

The 10K Training Template

How To Smash Your Current PB

*A step-by-step guide
for 10k runners of
all levels, who want
to achieve a new
Personal Best.*



CREATED BY GB ATHLETE, ULTRA RUNNER,
AND COACH, STEVE TILL.

THE 10K TRAINING TEMPLATE

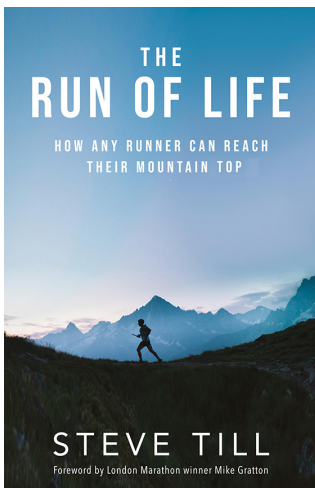
About Steve Till



Steve Till has competed in 100km and 24-hour events for his country, won medals in national championships, run more than 100 marathons, over 500 parkruns, and is a Centurion, having race-walked 100 miles in less than 24 hours.

His hard-won insights and moving examples can help you to harness your passion, identify your mountaintop, plan your ascent, overcome any setbacks and finally reach your personal summit.

The Run Of Life



Primarily about running but directly applicable to any challenge, The Run of Life explores what it takes to identify the right goal – the one that excites your passion – to plan for its achievement, to overcome any setbacks and to prepare yourself for the ultimate test.

It does this by examining my own journey from coming last in school cross country races to running for Great Britain and Northern Ireland in ultrarunning events, and the experiences of dozens of other runners, sportspeople and those who strive in any arena.

There are lessons here, but I don't preach. It is more about ideas, interest and inspiration.

Each chapter takes a theme – how to start, how to identify your true passion, how to overcome inertia – and looks at it from my own viewpoint, the experiences of those I have coached or watched, and those of famous and not-so-famous runners and achievers.

I hope that each chapter successfully weaves together thoughts, moments and stories that will engage and motivate ambitious sportspeople of all standards, and indeed anyone who strives to make the most of their abilities.

The Run Of Life is available via Amazon.

Ten steps to your 10km personal best

“I’ve done quite a few 10Ks now – 62, 63 minutes, even one just under 61 – but I just can’t seem to get under the hour. How can I take those last couple of minutes off?”

“I did 40:23 three years ago, and I always thought I’d just go on and break 40, but it never happened. What should I do?”

If this sounds at all familiar, then read on for TEN STEPS to your shiny new PB.

1

ONE. You need to commit to working hard three times a week. This does not only mean that you do those three sessions, but also that you clear the space around them to make them work! What do I mean by that? Well, for example, if Sunday is your longer run, then you need to prioritise that: you can't really stay up too late on Saturday night; and you can't go too hard at parkrun on Saturday morning. Do you see where I'm coming from?

2

TWO. The long run. What is the furthest you've run in the last month? Start by running that distance roughly two minutes a mile slower than your target 10km pace. So, if your target is sub-60 (9:30 pace), do these long runs at 11:30 per mile. If your target is sub-40 (6:20 pace), then long runs at 8:20-ish.

Build up so that you are running a mile further every few weeks. Do this until you reach 9 miles, ideally two weeks before your target 10km race. This is enough to give you the endurance to make all the lovely speed and speed-endurance that you are acquiring in the other sessions, work over the 10km distance.

3

THREE. Speed and hills. One week this will be speed; the next it will be hills. Warm up well with a combination of jogging for at least a mile, some stride-outs (faster running for 60 metres or so with a good rest between), any stretching you want to do, and then some faster strides up to sprinting speed.

Speed: start with 30 seconds fast, 30 seconds jog, repeated 6 times, on flat ground. Do this session the first and third weeks, then on the fifth and seventh, do 4 times 60 seconds fast, 60 seconds jog. Build this up to 8 times 60/60 every other week.

