

Dock2Dock

Training for the 10k distance

Select your swimming goal: are you a?

1. Completer
2. Competer

Key considerations to help you decide whether you will choose 1 or 2?

Current fitness and ability level – questions to answer are:

- **A** Do I have reasonable technique that I can develop in time to swim this longer distance?
- **B** Do I need to work on technique?
- **C** Can I swim for at least 30 minutes without stopping?
- **D** If I can do the above, then with 8-10 weeks consistent training I will be able to progress enough to complete.
- **E** If I have been swimming for a while and have completed or competed in events before and been swimming consistently then I'm ready to jump straight in to the plan



NOWCA training plan devised for you by **Rick Kiddle, NOWCA National Coach**

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Time to train

If the above is ok then realistically do I have time to get to the water regularly enough? Minimum of 4/5 times a week.

Motivation

Based on above if that is ok then can I physically make myself go to water? If you are questioning yourself here, you may want to consider dropping down to the 5km??

Support

Don't be selfish and over train when your family need you. Better still, ask them to support you in your goal. You need their backing on this venture, so you don't feel guilty training all the time. Maybe get them to help time you or hand you food or even be there in case of an emergency (never swim in open water on your own). You also want them there on the day cheering you on.

Structure

It is really helpful to follow a plan and sessions that are structured and progressive. We can provide this element here!



Health

Do you have any underlying medical or injury issues? Common sense should mean that you get checked out by your doctor if you think that you are jeopardising your health in any way.

Nutrition

Swimming 10km is like running a marathon. It cannot be done on water alone. You will need a feeding strategy to give you energy from start to finish as well as pre-race and post-race recovery. See training tips on **dock2dock.co.uk/training-tips**

Remember with enough time and support you can achieve anything you set out to. You can also change physical shape if you incorporate what you eat and combine it with the training you do.

Keep calm and let's get going. The journey to your goal starts with the first stroke of your first swim!

If you're preparing to step up to the 10k distance for the first time or are looking to get a Personal Best here is your guide. And don't forget we also have a **brilliant online swimming course** that can be used as a foundation course to prepare you before you start this plan. In fact, it is the perfect steppingstone.

In any case you need to decide today what level you are currently at and then get started.



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Swimming volume is not always the best plan!! It is best to swim consistently and structure the workouts that in combination will add the endurance you need to swim at good pace all the way round.

IF we were to look at volume a swimmer would want to already be comfortably covering 10'000m in training during a week of 4/5 sessions for between 4>8 weeks.

So, what will a swimming week look like for you now?

A. Technique and short intervals x 2

B. Progressively longer Interval sessions x 2

C. Longer slower endurance workouts x 1

D. In second and third block (threshold endurance x 1)

How do we measure progress?

1. Building distance and sessions progressively
2. Swimming faster with fewer strokes
3. Feeling stronger with good technique
4. Make at least three of your swims 'key sessions' each week that you don't miss.
5. Try to ensure you're rested before these 'key sessions'.
6. Other swims should either be technique focused sessions or social group or club swims.

We have included three blocks of sessions for you to follow. Each block of training lasts between two to four weeks, so you can fit in structured training to follow if you are starting, and/or the event falls sooner than the whole three blocks of training allow. There is plenty of scope to do a little more or less depending on how you feel, time available or current level.

In each block there are multiples of A, B, C. D. Some of the sessions may be best suited for the pool, however if you cannot get into a pool for any reason you should easily be able to adapt the open water venue by using the buoys, time and RPE to help you set your distances and effort levels. It doesn't matter if they're not exact distances as long as you use the same ones all the time so you can track and measure progress.



Safety:

Think about temperature and time in the water if you are planning to swim without a wetsuit. If you need to train in the wetsuit it will be different from on the race day without. Preparation for race day is very important so there are no surprises.

Pace:

Estimate your race pace based on perceived rate of exertion. You can get this fairly accurate by judging the number related to your effort. *Note:* your RPE numbers can change daily if you are having a 'good day' = high threshold because your training is going well, you are recovering efficiently, good sleep, good nutrition, low stress.

Or having a 'bad day'= low threshold because you're not recovering well, poor sleep, high stress, bad diet.

Note: did you know your threshold can change daily and even in the middle of a workout. Have you ever felt rubbish at the start (low threshold) so you had to slow down? Gradually you felt better and better and ended up flying!! (Raising to a high threshold)

For example:
Rate of Perceived Exertions Scale (RPE)

1 = Asleep and 10 = As hard as you can possibly go before you have to stop.

Therefore:

Warm up	3 > 4.5
Easy to Steady	5 > 6
Aerobic	6 > 7.5

10km Threshold or Race pace = 7.5>8.5 (depending on how you feel, energy level, volume of training before event, how rested you are etc)

Open Water Venue Course Set up

For the open water sessions, you may additionally have to adapt to the course set-up at your local venue or estimate distances based on swimming time.

For example, if the session plan has 6 x 200m and the loop length at your venue is 400m, then estimate roughly where 1/2 of the distance is so you can take recovery rests at that point (float, tread water or switch to easy backstroke or breaststroke).

