

STRENGTH RUNNING

How to Plan a Season

Planning your training season is critical for success. To help you schedule your race season, use this worksheet to determine the many variables that affect how your training cycle is structured.

Step 1: Pick Your Goal Race

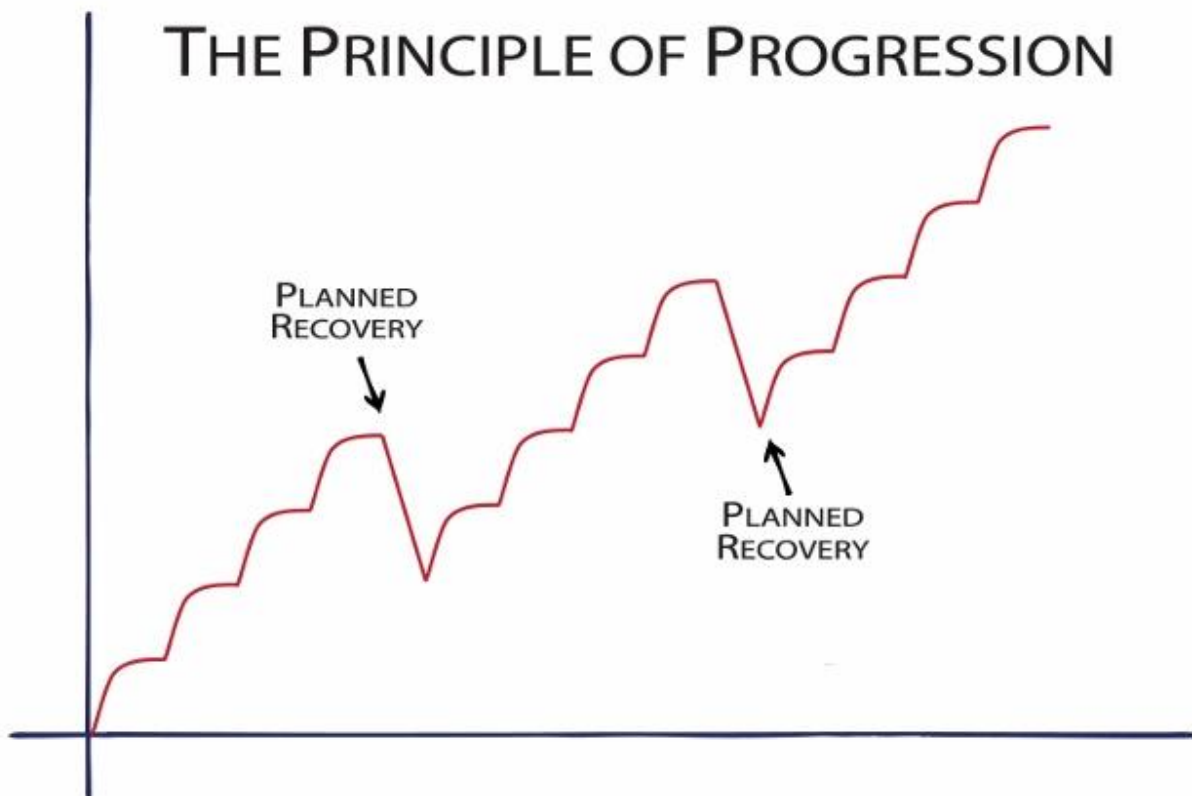
Your goal race is the #1 priority of the season. It's the "A" goal that the entire season is built around.

Write down the distance and date of your goal race – making sure you follow these guidelines:

- The goal race should be 12-24 weeks from today, allowing you enough time to train.
 - 5k – 10k goal races don't require as long of a training cycle so they can be 12-16 weeks
 - Half Marathon – Marathon goal races should have 16-20 week training cycles
 - Ultramarathon goal races should have 20-24 week training cycles

Step #2: Plan Your Training

Every training plan should have a general progression of mileage and workouts:



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Each training season has three main components:

- The **base phase** of training is first and should be 4-8 weeks long. It focuses on endurance and preparing you for harder workouts later in the cycle.
- The “**race-specific**” or “competition phase” of training comes next and should be 4-8 weeks long. Workouts become more difficult and mileage plateaus.
- The **taper period** is last and includes a 2-3 week phase of reduced mileage and slightly increased intensity from the competition phase.

Step #3: Schedule Tune-up Races

Tune-up races help you prepare for your goal race. Follow these guidelines to help you plan these races:

- Marathon runners should schedule a half marathon tune-up race 4-6 weeks from the goal marathon.
- Half marathoners can schedule 2-3 tune-up races in the 4-6 weeks before the goal race. Great HM tune-up race distances are between 8k – 10 miles in length.
- 10k runners can schedule 3-4 tune-up races in the 4-8 weeks before the goal race. Great 10k tune-up race distances are between 5k – 10k in length.
- 5k Runners can schedule 4-5 tune-up races in the 8 weeks before the goal race. Great 5k tune-up race distances are between 800m – 5k in length.

This table summarizes the distances for each race:

Peak Race Distance	Tune-up Race Distance
5k	5k, 800m - 2-mile track
10k	5k, 8k
Half Marathon	8k, 10k
Marathon	10k - Half Marathon

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Below is an example tune-up race schedule for the 10k during the final 8 weeks of the season:

Week 1	5k Race
Week 2	<i>No Race</i>
Week 3	2k - 2mi Race
Week 4	5k Race
Week 5	10k Race
Week 6	No Race
Week 7	5k Race
Week 8	10k Goal Race

Of course, this is just a high-level view of sound season planning. If you'd like help planning a season around your goal race, consider a [custom training plan](#).