2027 CREDIT UNION CHERRY BLOSSOM 5K BEGINNER TRAINING PROGRAM

Coach Yasmin

WEEK 1 (01/25 – 01/31)

Overview: The Credit Union Cherry Blossom is pleased to bring you this 5K Beginner Training Program, thanks to the support of ASICS, Gatorade, Wegmans and PR Run & Walk. Are you a first-time 5K participant wanting to go from walking to running for this year's Cherry Blossom 5K? Then Coach Yasmin's 5K Beginner Training Program is the program for you! Follow this program if you've taken a break from running, have never run more than 1 or 2 consecutive miles before, or if you're active in other sports like cycling, rowing or basketball, but haven't done much the training program. Non-runners should follow the program as closely as possible to get the best results. If you've run in the past, you should still follow the time guidelines, but you may want to take fewer walking breaks.

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: Key Workout #1:

Goal: 20-minute key workout. Walk for 4 minutes and then ease into a slow jog for 1 minute. Do this 4 times.

Tip: Today is your first key workout. This plan begins with 3 key workouts a week and progresses to four. The rest of the days are either rest, walking or cross training. It's OK to listen to your body and move your key workouts around to fit your schedule, but try to keep them evenly spaced throughout the week. And it's always better to do less than to do nothing at all.

Tuesday (01/26)

Workout: 20-minute Cross Training (optional)

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 is not the time to start lifting heavy.)

Wednesday (01/27)

Workout: Key Workout #2:

Goal: 20-minute key workout. Walk for 4 minutes, then ease into a slow jog for 1 minute. Do this 4 times.

Tip: Always begin walking to warm up your legs. The jogging portion should be at a conversational effort - that means if you couldn't talk to a friend while doing it, you're going too fast! Consider active stretches before each workout - that means leg swings, high knees, and some jogging in place to get blood flowing to cold muscles. Visit YouTube for pre-run warmup suggestions.

Thursday (01/28)

REST

Tip: Rest days are important to let your body recover. If you are used to other kinds of intense aerobic activities like HIIT classes or kickboxing, you may want to consider cutting back temporarily during this training program. Consider instead taking a Yoga class on your rest day.

Friday (01/29)

Workout: 20-25 minute brisk walk

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 an old pair of running shoes. The wrong shoes can lead to injury.

Saturday (01/30)

Workout: Key Workout #3:

Goal: 25-minute key workout. Walk for 4 minutes, then jog/run for 1 minute. Do this 5 times. Recommend picking up the pace slightly.

Tip: 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 sports watch.

Sunday (01/31)

REST DAY

Workout: The first week is probably the hardest. Between settling into a new routine and sore muscles, you may feel like you are not improving. Be patient. Running will get easier over time. Sore muscles are good, pain is not.

WEEK 2 (02/01 – 02/07)

Overview: 1 week down! Pat yourself on the back! You might be feeling a little sore from last week's training; that's okay! As you progress, the key workouts should start to feel easier. Join the CUCB Strava Club to share your training experience.

Monday (02/01)

Workout: Key Workout #1:

Goal: 25-minute key workout. Walk for 3 minutes then jog/run for 2 minutes. Do this 5 times.

Tip: Week 2 has you increasing your jogging/running time and decreasing the duration of walking breaks. As you jog/run, maintain a conversational pace. You'll get faster naturally over the program - don't force yourself to speed up before your body is ready!

Tuesday (02/02)

Workout: 20 minute Cross Training (optional)

Tip: Cross training is optional depending on how your body is feeling, but it has been shown to help your body adapt to running (and makes the training process more fun!)

Wednesday (02/03)

Workout: Key Workout #2:

Goal: 25-minute key workout. Walk for 3 minutes then jog/run for 2 minutes. Do this 5 times.

Tip: Wear appropriate layers of clothing if running in cold weather. Runners lose a lot of heat through their head and hands, so be sure to wear a hat and gloves. You can find the latest running clothes, including outstanding apparel from ASICS, our official shoe and apparel sponsor at PR Run & Walk, our official retail partner.

Thursday (02/04)

REST

Tip: Be purposeful about your rest. You can use this day to get some extra light stretching and foam rolling. These things will help your running come together.

Friday (02/05)

Workout: 20-25 minute Brisk Walk

Tip: As you walk, start picking up your pace. The goal is to prepare yourself to go from a walk to a jog/run as the training progresses.

Saturday (02/06)

Workout: Key Workout #3:

Goal: 30-minute key workout. Walk for 3 minutes then jog/run for 2 minutes. Do this 6 times.

Sunday (02/07)

REST

Tip: Think about self-care and getting ready for the week ahead on your rest days. Plan your times for your workouts, take care of your shoes and feet, and reflect on what went well in your training this week.

WEEK 3 (02/08 – 02/14)

Overview: In week 3 you will continue to increase your total running time while decreasing your walking. Returning runners may want to end the walking breaks altogether. Check in with other beginner runners on the CUCB Strava Club. You might even find a running partner!

