

You too can run the Ahwatukee YMCA 5K April 4

By DAVID ALLISON
SPECIAL TO AFN

In the financial quagmire we are currently all in, one must find other rewarding outlets to spend time with family and friends. And running in the Ahwatukee Foothill YMCA's 5K on April 4 is a great way to help out our community, build up a good sweat and have fun with the whole family.

"But Dave, I have never even run a 5K before and how long is that exactly, anyway?"

Have no fear my fellow Ahwatukeean and East Valley novice runners, I am here to allay your fears of the 3.1 mile race you are contemplating on running as your read this piece. If I can coach novice runners in 20 weeks to complete an entire marathon (26.2 miles), then I am confident in the 5-plus weeks you have before this race, even if you have been a couch potato since your 2007 New Year's Resolution to get in shape (which just missed your fitness goal when you gave up on Jan. 8, 2007), you

Here's your training plan:

Sun.	Mon.	Tues.	Wed.	Thurs.	Fri.	Sat.
Rest (March 1)	15-minute walk or run	Rest	15-minute walk or run	Rest	Rest	15-minute walk or run
Rest	20-minute walk or run	Rest	20-minute walk or run	Rest	Rest	25-minute walk or run
Rest	25-minute walk or run	Rest	25-minute walk or run	Rest	Rest	30-minute walk or run
Rest	30-minute walk or run	Rest	25-minute walk or run	Rest	Rest	35-minute walk or run
Rest	35-minute walk or run	Rest	15-minute walk or run	Rest	Rest	RACE DAY! (April 4)

can be ready to cross the finish line for this 5K in early April.

Now I'm not saying you will set any world records, may have to walk a bit, but you'll be surprised how your endurance can improve in five short weeks by following this plan.

But before I get to the actual training plan, there are a few items we need to address:

1. You should always consult a doctor if you are unsure about your health before any type of physical exertion.
2. If you have bad knees/joints or a bad heart, then again heed the advice in point No. 1.
3. Get a good pair of running shoes. This is the only significant investment you need to make

in the sport of running. I would suggest going to a running store like Sole Sports or Run AZ, both in the immediate area. At a running store they will check out your running stride, find the proper shoe for your foot and strike, rather than slap a shoe on your foot that may be inappropriate for your body type, gait and the type of running you will be doing.

4. Sign up for the race *now* before you get cold feet (you can go to active.com to sign up for the race online or sign up at the YMCA in person).

5. Shake off the self-doubt and understand that you really *can* do this!

I've developed a simple run-

ning plan for a novice athlete who wants to finish his/her 1st 5K. You can either walk or run these workouts (or do a combination, as in, run two minutes, walk two minutes, etc). This is dependent upon your current fitness level. On the schedule you have at least one day between workouts. It's important for beginners not to over do it when starting a program. By the third week you may feel like you want to ratchet up the workload a bit - *don't!* This means you are getting into shape and your confidence is growing - this is a good thing. I always tell my runners that if you want to do more, you can always increase your runs *after* the goal race, not before it.

If you plan on walking the entire 5K, then the race will probably take you somewhere in the range of 45 to 60 minutes to complete. If you run the entire race, you will most likely be in the 30- to 40-minute range. As you can see, the longest workout you have is 35 minutes. I do this because I would rather you push yourself on race day (you'll be amped up on endorphins, nerves and pre-race excitement, which will get you across the finish line), then before the race and potentially injure yourself.

I hope to see you at the race and if you have any questions, please feel free to contact.

Good luck!

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