

12 WEEKS TO YOUR FIRST TRIATHLON

By Matt Fitzgerald

If you are generally healthy, know how to swim and ride a bike and you are not too overweight, you can prepare for a triathlon in 12 weeks—even if you're pretty out of shape today. Untold thousands of men and women starting from a place very close to yours have prepared for a successful sprint triathlon finish in less than three months. Now it's your turn.

This 12-week beginner's sprint triathlon training plan features a manageable weekly schedule of two swims, two rides and two runs per week. It starts with very short, moderate-intensity workouts in week one and becomes more challenging each week thereafter.

Before you start this plan, you should be able to swim 200 yards (eight lengths of a standard 25-yard pool) without taking a break. You should also be able to bike for 30 minutes and run for 15 minutes. If you're not there yet, take a few weeks to gradually build

your endurance before starting this plan. For example, start with a 15-minute workout consisting of one minute of running followed by one minute of walking. In subsequent workouts, gradually increase the duration of the running segments until you're able to run for 15 minutes straight.

To monitor your workout intensity throughout this plan, use an effort scale of 1-to-10. "1" is a slow walk/coasting on the bike/treading water, "5" is a moderate, comfortable pace and "10" is a full sprint. The rest of the information you need to do each workout is contained within the training schedules themselves—except for the swim drills, which are prescribed but not described. You can learn appropriate drills from a Masters swim coach, a Web site such as Trinewbies.com or a book such as *Triathlete Magazine's Complete Triathlon Book*.

Good Luck! ▲

12-WEEK BEGINNER'S SPRINT TRIATHLON TRAINING PLAN

	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN
1	Off	SWIM Warmup: 100 yards Level 4, Drills: 4 x 25 yards (rest 30 seconds after each 25), Main set: 100 yards Level 6-7, Cooldown: 100 yards Level 4	BIKE 30 minutes Level 5-6	RUN 15 minutes Level 5-6	SWIM Warmup: 100 yards Level 4, Drills: 4 x 25 yards (rest 30 seconds after each 25), Main set: 100 yards Level 6-7, Cooldown: 100 yards Level 4	BIKE 30 minutes Level 5-6	RUN 15 minutes Level 5-6
2	Off	SWIM Warmup: 100 yards Level 4, Drills: 4 x 25 yards (rest 30 seconds after each 25), Main set: 2 x 100 yards Level 6-7 (rest 30 seconds after each 100), Cooldown: 100 yards Level 4	BIKE 30 minutes Level 5-6	RUN 20 minutes Level 5-6	SWIM Warmup: 100 yards Level 4, Drills: 4 x 25 yards (rest 30 seconds after each 25), Main set: 2 x 100 yards Level 6-7 (rest 30 seconds after each 100), Cooldown: 100 yards Level 4	BIKE 35 minutes Level 5-6	RUN 20 minutes Level 5-6
3	Off	SWIM Warmup: 100 yards Level 4, Drills: 4 x 25 yards (rest 30 seconds after each 25), Main set: 3 x 100 yards Level 6-7 (rest 30 seconds after each 100), Cooldown: 100 yards Level 4	BIKE 35 minutes Level 5-6	RUN 20 minutes Level 5-6	SWIM Warmup: 100 yards Level 4, Drills: 4 x 25 yards (rest 30 seconds after each 25), Main set: 3 x 100 yards Level 6-7 (rest 30 seconds after each 100), Cooldown: 100 yards Level 4	BIKE 40 minutes Level 5-6	RUN 25 minutes Level 5-6
4	Off	SWIM Warmup: 100 yards Level 4, Drills: 4 x 25 yards (rest 30 seconds after each 25), Main set: 4 x 75 yards Level 9 (rest 30 seconds after each 75), Cooldown: 100 yards Level 4	BIKE 10-minute warmup Level 4, 10 minutes Level 8, 10-minute cooldown Level 4	RUN 20 minutes Level 5-6	SWIM Warmup: 100 yards Level 4, Drills: 4 x 25 yards (rest 30 seconds after each 25), Main set: 4 x 100 yards Level 6-7 (rest 30 seconds after each 100), Cooldown: 100 yards Level 4	BIKE 40 minutes Level 5-6	RUN 25 minutes Level 5-6

