

NEW RUNNERS COUCH-TO-5K COURSE

Commencing 5 September 2020



Are you new to running or returning after a break? Come join us!

Following on from the highly successful and popular C25K courses we have held for the past three years, we are delighted to again offer this for all new or returning runners. Many more people enjoy and succeed at running when they have running buddies! Taking up running can seem like a scary prospect, especially if you feel out of shape or unfit but Couch-to-5k with West Coast Runners Cyprus will help get you running in just a few weeks.

What is Couch-to-5k? Couch-to-5k is a well established, tried & tested running plan and is the ideal way to get started. It is a 10-week programme which involves walking and running for about 20-30 minutes three times a week. Gradually you will walk less and run more each session until you are able to run continuously for 5km.

How does Couch-to-5k work? Probably the biggest challenge a new runner faces is not knowing how or where to start. Often when trying to get into exercise, we can overdo it, feel defeated and give up when we're just getting started. Couch-to-5k works because it starts with a mix of walking and running to gradually build up your fitness and stamina. For instance, Week 1 involves running for just 1 minute at a time with 1½ minute walk breaks in between, creating realistic expectations and making the challenge feel achievable right from the start.

Who is Couch-to-5k for? Couch-to-5k is for everyone: even if you've never run before, Couch-to-5k is an easy way of getting fitter and healthier. If you have any health concerns about beginning an exercise regime like Couch-to-5k, make an appointment to see your GP and discuss it with them first.

What are the benefits of running? There are plenty of benefits from getting into running:

- For starters, it's an easy, relatively cheap way of improving your physical health.
- Running requires little equipment but a good pair of running shoes that suit your foot type may help improve comfort.
- Running regularly will improve the health of your heart and lungs. It can also help you lose weight, especially if combined with a healthy diet.
- There's evidence it may help increase bone density in some people, which can help protect against bone diseases like osteoporosis.
- There are also mental benefits of running: taking on the challenge of Couch-to-5k can help boost your confidence and self-belief, as you prove to yourself that you can set yourself a target and achieve a goal.
- Running regularly can also be a great stress reliever and has even been shown to combat depression.

There are even more benefits when you do Couch-to-5k with West Coast Runners Cyprus!

We have held very successful and popular C25K courses for the past three years so you're in good hands! Whether you have never run before or are returning after a break, we promise you a warm welcome and lots of help & encouragement. To help you get started and succeed at running, our club members volunteer to be mentors each week to help new runners. It can be tough when you are just starting out so our mentors will help & support you, provide advice & encouragement and answer any questions that you may have – some of them started out by doing our C25K courses in the last three years so who better to advise and motivate you! It is based on you training THREE times a week: we will mentor you on one session a week on Saturday mornings and you are welcome to come along to our Tuesday afternoon, Wednesday morning or Thursday afternoon club runs if you want to train alongside

us for your other two sessions. Our current monthly running schedule showing times and locations is always on our website and Facebook page. Please note that we cannot always guarantee any mentors would be available to run with you at your other two weekly sessions (although we will try our best) but we will be available at the start and finish of the session for a chat and catch-up! Alternatively, you may prefer to run on your own or buddy up with someone else in the group at a time that suits you better. There are various C25K apps and podcasts that you can download to guide you for your other two weekly sessions. Alternatively, you can simply follow the training programme in a low tech, old school way just using a watch to time your run/walk intervals!

Please note that you can repeat any of the weeks until you feel physically ready to move on to the next week.

Sounds great! How do I start?

- Our next ten-week New Runners C25K course will start on **Saturday 5 September 2020** at **7.30am**.
- We meet at the **Lighthouse Beach Cafe** and head along the coastal path towards the harbour and back. Please aim to arrive 5-10mins early so you don't miss any announcements or important information and we can start training promptly at 7.30am.
- If you're still not sure, why not try a **FREE two-week trial**? We don't want money to be a barrier to running so it only costs **€5** to join our C25K course. This is even fully refundable against annual club membership (normally €20) if you decide to join West Coast Runners Cyprus at the end of the course, making it a real bargain at only **€15!**
- If you are planning to attend (or if you have any queries or need any more information), please telephone the Course Leader **Diana** on **97761015** or **Louise** on **97697798**.
- Each week when we meet up, the Course Leader and mentors will check in with everyone to find out how your running is going and if you have any questions. That week's volunteer mentors will be available to run with you.
- Our mentors will get everyone started on their 5 minute warm-up walk and then we'll jump right into whatever week you're doing in C25K.
- In the final week, West Coast Runners will arrange a measured & timed 5km run you can take part in as a grand finale to your training – finishers' certificates and prizes will be awarded! After that, you'll be ready to join us on our regular club runs!

Tips on Progression

- This programme is designed for new runners to GRADUALLY build up their running ability so that they can run 5km without stopping.
- Structure is important for motivation so try to allocate specific days of the week for your runs and stick to them.
- Rest days are critical. A rest day in between each run will reduce your chance of injury and also make you a stronger, better runner.
- Resting allows your joints to recover from what is a high-impact exercise and your running muscles to repair and strengthen.
- Some new runners starting the programme may experience calf pain or sore shins. Such aches can be caused by running on hard surfaces or by running in shoes that do not have enough foot and ankle support. Always do the five-minute warm-up walks as instructed before each run and check that your running shoes are offering good support.
- For more information on preventing and treating injuries, read the NHS page on sports injuries <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/sports-injuries>
- You will have good runs and bad runs. Accept it and don't spend too much time analysing the how and why. Even a bad run is good for you!

