

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.

Improver's P L A N

WEEKS 1-4

WEEK/DAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
WEEK 1	30 minute light spin indoors or on flat terrain (low Zone 1), legs feeling no pressure.	1 hour ride, in the morning ideally, fasted (no breakfast beforehand – exercising fasted can encourage the use of more stored fat as fuel), at moderate Zone 1 effort, indoors or on moderate terrain.	1 hour evening ride, either intervals of 5-8 minutes (equal work and recovery) in mid Zone 2, or chaingang/group ride on moderate terrain: aim for 30 minutes hard work.	Two sessions if you can, moderate Zone 1 effort: 40 minutes fasted in the morning, 40 minutes rolling terrain, taking in only water in the evening.	Recovery day. Optional 1 hour light spin indoors or on flat terrain (low Zone 1), legs feeling no pressure.	Endurance: 40% of event distance on a moderate to rolling course. Stay in Zone 1 for more than 75% of your 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 2	Recovery day. Ideally, get a massage or at least self-massage your leg muscles, especially your quads. Optional 30 minutes light spin indoors or on 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 your area of weakness. You could do some extra morning fasted work up to 2 hours.	Recovery day. Optional 1 hour light spin on rollers or flat terrain (low Zone 1), legs feeling no pressure.	Endurance: 50% of event distance on a moderate to rolling course. Stay in Zone 1 for more than 75% of your 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	Recovery day. Optional 1 hour light spin indoors or on flat terrain (low Zone 1), legs feeling no pressure.	Light day – your choice of training but be mindful of tomorrow's session.	1 hour evening ride, either intervals of 5-8 minutes (equal work and recovery) in mid Zone 2, or chaingang: aim for 30-35 minutes hard work.	Two sessions if you can, moderate Zone 1 effort: 60 minutes fasted in the morning, 40 minutes rolling terrain, taking in only water in the evening.	Recovery day. Optional 1 hour light spin indoors or on flat terrain (low Zone 1), legs feeling no pressure.	Endurance: 60% of event distance on a moderate to rolling course. Stay in Zone 1 for more than 75% of your 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 30 minutes.
WEEK 4	Total rest day; spend time getting bike mechanics sorted, kit organised, rides planned and nutrition bought/organised.	1 hour ride, in the morning ideally, fasted, at moderate Zone 1 effort, indoors or on moderate terrain.	80 minute evening ride in chaingang/group, but riding to save energy – let others do the work on this one.	1 hour ride, in the morning ideally, fasted, at moderate Zone 1 effort, indoors or on moderate terrain.	Rest day. Leave the bike alone. Try to get to bed early for the next four nights.	Endurance: 30% of event distance on a moderate to rolling course. Stay in Zone 1 for more than 90% of your ride time.	Sat ride if it was missed. Otherwise, 1 hour light spin with 8 second efforts every 6 minutes.

Improver'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	Recovery day. Optional 35-40 minutes light spin on rollers/turbo or flat terrain (low Zone 1), legs feeling no pressure.	80 minute ride, in the morning ideally, fasted (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, either intervals of 5-8 minutes (equal work and recovery) in mid Zone 2 to Zone 3, or chaingang: aim for 30-40 minutes of hard work.	Two sessions on this day as an option: 1 hour fasted in the morning and 40 minutes on rolling terrain in the evening, drinking water only.	Recovery day. Optional 1 hour light spin on rollers/turbo or flat terrain (low Zone 1), legs feeling no pressure.	Endurance: 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 it was missed. Otherwise, 90 minute ride in big gear, pushing on inclines for the middle 30 minutes.
WEEK 6	1 hour morning or evening ride; Zone 1 effort, either indoors or on moderate terrain.	1 hour ride, in the morning ideally, fasted (no breakfast beforehand) at moderate Zone 1 effort, indoors or on moderate terrain.	2 hour evening ride, low Zone 2 on the longest climbs you can find for a total of 30-40 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.	Recovery day. Optional 1 hour light spin, low Zone 1, on rollers or flat terrain, legs feeling no pressure.	Endurance: 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	Recovery day. Optional 1 hour light spin on rollers/turbo or flat terrain (low Zone 1), legs feeling no pressure.	Light day – your choice of training but be mindful of what's coming up tomorrow.	1 hour evening ride, either intervals of 5-8 mins (equal work and recovery) in mid Zone 2 to Zone 3, or chaingang: aim for 50 minutes of hard work.	Two sessions on this day as an option: 1 hour fasted in the morning and 1 hour rolling terrain in the evening, drinking water only.	Rest day. Just get away from the bike and try to get to bed early for the next four nights.	Endurance: 60% of event distance on the hilliest course you can find, or ride a sportive event. Stay in upper Zone 1 on flats and Zone 2 on hills.	Saturday ride if it was missed. Otherwise, 90 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.	1 hour ride, in the morning ideally, fasted at moderate Zone 1 effort, indoors or on moderate terrain.	80 minute evening ride in chaingang/group, but riding to save energy – let others do the work.	1 hour ride, in the morning ideally, fasted at moderate Zone 1 effort, indoors or on moderate terrain.	Rest day. Just get away from the bike. Try to get to bed early for the next four nights.	Endurance: 40% of event distance but on flat terrain in low to mid Zone 1.	Saturday ride if it was missed. Otherwise, 80 minute light spin with 8 second efforts every 6 minutes.