Monday (02/08)

Workout: Key Workout #1:

Goal: 30-minute key workout. Walk for 2 minutes then jog/run for 3 minutes. Do this 6 times.

Tip: If you've gotten off track with the program or are finding the intervals difficult, don't be afraid to adjust to your current level of fitness. The most important thing is that you keep showing up!

Tuesday (02/09)

Workout: 25-minute Cross Training (optional)

Tip: Cross training increases a bit here – still optional, but you may consider adding it in if you haven't already.

Wednesday (02/10)

Workout: Key Workout #2:

Goal: 30-minute key workout Walk for 2 minutes then jog/run for 3 minutes. Do this 6 times.

Tip: You should be able to hold a conversation as you run. If you are out of breath, consider slowing down.

Thursday (02/11)

REST DAY

Tip: Days off are very important to let your body recover from the hard efforts. You should use the rest day to do moderate upper body weights or attend a yoga class.

Friday (02/12)

Workout: 20-25 minute Brisk Walk

Tip: Walking is a great way to prepare your body for the final key workout of the week, as well as a great stress reliever. Track your pace to make it feel more like a workout!

Saturday (02/13)

Workout: Key Workout #3:

Goal: 30-35 minute key workout. Walk for 2 minutes then jog/run for 3 minutes. Do this 6-7 times.

Tip: If you're feeling confident, you can progressively pick up the pace here!

Sunday (02/14)

REST DAY

Tip: You may need more sleep as your body adapts to running. Pay attention to your rest and keep hydrated!

WEEK 4 (02/15– 02/21)

OVERVIEW: In week 4 you will continue to increase your total running time while decreasing your walking. This is the magic of the walk-run approach — soon you will be running non-stop!

Monday (02/15)

Workout: Key Workout #1:

Goal: 30-minute key workout: Walk for 1 minute then jog/run for 4 minutes. Do this 6 times.

Tip: You should start getting used to only having very short walking breaks. You can skip the walking breaks if you feel you do not need them, but if you start getting out of breath, slow down.

Tuesday (02/16)

Workout: 25 -minute Cross Training

Wednesday (02/17)

Workout: Key Workout #2:

Goal: 30-minute key workout: Walk for 1 minute then jog/run for 4 minutes. Do this 6 times.

Tip: You should be able to hold a conversation as you run. If you are out of breath, consider slowing down.

Thursday (02/18)

REST DAY

Tip: If you want to stretch on your rest day, before you do, go for a brisk walk to warm up your muscles. Warm muscles stretch better than cold ones!

Friday (02/19)

Workout: 30-minute Brisk Walk

Saturday (02/20)

Workout: Key Workout #3:

Goal: 35-minute workout: Walk for 1 minute then jog/run for 4 minutes. Do this 7 times.

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 DAY

WEEK 5 (02/22 – 02/28)

OVERVIEW: You're halfway there! This week you'll have your first jog/run with no walking breaks. If you start to feel out of breath, slow down a little bit but try not to walk. Share your training experience and give us feedback on your training by joining the CUCB Strava Club.

Monday (02/22)

Workout: Key Workout #1:

Goal: 35-minute key workout: Walk for 1 minute then jog/run for 4 minutes. Do this 7 times.

Tip: Keep focused on your goal of running confidently. Don't worry about speed, just focus on even form and remaining light on your feet. You can reduce the walking breaks if you feel like you can.

Tuesday (02/23)

Workout: 30-minute Cross Training

Wednesday (02/24)

Workout: Key Workout #2:

Goal: Jog/run for 15 minutes

Tip: Your first full run, congrats! Make sure to maintain conversational pace and check in with how you feel afterwards.

Thursday (02/25)

REST DAY

Tip: Remember to spend some time stretching, doing light upper body weights and/or Yoga/Pilates.

Friday (02/26)

Workout: 30-minute Brisk Walk

Saturday (02/27)

Workout: Key Workout #3:

Goal: 35 minute key workout: Walk for 1 minute then jog/run for 4 minutes. Do this 7 times.

Tip: If you're able to take a shorter walk break, you can reduce the amount of time walking.

Sunday (02/28)

REST DAY

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

WEEK 6 (03/01 – 03/07)

OVERVIEW: This is the last week of walk/run key workouts. As you begin to run more, remember to take your time, ease your way into it and listen to your body. Want your training to be more interactive? Join our CUCB Strava Club. It is a good way to stay connected and motivated.

Monday (03/01)

Workout: Key Workout #1:

Goal: 33- 36 minute key workout: Walk for 30 seconds - 1 minute then run for 5 minutes. Do this 6 times.

Tip: Try reducing the amount of time walking and begin picking up the pace to a run.

Tuesday (03/02)

Workout: 30-minute Cross Training

Wednesday (03/03)

Workout: Key Workout #2:

Goal: 15 minutes of easy running.

Tip: Transition from a jog to a run while maintaining conversational pace. Try to run continuously without stopping, but if you need a break, that's okay.

