

USING OUR TRAINING PLANS

We've kept things simple by using just three different zones of training intensity in our programmes. You can make sure you're exercising at the right level either with a heart rate monitor (HRM) or by using perceived exertion – how hard you feel you're working.

If you use an HRM, our zones are based on your maximum heart rate (max HR). Subtracting your age from 220 will give you a theoretical max HR, but it can be inaccurate – sometimes wildly out.

Zone 1 60-80% max HR (60-75% if you are getting back to fitness or lack stamina). This is light to moderate effort; breathing and conversation is easy.

Zone 2 80-89% max HR (75-85% if you are getting back to fitness or lack stamina). Moderate to hard effort, though it is controlled and you're not about to blow up.

Zone 3 Around 90% max HR and above (85% and above when lacking fitness). Very hard; breathing is laboured and lactate makes your muscles burn.

Beginner's P L A N

WEEKS 1-4

WEEK/DAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
WEEK 1	Check your bike and kit over, making sure everything is ready for you to begin riding tomorrow.	1 hour ride, in the morning ideally, fasted (no breakfast beforehand – exercising fasted is a means of encouraging the use of more stored fat as fuel), at moderate Zone 1 effort, indoors or on moderate terrain.	1 hour evening ride over moderate terrain, ideally with a few mates or a club so you can practise riding in a group.	Two short sessions if possible: 30-40 minutes am and pm. Do the morning ride fasted, and the evening ride with an 8 second fast effort every 5 minutes.	Rest	Endurance: 30-40% of event distance on a moderate to rolling course. Stay in Zone 1 more than 75% of ride time.	Sat ride if it was missed. Otherwise, a 1 hour ride concentrating on a higher than normal cadence.
WEEK 2	Recovery day. Ideally, get a massage or at least perform self-massage of your leg muscles, especially your quads.	1 hour ride, in the morning ideally, fasted, at moderate Zone 1 effort, indoors or on moderate terrain.	90 minute evening ride, mainly low Zone 2, but include the longest hills you can find for a total of 30 minutes controlled hard climbing work.	Choice day, working on your area of weakness. You could do some extra morning fasted work up to 2 hours. Exercising fasted is a means of encouraging the use of more stored fat as fuel.	Rest	Endurance: 40-50% of event distance on a moderate to rolling course. Stay in Zone 1 more than 75% of ride time.	Sat ride if it was missed. Otherwise, 1 hour ride in a bigger than normal gear (cadence of 50-60rpm), pushing your effort on inclines for the middle 20 minutes.
WEEK 3	Rest	1 hour ride, in the morning ideally, fasted, at top of Zone 1 effort, indoors or on moderate terrain.	1 hour evening ride including hilly terrain, working out your best Zone 2 pace to stay smooth with controlled breathing.	Choice day, working on your area of weakness. You could do some extra morning fasted work up to 90 minutes.	Rest	Endurance: 50-60% of event distance on a moderate to rolling course. Stay in Zone 1 more than 75% of ride time.	Sat ride if it was missed. Otherwise, 1 hour ride in a bigger than normal gear (cadence of 50-60rpm), pushing your effort on inclines for the middle 20 minutes.
WEEK 4	Total rest day; spend time getting bike mechanics sorted, kit organised, rides planned and nutrition bought/organised.	45 minute ride, in the morning ideally, fasted, at moderate Zone 1 effort, indoors or on moderate terrain.	1 hour ride working on an area of weakness: could be climbing, descending, cornering or group riding.	Rest	Rest	Endurance: no more than 25% of event distance on a moderate to rolling course. Stay in Zone 1 more than 90% of ride time.	Sat ride if it was missed. Otherwise, 1 hour light spin with 8 second efforts every 6 minutes.

Beginner's P L A N

WEEKS 5-8

GROUP RIDING

WE'VE SUGGESTED THAT you work on your group riding skills regularly throughout your training, but if you've not been able to so far, really make the effort in the final weeks before your event. Apart from saving you a whole load of energy and getting you to the finish line quicker, the ability to ride confidently in a bunch makes you a lot safer among other cyclists. Keep these rules in mind during your sportive...

- **STAY SMOOTH.** Keep your speed and cadence as consistent as possible when there are others riding close, and avoid jerky acceleration and braking.
- **LOOK AHEAD.** Keep your eyes on the road to anticipate what's coming up. Know what the riders around you are doing, but don't focus solely on them.
- **TALK AND INDICATE.** Let the riders around you know what hazards are coming up and what you intend to do. Don't expect riders behind you to see the parked cars ahead or to sense that you're about to pull out – you need to let them know.
- **DO YOUR BIT.** If you're drafting other people, you have to expect to do your stint at the front too or you'll become really unpopular very quickly.

