)

OVERVIEW: Only a few more weeks to go! Start thinking about your race-day outfit, nutrition, and mindset. What will keep you going when the going gets tough? Link up with your fellow runners on our CUCB Strava Club.

Monday (03/08)

Workout: REST + Mobility/Stretching/Walking

Tip: This is the first of your 2 most challenging weeks in the program mileage wise! Make sure you're fueling your workouts appropriately before and after and staying hydrated.

Tuesday (03/09)

Workout: Key Workout #1:

Goal: 3-4 mile Easy Run

Wednesday (03/10)

Workout: Cross-training (30-35 Minutes)

Tip: You've been working hard! Enjoy a day of stretching, light weights, or non-strenuous activity.

Thursday (03/11)

Workout: Key Workout #2:

Goal: 7x400 meters at faster than 5K pace

Tip: Extra kudos if you decide to take your picture after completing today's workout!

Friday (03/12)

REST Or optional 20-minute Easy Run

Tip: You can use this day for extra stretching and foam rolling.

Saturday (03/13)

Workout: Key Workout #3:

Goal: 65-75 minute Easy Run

Tip: Warm up by slowly jogging, then transition to running at a steady pace for the remainder of the run.

Sunday (03/14)

REST

Tip: You have a few weeks to go. Your body should start to feel more comfortable as you run more.

WEEK 8 (03/15 – 03/21)

OVERVIEW: Week 8 and feeling great! Use this week to test out your race day strategies of what your actual race day will feel like. Work out all the kinks now so you'll have less to worry about on race day.

Monday (03/15)

Workout: REST + Mobility/Stretching/Walking

Tip: It's peak week baby! There's no more important time to listen to your body and watch out for any niggles or lingering issues. This is the right time to visit a PT or your physician to make sure you're cleared to race smart and safe. Don't ignore pain.

Tuesday (03/16)

Workout: Key Workout #1:

Goal: 3-4 mile Easy Run

Tip: Make this run easy. We'll pick up the pace during Thursday's tempo run.

Wednesday (03/17)

Workout: Cross-training (30-35 Minutes)

Tip: Keep today's cross-training relatively short and easy to prepare for the hard work to come in the next couple of days.

Thursday (03/18)

Workout: Key Workout #2:

Goal: 45-minute Tempo Run

Tip: Increase the pace in the middle of this run. Start easy, increase the pace for a few minutes in the middle, then finish at an easy pace. Listen to your body over any recommendation given on a training plan.

Friday (03/19)

REST Or optional 20-minute Easy Run

Saturday (03/20)

Workout: Key Workout #3:

Goal: 75-85 minute Easy Run

Tip: Warm up by slowly jogging, then transition to running at a steady pace for the remainder of the run. It's easy to get in the zone during long runs but always be aware of your surroundings.

Sunday (03/21)

REST

Tip: Prioritize getting 7-8 hours of sleep, if not more, stretching and staying hydrated with a sports drink such as Gatorade, the official sports fuel provider of the Credit Union Cherry Blossom race.

WEEK 9 (03/22 – 03/28)

OVERVIEW: Only 2 more weeks until race day! If you haven't already done so, check out https://www.cherryblossom.org/race-weekend/ for the race weekend schedule, info on getting to the race, bag check, and more! For tips from local runners, log on to our CUCB Strava Club.

Monday (03/22)

Workout: REST + Mobility/Stretching/Walking

Tip: This begins your race taper — start to bring down the mileage and use the extra time to nourish your body with self-care activities and race prep. Make sure you know how you're getting to the race, have roped friends and family into cheering you on, and have a plan for afterwards!

Tuesday (03/23)

Workout: Key Workout #1:

Goal: 3-4 mile Easy Run

Tip: Keep your run at conversational pace. If you are still tired from Saturday's long run, take an extra day off to stretch, or shorten today's run.

Wednesday (03/24)

Workout: Cross-training (20-30 Minutes)

Tip: Use this day for extra stretching and foam rolling.

Thursday (03/25)

Workout: Key Workout #2:

Goal: 5x400 meters at 5K goal pace

Tip: Use this last speed workout to really dial in your race pace and decide what your goal is now that the training is under your belt. Your intervals should progressively get faster. Don't forget to warm-up and cool-down with a short jog/run.

Friday (03/26)

REST Or optional 20-minute Easy Run

Tip: Prioritize getting 7-8 hours of sleep, if not more, stretching and staying hydrated.

Saturday (03/27)

Workout: Key Workout #3:

Goal: 70-80 minute Easy Run

Tip: You are now in the final stages of training. This is a great time to start developing an inner conversation in your mind about what your race goals are, how you'll motivate yourself if it gets hard, and what you're looking forward to on race day!

Sunday (03/28)

REST

Tip: As you come into the last week of training, get as much sleep as you can in case pre-race jitters and excitement creep up the night before the big day.

WEEK 10 (03/29 – 04/04)

OVERVIEW: It's race week! Take pride in the work you did to get here. Cut back on your training, hydrate, and get as much rest as you can to prepare for the big day. Resist the urge to run hard or make up runs you may have missed. The hard work is done; your goal now is to get to the start line healthy.

Monday (03/29)

Workout: Key Workout #1:

Goal: 2-mile Easy Run

Tip: If you are still tired from Saturday's long run, take an extra day off and stretch, or shorten today's run.

Tuesday (03/30)

REST

Tip: Check the forecast for Saturday. Think about what you'll need to wear to prepare for the weather.

Wednesday (03/31)

Workout: Key Workout #2:

Goal: 2-mile Easy Run

Tip: You guessed it! 2 miles of running in the easy zone!

Thursday (04/01)

Workout: Key Workout #3:

Goal: Rest or 10-15 minute Easy Run

Tip: Figure out your plan (i.e. transportation) to get to the start line. Make a plan with your cheer squad on where you plan to meet after the race.

Friday (04/02)

REST

Tip: Shake off the nerves. Hydrate, sleep early, carb load. Head to the Cherry Blossom website for all the information you need about packet pick up. Visit our Getting to the Race page for maps and

details on transportation options to both the Expo and the race start.

Saturday (04/03)

RACE DAY

Tip: Aim to get to the race site at least an hour ahead of time, and make sure to leave enough time for delays and to get situated behind the starting line. Good luck and feel confident about the work you've done to get here! Once finished, cool down by going for a walk and stretch.

Sunday (04/04)

REST

Tip: Recovery after a race is important! Take the next day or two to recover your muscles. Reflect on your training and make notes for future races on what went well and what you can improve. Go for a walk to get over the soreness. Share your race day pictures on the CUCB Strava Club. Email any feedback to Yasmin at 5kcoach@cherryblossom.org. Thank you for trusting me to guide you on this journey!