Hills: pick a gradual hill, and start with 6 times 15 seconds uphill fast, with a strict jog down between the efforts on weeks 2 and 4. On week 6, move this up to 2 sets of 4 times 30 seconds with a strict jog down, and 3 minutes rest between the sets. Again, build this up sensibly over the weeks.

Make sure you are disciplined about both of these types of sessions, be-

cause the hills in particular are the sort of session that sees me standing at the start line, whistle round neck, stopwatch in hand, shouting things like, “Turn straight round, don’t dawdle at the top.”

My athletes tell me that they can hear me yelling these things even when I am not around!

4

FOUR. Tempos. This is the big one. Miss everything else, but don’t miss this! These sessions assume that you can initially perform between 1 and 2km at your target 10km pace – be it sub-70, sub-60, sub-50 or sub-40.

Do the same warm up as you do for the speed and hill sessions above, and then.....

First week, your tempo session is 2x2km at target pace with 5 minutes’ walk/jog between – denoted “2x2km @ T (5 mins)”.

Second week, you do 3x1km at 30 seconds per km under target pace with 2 minutes’ walk/jog between – denoted “3x1km @ T-30 (2 mins)”.

Subsequent weeks go: 3,2,1 @ T (7,5 mins) // 4x1km @ T-30 (2 mins) // 2x3km @ T (5 mins) // 2x2km @ T-30 (4 mins) // 5x1km @ T-45 (2 mins) // 4,3,2 @ T (7,5 mins).

You can, if you like, do these in miles, so, for example, you could start with 3x1mile @ T (5 mins).

Do you see what we are doing? We are inching you week by week towards the sort of sustained speed you will need to achieve your 10km goal. These tempo sessions work directly in the crucial pace zones, moving you from where you are to where you need to be.

This could be moving our 62-minute 10km runner, who can manage 10-minute miles for 2 miles in training at present, to a condition where he can achieve 3 miles at 9:30s (indicative of a likely PB.)

Or it could be elevating our 40+ minute runner, who can cope with 7s for 2 miles, to a state where she can accomplish 6:20s for 3.

5

FIVE. The philosophy. It's important that you understand and buy into this. My athletes and I believe that the long runs provide the endurance to maintain the required pace over the whole distance, that, at the other end of the scale, the speed and hills supply the leg strength and raw speed to make that pace feel easier (at least at first), allowing those vital tempo sessions to work their magic.

TYPICAL WEEK'S TRAINING SCHEDULE

Monday: Jog
Tuesday: Speed or hills
Wednesday: Jog
Thursday: Tempo
Friday: Rest
Saturday: Jog or easy parkrun
Sunday: Long run

Training seriously for an event has to be multi-layered, in this way. It is about working on all of your "gears" in the different sessions, so that, on race day, the speed, strength, speed-endurance and stamina all come together to give the athlete the best possible opportunity to deliver an optimum performance.

6

SIX. Rest. To allow you to perform well in the three key sessions above, you need to make the other days easy or rest days. Don't get sucked into a "burn-up" the day before your scheduled tempo.

7

SEVEN. Other exercise. This should certainly not interfere with your training – don't have a long, hard tennis match on the Saturday and expect to complete your long run satisfactorily the next day. But weights may become an important part of your routine, especially if you are towards the sharper end of the speed pyramid and leg strength is an important factor in your leg speed.

8

EIGHT. Stretching. There is much debate at present about the merits of stretching for runners. From my own personal experience and that of

my runners, stretching warm muscles can do no harm and may be hugely beneficial.

For example, I had a very sore Achilles tendon for a while, but, having learnt to stretch my calves a mile into every run, I have never suffered since.



9

NINE. Diet is important, both for correct fuelling and for weight optimisation.



10

TEN. And finally the 10km itself. Warm up well. Position yourself sensibly at the start. Know your correct pacing. Don't panic. Commit.

You've dedicated yourself to this goal for 8, 16, 24 weeks, now commit. What's the difference between dedication and commitment? Think of bacon and eggs: the hen is dedicated, but the pig is committed.

If you follow these 10-Steps, then you're sure to achieve your new PB.

Steve Till.