Improver's P L A N

WEEKS 9-12



Bikeradar has created a free 100 mile training plan for you. Train, share & compare with other riders. www.bikeradar.com/training

WEEK/DAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
WEEK 9	Recovery day. Optional 40-45 minute light spin on rollers/turbo or flat terrain (in low Zone 1), no pressure should be put on the legs.	90 minute ride, in the morning ideally, fasted at moderate Zone 1 effort, indoors or on moderate terrain.	1 hour evening ride, either intervals of 5-8 minutes (equal work and recovery) in mid Zone 2 to Zone 3, or chaingang.	Two sessions on this day if possible – 60 minutes fasted in the morning and 60 minutes rolling terrain in the evening, drinking water only.	Recovery day. Optional 1 hour light spin on rollers or flat terrain at low Zone 1, legs feeling no pressure.	Endurance ride of 50% event distance on a hilly course. Stay in Zone 1 on flat land and low to mid Zone 2 on hills.	Do the Saturday ride if you missed it yesterday. Otherwise, 1 hour ride in a big gear, pushing hard on the inclines for the middle 50 minutes.
WEEK 10	1 hour morning or evening ride in Zone 1, either indoors or on moderate terrain.	1 hour ride, in the morning, fasted (no breakfast beforehand) at moderate Zone 1 effort, either indoors or on moderate terrain.	2 hour evening ride in low Zone 2 on the longest climbs you can find, staying controlled for 30-50 minutes of hard climbing.	Choice day, working on an area of weakness; you could do some morning fasted work up to 2 hours.	Recovery day. Optional 1 hour light spin in low Zone 1 on rollers or flat terrain, legs should not feel pressure.	Endurance ride of 40% event distance on the hilliest course 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, practice 2 hours of descending at speed on the declines as well as 5-6 1minute, Zone 3 efforts with 2-3 minute spin recovery in between.
WEEK 11	Recovery day. Optional 1 hour light spin in low Zone 1 on rollers/turbo or flat terrain, legs should not feel any pressure.	A day of light training – it's your choice what you want to do but be mindful of tomorrow's plan.	1 hour evening ride, either intervals of 5-8 minutes (equal work and recovery) in mid Zone 2 to Zone 3 or chaingang: aim for 30 minutes of hard work.	The first of a double rest day to allow your body to absorb all the hard work you've done.	Rest day. Get away from the bike and try to get to bed early every night before the big day.	Endurance ride of 30-40% event distance on a moderate to rolling course. Stay in Zone 1 at least 75% of the time.	Do the Saturday ride if you missed it yesterday. Otherwise, 90 minute ride with descending at speed practice on the declines for the middle 30 minutes.
WEEK 12	Total rest day – spend time getting bike mechanics sorted, kit organised, rides planned and food stocked up.	1 hour evening ride with some top of Zone 1, 3-5 minute climbs on moderate terrain. Aim for a total of 30 minutes hard work.	1 hour evening ride solo, practice on the descents and check the bike works okay. You should be feeling full of energy.	Optional 1 hour light spin in Zone 1 with 8 second efforts every 6 minutes to keep your legs alert. No more than this; it's time to store glycogen.	Rest day. Get your kit ready, get the travel details and race route in your mind. Then chill.	Some riders like a light spin the day before an event to keep their legs loose, others don't – it's up to you.	Goal event. Have fun!