WEEK/DAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
WEEK 5	Rest	45-60 minute ride, in the morning ideally, fasted (no breakfast – exercising fasted is a means of encouraging the use of more stored fat as fuel) at moderate Zone 1 effort, indoors or on moderate terrain.	1 hour evening ride, with a few mates or a cycle club. Aim for moderate terrain and concentrate on group-riding skills.	Two short sessions if possible: 30-40 minutes morning and evening. Do your morning ride fasted, and evening ride with 8 second fast efforts every 5 minutes.	Rest	Endurance: 50-60% of event distance on a hilly course. Stay in Zone 1 on flats and low to mid Zone 2 on hills.	Saturday ride if missed. Otherwise, 80 minute ride in big gear, pushing on inclines for the middle 30 minutes.
WEEK 6	Recovery day. Ideally, get a massage or at least perform self-massage. Optional 30 minute light spin on turbo or flat terrain.	1 hour ride, in the morning ideally, fasted at moderate Zone 1 effort, indoors or on moderate terrain.	90 minute evening ride, low Zone 2, on the longest climbs you can find for a total of 30 minutes controlled hard climbing work.	Choice day, working on an area of weakness. You could do some extra morning fasted work up to 2 hours.	Rest	Endurance: 65-70% of event distance on a hilly course. Stay in Zone 1 on flats and low to mid Zone 2 on hills.	Saturday ride if missed. Otherwise, 90 minutes with speed practice on the descents and 5-6 1 minute Zone 3 efforts with 2-3 minutes spin recovery.
WEEK 7	Rest	1 hour ride, in the morning ideally, fasted at top of Zone 1 effort, indoors or on moderate terrain.	1 hour evening ride on hilly terrain working out your best Zone 2 pace to stay smooth with controlled breathing.	Choice day, working on an area of weakness. You could do some extra morning fasted work up to 90 minutes.	Rest	Endurance: 60% of event distance on the hillest course you can find, or ride a sportive event. Stay in upper Zone 1 on flats and Zone 2 on hills.	Saturday ride if missed. Otherwise, 80 minute ride with speed practice on the descents for the middle 40 minutes.
WEEK 8	Total rest day; spend time getting bike mechanics sorted, kit organised, rides planned and nutrition bought/organised.	45 minute ride, in the morning ideally, fasted at moderate Zone 1 effort, indoors or on moderate terrain.	1 hour ride working on an area of weakness – could be climbing, descending or feeding in the saddle.	Rest	Rest	Endurance: 30-40% of event distance on flat terrain in low to mid Zone 1.	Saturday ride if missed. Otherwise, 1 hour light spin with 8 second efforts every 6 minutes.

Beginner's P L A N

WEEKS 9-12

CYCLING PLUS

For more product reviews and the best riding advice Cycling Plus magazine is offering a great subscription deal to Prudential RideLondon entrants simply visit www.myfavouritemagazines.co.uk/ridelondon

WEEK/DAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
WEEK 9	Rest	Bonus 45-60 minute ride, ideally in the morning. Do not eat breakfast beforehand, and keep in moderate Zone 1, either indoors or on moderate terrain.	1 hour evening ride with a few mates or a cycle club. Aim for moderate terrain and work on your group riding skills.	Two short sessions on this day if possible, 30-40 minutes morning and evening. Do your morning ride fasted and the evening ride with an 8 second fast effort every 5 minutes.	Rest	Endurance: 50% of event distance on a hilly course. Stay in Zone 1 on flats and low to mid Zone 2 on the hills.	Do the Saturday ride if you missed it yesterday. Otherwise, 80 minute ride in a big gear pushing on the inclines for the middle 40 minutes.
WEEK 10	Recovery day. Get a massage or perform a self-massage. A 30 minute light spin is optional on rollers or flat terrain.	Optional 1 hour ride, in the morning. Fasted at moderate Zone 1 effort, indoors or else on moderate terrain.	90 minute ride, low Zone 2, on the longest climbs you can find for a total of 30 minutes controlled, hard climbing work.	Choice day, working on an area you know is weakest; you could do some extra morning fasted work up to 2 hours.	Rest	Endurance ride of 40% event distance on the hilliest terrain you can find, or ride a sportive. Stay in upper Zone 1 on flats and Zone 2 on hills.	Do the Saturday ride if you missed it yesterday. Otherwise, a 90 minute ride with descending at speed practice and 5-6 1minute efforts in Zone 3 with a 2-3 minute spin recovery.
WEEK 11	Rest	Two short sessions on this day if possible, 30-40 minutes morning and evening. Do the morning ride fasted and the evening ride with an 8 second fast effort every 5 minutes.	1 hour ride on hilly terrain, climbing at Zone 2 pace, staying smooth and relaxed.	The first of a double rest day to ensure that all your hard work is absorbed.	This is the second rest day. No riding at all. Chill out.	Endurance ride of 30-40% event distance on a moderate to rolling course. Stay in Zone 1 for at least 75% of the time.	Do the Saturday ride if you missed it yesterday. Otherwise, do an 80 minute ride, practising descending at speed for 30 minutes.
WEEK 12	Rest day. Spend time getting your event kit sorted, travel organised, ride food and nutrition sussed.	1 hour ride with some top of Zone 1 3-5 minute climbs on moderate terrain. Aim for 30 minutes of hard work.	1 hour ride working on an area of weakness – perhaps climbing, descending or feeding while in the saddle.	1 hour light spin with 8 second efforts every 6 minutes to test your legs' responses. No more than this; it's time to store glycogen.	Rest	Some riders like a light spin on the day before an event to keep their legs loose, others prefer not to – it's your choice.	Goal event. Enjoy it!