

Ironman Program Sample Week

Swim 3:00 - Bike 9:50 - Run 5:10 -- Total: 17:00

Monday

Total recovery day -- relax, recover, stretch out, and enjoy...

Tuesday

SWIM 0:45

WARM UP

400 Swim, 200 Kick, 300 Pull

MAIN SET

4 x 400 @75-85% w/30 sec rest

- every 4th length Choice

COOL DOWN

200 @under 60%

BIKE 1:30

20:00 gearing pyramid as follows:

- 4:00 in easy gear @50%

- 6:00 in next harder gear @55-60%

- 6:00 in next gear @60-70%

- 4:00 up one more gear @75%

MAIN SET

3 x (6.2mi / 10km / 17:00) as follows:

- #1 @75%, followed by 3:00 recovery spin

- #2 @84-92%, followed by 10:00 recovery spin

- #3 @84-92% -- go straight into the cool down:

COOL DOWN

Continue spinning, bringing your HR down slowly until it's under 50% by the end

DAILY TOTAL: 2:15

Wednesday

Today's total is three hours -- the maximum that we'll ever ask you to do on a weekday -- and you'll need to keep your focus on making it through as easily as possible. Remember, high training volume = low training intensity!

RUN 1:15

15:00 warm up jog, allowing your body to slowly get up to 60-65%
4 x 7:00 steady tempo runs @70-75% w/3:00 @60-70% after each

- focus on holding proper running form

Bring your HR back down gradually, to 60% with 5:00 remaining down to 50% by the end.

BIKE 1:45

WARM UP

20:00 spinning @90-95rpm

DRILLS

2 x 3:00 Isolated Leg Training w/30 sec recovery after each

3 x 4:30 Variable Gearing ("VG") set w/30 sec recovery spin after each

- each repeat goes 3 x thru the following:
- 40 sec in moderate gear @95-100 rpm
- 20 sec in easy gear @110-115 rpm
- 30 sec in hard gear @85-90 rpm

repeat the following:

2 x 3:00 Isolated Leg Training w/30 sec recovery after each

MAIN SET

2 x (6.2mi / 10km / 18:00) @75% w/2:00 sec easy spinning

- hold 90-95rpm cadence throughout

COOL DOWN

15:00 easy spin (small chain ring) @95rpm, allowing your HR to return to 50% for the final few minutes.

DAILY TOTAL: 3:00

WEEK-TO-DATE: 5:15

Thursday

SWIM 1:00

WARM UP

400 Swim - 200 Kick - 200 IM

MAIN SET

8 x 250 w/30 sec rest

(Alternate set: 8 x 200 w/30)

- descend 1-4, 5-8
- the first one in each set of 4 should be @75%; the last one at race pace

COOL DOWN

600 Pull, long and relaxed

RUN 1:05

As usual, this session is designed to be done at a track. The durations are included in case you need to run on the road instead.

15:00 easy jog, gradually raising your HR to 70%. This first intermediate set is designed to elevate your HR for the main set:

4 x In & Out (100 / 20 sec) -- 800 total. The main set is designed to get your HR elevated relatively quickly and then held in the suggested zone for the entire period -- the rest intervals will only be enough to allow you to catch your breath, not fully recover.

3 sets of:

4 x (400 / 1:45) @84-92% w/(100 / :30) easy jog after each
- take an additional (800 / 4:00) between sets

Jog easy @60% or below to the end

DAILY TOTAL: 2:05

WEEK-TO-DATE: 7:20

Friday

SWIM 0:45

WARM UP

400 Swim - 200 Kick - 200 IM

MAIN SET

2 sets of

(5 x 150 @75-80% w/30 sec rest); w/1:00 btwn sets

- set #1 is Swim; #2 is Pull

(ALTERNATE SET: 2 sets of 4 x 150)

COOL DOWN

200 easy swim

BIKE 1:00

This is an easy recovery workout designed to give you some relief before the long weekend. If you're dragging and need some additional recovery, feel free to skip this one

-- but make up for it tomorrow!

WARM UP

20:00 spinning @95rpm gradually raising your HR up to 65-70%

DRILLS

3 x 3:00 Isolated Leg Training w/30 sec recovery after each
Continue spinning @65-70% intensity & 90-95rpm cadence. Bring your HR down under 50% by the end.

DAILY TOTAL: 1:45

WEEK-TO-DATE: 9:05

Saturday

This is one of the epic "Iron Days" that you'll have prior to your race, to instill confidence that your body, your equipment, and your fueling strategies are going to be where you need them to get through your big day. Approach this weekend as one big challenge, and have fun with it!

SWIM 0:30

This can be put in either first thing in the day -- to simulate the order in a triathlon -- or last in the day, to enable a more complete recovery. And, if you're completely shot, you can also skip this entirely (believe me, I've been there!).

800 warmup swim, gradually getting your HR from 60-70%

If you're doing this workout last, then reverse the intensities (80-75-70-65%) 400 @65% - 300 @70% - 200 @75% - 100 @80%

BIKE 4:35

Get psyched, be prepared, bring along enough spare tires, and test out your fueling strategies here. I've always found it more realistic and manageable (though mentally challenging) to break this kind of ride into multiple loops, with each one ending back at the house, to help simulate an aid station -- more like the "turnaround point"!

If the weather is awful today, then feel free to switch the Saturday and Sunday schedules. Get out there and enjoy!

RUN 0:50

Remember, the duration is really what counts, and you're all teaching your bodies what they will need to do to keep going and going...

Again here, plan to have substantial aid available before and during this effort. You're likely dehydrated after your ride (it's much harder to gauge how thirsty you are on the bike), and you'll benefit from your run much more if you approach it slowly and gradually.

Break this into multiple loops if necessary, and keep going!

DAILY TOTAL: 5:55

WEEK-TO-DATE: 14:00

Sunday, 6/29

What's in store after yesterday? You can view this as being the "rest of the run" -- or a "bike sandwich" as it's been known to be called. You'll begin with essentially no legs, and slowly you'll find life returning to them. Then you'll hop on your bike for an extension of the run, which will hopefully also help circulate the blood and help you feel stronger. And finally, you'll finish with your final "victory lap" to the finish...

RUN 1:20

I've found it easiest here to break this into 40 minute segments, preferably as loops that begin and end at the house -- it's sometimes even better if it's broken into one 50-minute and one 30-minute segment following different routes. Keep your HR below 70% throughout, which after yesterday shouldn't be too tough...

BIKE 1:00

This can be done on the road for the sake of more scenery, though the intensity (hold it under 70% here as well) will be easier to control indoors.

If you're inside, break it up as follows:

3 aerobic intervals @60-70% intensity w/3:00 recovery after each:

- #1 (8.4mi / 13km / 22:00)
- #2 (5.6mi / 9km / 17:00)
- #3 (2.8mi / 5km / 9:00)

RUN 0:40

Then it's back outside for your final "victory lap"!

DAILY TOTAL: 3:00

WEEK-TO-DATE: 17:00