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5	Off	SWIM Warmup: 200 yards Level 4, Drills: 8 x 25 yards (rest 30 seconds after each 25), Main set: 4 x 100 yards Level 6-7 (rest 10 seconds after each 100), Cooldown: 200 yards Level 4	BIKE 10-minute warmup Level 4, 15 minutes Level 8, 10-minute cooldown Level 4	RUN 5-minute warmup Level 4, 3 x (5 minutes Level 9/3 minutes Level 4), 5-minute cooldown Level 4	SWIM Warmup: 200 yards Level 4, Drills: 4 x 25 yards (rest 30 seconds after each 25), Main set: 8 x 50 yards Level 10 (rest 30 seconds after each 50), Cooldown: 200 yards Level 4	BIKE 40 minutes Level 5-6	RUN 30 minutes Level 5-6
6	Off	SWIM Warmup: 200 yards Level 4, Drills: 8 x 25 yards (rest 30 seconds after each 25), Main set: 6 x 100 yards Level 6-7 (rest 10 seconds after each 100), Cooldown: 200 yards Level 4	BIKE 10-minute warmup Level 4, 3 x (5 minutes Level 9/3 minutes Level 4), 10-minute cooldown Level 4	RUN 5-minute warmup Level 4, 15 minutes Level 8, 5-minute cooldown Level 4	SWIM Warmup: 200 yards Level 4, Drills: 8 x 25 yards (rest 30 seconds after each 25), Main set: 10 x 50 yards Level 10 (rest 30 seconds after each 50), Cooldown: 200 yards Level 4	BIKE-RUN Bike 40 minutes Level 5-6 + Run 10 minutes Level 5-6	RUN 25 minutes Level 5-6
7	Off	SWIM Warmup: 200 yards Level 4, Drills: 8 x 25 yards (rest 30 seconds after each 25), Main set: 8 x 100 yards Level 6-7 (rest 10 seconds after each 100), Cooldown: 200 yards Level 4	BIKE 10-minute warmup Level 4, 20 minutes Level 8, 10-minute cooldown Level 4	RUN 5-minute warmup Level 4, 4 x (5 minutes Level 9/3 minutes Level 4), 5-minute cooldown Level 4	SWIM Warmup: 200 yards Level 4, Drills: 8 x 25 yards (rest 30 seconds after each 25), Main set: 12 x 50 yards Level 10 (rest 30 seconds after each 50), Cooldown: 200 yards Level 4	SWIM-BIKE-RUN Swim 300 yards Level 5-6 + Bike 40 minutes Level 5-6 + Run 10 minutes Level 5-6	RUN 30 minutes Level 5-6
8	Off	SWIM Warmup: 200 yards Level 4, Drills: 8 x 25 yards (rest 30 seconds after each 25), Main set: 4 x 75 yards Level 9 (rest 20 seconds after each 75), Cooldown: 200 yards Level 4	BIKE 10-minute warmup Level 4, 3 x (5 minutes Level 9/3 minutes Level 4), 10-minute cooldown Level 4	RUN 5-minute warmup Level 4, 10 minutes Level 8, 5-minute cooldown Level 4	SWIM Warmup: 200 yards Level 4, Drills: 8 x 25 yards (rest 30 seconds after each 25), Main set: 8 x 50 yards Level 10 (rest 30 seconds after each 50), Cooldown: 200 yards Level 4	BIKE 15 minutes Level 4	RUN 40 minutes Level 5-6
9	Off	SWIM Warmup: 200 yards Level 4, Drills: 8 x 25 yards (rest 30 seconds after each 25), Main set: 6 x 75 yards Level 9 (rest 20 seconds after each 75), Cooldown: 200 yards Level 4	BIKE 15-minute warmup Level 4, 15 minutes Level 8, 15-minute cooldown Level 4	RUN 5 minutes Level 4, 4 x (5 minutes Level 9/3 minutes Level 4), 5 minutes Level 4	SWIM Warmup: 200 yards Level 4, Drills: 8 x 25 yards (rest 30 seconds after each 25), Main set: 3 x 300 yards Level 8 (rest 45 seconds after each 300), Cooldown: 200 yards Level 4	BIKE 1 hour 10 minutes Level 5-6	RUN 50 minutes Level 5-6
10	Off	SWIM Warmup: 200 yards Level 4, Drills: 8 x 25 yards (rest 30 seconds after each 25), Main set: 7 x 75 yards Level 9 (rest 20 seconds after each 75), Cooldown: 200 yards Level 4	BIKE 15-minute warmup Level 4, 20 minutes Level 8, 15-minute cooldown Level 4	RUN 5-minute warmup Level 4, 20 minutes Level 8, 5-minute cooldown Level 4	SWIM Warmup: 200 yards Level 4, Drills: 8 x 25 yards (rest 30 seconds after each 25), Main set: 4 x 300 yards Level 8 (rest 45 seconds after each 300), Cooldown: 200 yards Level 4	BIKE-RUN Bike 60 minutes Level 5-6 + Run 10 minutes Level 5-6	RUN 55 minutes Level 5-6
11	Off	SWIM Warmup: 200 yards Level 4, Drills: 8 x 25 yards (rest 30 seconds after each 25), Main set: 8 x 75 yards Level 9 (rest 20 seconds after each 75), Cooldown: 200 yards Level 4	BIKE 10-minute warmup Level 4, 20 minutes Level 8, 10-minute cooldown Level 4	RUN Level 4, 5 x (5 minutes Level 9/3 minutes Level 4), 5-minute cooldown Level 4	SWIM Warmup: 200 yards Level 4, Drills: 8 x 25 yards (rest 30 seconds after each 25), Main set: 3 x 400 yards Level 8 (rest 45 seconds after each 400), Cooldown: 200 yards Level 4	SWIM-BIKE-RUN Swim 300 yards Level 5-6 + Bike 40 minutes Level 5-6 + Run 10 minutes Level 5-6	RUN 60 minutes Level 5-6
12	Off	SWIM Warmup: 200 yards Level 4, Drills: 4 x 25 yards (rest 30 seconds after each 25), Main set: 6 x 75 yards Level 9 (rest 30 seconds after each 75), Cooldown: 200 yards Level 4	BIKE 10-minute warmup Level 4, 10 minutes Level 8, 10-minute cooldown Level 4	RUN 5-minute warmup Level 4, 10 minutes Level 8, 5-minute cooldown Level 4	SWIM Warmup: 100 yards Level 4, Main set: 200 yards Level 6-7, Cooldown: 100 yards Level 4	BIKE 15 minutes Level 4	SPRINT TRIATHLON