Thursday (03/04)

REST DAY

Friday (03/05)

Workout: Key Workout #3:

Goal: 26-28 minute key workout: Walk for 30 seconds - 1 minute then run for 6 minutes. Do this 4 times.

Saturday (03/06)

Workout: Key Workout #4:

Goal: 20 minutes of easy running.

Tip: Another milestone run! Try to run continuously without stopping. Slow down if needed, but aim to keep moving with confidence and trust in your body.

Sunday (03/07)

REST

Tip: Make sure you make sleep a priority. It will assist you in the recovery process.

WEEK 7 (03/08 – 03/14)

OVERVIEW: This is your first week of non-stop running — congrats runner! Keep your runs easy by staying at conversational pace. If you start to feel out of breath, slow down a little bit but try not to walk.

Monday (03/08)

Workout: Key Workout #1:

Goal: 15 minutes of easy running.

Tip: Try to run continuously without stopping. It's usually most tempting to walk when you're running too fast, so just slow down if needed.

Tuesday (03/09)

Workout: 30-minute Cross Training

Wednesday (03/10)

Workout: Key Workout #2:

Goal: 20 minutes of easy running.

Tip: Try to run continuously without stopping. Slow down if needed.

Thursday (03/11)

REST DAY

Friday (03/12)

Workout: 15-minute key workout:

Goal: 15 minutes of easy running.

Saturday (03/13)

Workout: Key Workout #3:

Goal: 25 minutes of easy running.

Tip: You are less than a month away from the race. 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 (03/14)

REST DAY

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

WEEK 8 (03/15 – 03/21)

OVERVIEW: In week 8, the duration of your runs will increase. These longer runs are important for increasing aerobic capacity. You'll also practice your race day routine this week. It's advisable not to try anything new (e.g. foods, clothes, shoes) on race day.

Monday (03/15)

Workout: Key Workout #1:

Goal: 20 minutes of easy running.

Tip: Make this run easy. You will be running for longer periods of time this week.

Tuesday (03/16)
Workout: 30-minute Cross Training

Wednesday (03/17)

Workout: Key Workout #2:

Goal: 25 minutes of easy running.

Tip: As your body adjusts to running, you might feel ready to pick up the pace. Slowly increase your pace in the middle of this run (after the first 10 minutes) and see how you feel. Try to maintain this pace for the next 5-10 minutes, then return to an easy pace in the last 5 minutes. If this effort feels difficult, slow down and return to an easy, conversational pace.

Thursday (03/18)

REST DAY

Tip: Prioritize getting 6-8 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.

Friday (03/19)

Workout: Key Workout #3

Goal: 20-minutes of easy running.

Tip: You can try increasing the pace again in the middle of this run. The idea is to start easy, increase the pace for a few minutes in the middle of the run, then finish at an easy pace. Listen to your body over any recommendation given on a training plan.

Saturday (03/20)

Workout: Key Workout #4:

Goal: 30 minutes of easy running.

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.

Sunday (03/21)

REST DAY

Tip: Prioritize getting 6-8 hours of sleep, if not more, stretching and staying hydrated.

WEEK 9 (03/22 – 03/28)

OVERVIEW: In week 9 you will complete your longest run before the race. If you are able to finish the long runs, this should lead to a successful race day. Have you shared your training experience? Join the CUCB Strava Club.

Monday (03/22)

Workout: Key Workout #1:

Goal: 25 minutes of easy running.

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

Tuesday (03/23)

Workout: 25-minute Cross Training

Wednesday (03/24)

Workout: 30-minute key workout:

Goal: 30 minutes of easy running.

Tip: This is your last hard week of running. You are almost there!

Thursday (03/25)

REST DAY

Tip: Prioritize getting 6-8 hours of sleep, if not more, stretching and staying hydrated.

Friday (03/26)

Workout: Key Workout #3:

Goal: 20 minutes of easy running.

Tip: Tomorrow's run will be the longest in this training plan. Take it easy on your run today.

Saturday (03/27)

Workout: Key Workout #4:

Goal: 40 minutes of easy running.

Tip: This is your last long run before the race. Keep in mind you do not need to complete a 3.1 mile training run in order to successfully finish the race. Trust your body and training and enjoy this run!

Sunday (03/28)

REST DAY

Tip: Be purposeful about your rest. You can use this day for extra stretching and foam rolling.

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 plenty of rest 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: 20 minutes of easy running.

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 DAY

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: 15 minutes of easy running.

Thursday (04/01)

REST

Tip: Be purposeful about your rest. You can use this day to get in some light stretching and foam rolling.

Friday (04/02)

REST DAY (Or optional easy 1.5 mile walk/jog)

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. 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 + CELEBRATE!

Tip: If this is your very first 5K, congrats! And same goes if this is your first race after a break or your first time crossing a finish line. You should be very proud! It's easy to want to keep going, but 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. Email any feedback to Yasmin at 5kcoach@cherryblossom.org. Thank you for trusting me to guide you on this journey!