For all sessions complete a warm up of around 400m - 600m at RPE of 3>5 including upper body mobilisation and cool down of 200m - 400m after the main sets including upper and lower body stretches.



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BLOCK ONE
BASE AND BUILDING

Warm ups (open water) 10-15mins

1) Upper body Mobilisation for 2>3mins (this can include stretch cord work if you have access to one)
2) Acclimatisation entry to open water 1 min approx. (cooling the skin and breathing slowly out with face in the water)
3) 4 x 50m or 30-50 seconds (3-4RPE) easy long slow stretch out (approx.) practice sighting, limit leg action and focus on higher recovery arms with good long entry and glide and push phase of the stroke. 10 sec recovery between each one. Odd number use bilateral breathing drill (note: do not use this in harder efforts and the race)
4) 2 x 100m or 60-90 seconds (4-5RPE) easy long slow stretch out (approx.) practice sighting, limit leg action and focus on higher recovery arms with good long entry and glide and push phase of the stroke. 10 sec recovery between each one. Odd number use bilateral breathing drill (note: do not use this in harder efforts and the race)
5) 1 x 200m or 2-4mins (5.5RPE) building pace and arm turnover. Practice an intermittent 6 beat leg kick action to replicate the start and turns techniques, focus on lengthening stroke but incorporate a strong catch and pull phase of the stroke. Breathing every two strokes with popeye technique and good crocodile eyes sighting. **(if not sure see NOWCA online plans)**

Cool down (open water) 5-10mins

1) 200m or 2-4mins easing pace and stretching out. Add a strong leg kick at the end of the swim to ensure you don't feel lightheaded.
2) Exit the water and make sure you don't get cold. If possible, take off the wetsuit and start progressive stretches for the upper and lower body. Include shoulder instep/ankle stretches if you have poor flexibility. Drink plenty of water.

(NOTE: please see NOWCA online courses for more information on core knowledge such as stretching and technique)

Workout Recap info:

- **A.** Technique and short intervals x 2
- **B.** Progressively longer Interval sessions x 2
- **C.** Longer slower endurance workouts x 1
- **D.** Threshold endurance workouts x 1

Base and building endurance phase use A.>H. intervals @ (6-7.5RPE)

- **A.** 4-8 x 50m or 45seconds-1min with 30 secs recovery
- **B.** 4-6 x 100m or 1-2mins with 60 secs recovery
- **C.** 4-8 x 100m or 1-2mins with 20 secs recovery
- **D.** 2-4 x 200m or 2-4mins with 60 secs recovery
- **E.** 4-8 x 200m or 2-4mins with 120 secs recovery
- **F.** 1-4 x 400m or 6-8mins with 60 secs recovery
- **G.** 1-3 x 750m or 10-15mins with 120 secs recovery
- **H.** 1-3 x 1000m or 15-20mins with 120 secs recovery
- **I.** 1-3 x 1500m or 25-35mins with 120 secs recovery
- **J.** 1-2 x 3000m or 50-90mins with 5mins recovery
- **K.** 1 x 5000m or 90-120mins

Block 1

From 2 to 4 weeks

45min approx

Equipment needed



Bright coloured hat ✓



Goggles ✓



Digital watch ✓



Stretch cord ✓



Wetsuit ✓



Anti-fog + Anti-chafing crème ✓

Week session plans: (main sets, not including warm up & cool down)

Week 1	
Day 1 (A)	a. + b. + f.
Day 2 (B)	a. + d. + e.
Day 3 (C)	a. + g. + d.
Day 4 (A)	a. + b. + f.
Day 5 (B)	a. + b. + a.

Week 2	
Day 1 (B)	a. + e. + d.
Day 2 (A)	a. + f. + b.
Day 3 (C)	a. + d. + g.
Day 4 (B)	a. + b. + c.
Day 5 (A)	a. + b. + a.

Week 3	
Day 1 (A)	a. + b. + f.
Day 2 (B)	a. + d. + e.
Day 3 (C)	a. + h. + d.
Day 4 (A)	a. + b. + f.
Day 5 (B)	c. + b. + a.

Week 4	
Day 1 (A)	a. + b. + f.
Day 2 (B)	c. + d. + e.
Day 3 (C)	a. + h. + g.
Day 4 (A)	e. + b. + a.
Day 5 (B)	a. + b. + e.

>>>> SEE NOWCA ONLINE COURSES HERE

BLOCK TWO
RAISING THRESHOLD PHASE

Warm ups (open water) 10-15mins

1) Upper body Mobilisation for 2>3mins (this can include stretch cord work if you have access to one)
2) Acclimatisation entry to open water 1 min approx. (cooling the skin and breathing slowly out with face in the water)
3) 4 x 50m or 30-50 seconds (3-4RPE) easy long slow stretch out (approx.) practice sighting, limit leg action and focus on higher recovery arms with good long entry and glide and push phase of the stroke. 10 sec recovery between each one. Odd number use bilateral breathing drill (note: do not use this in harder efforts and the race)
4) 2 x 100m or 60-90 seconds (4-5RPE) easy long slow stretch out (approx.) practice sighting, limit leg action and focus on higher recovery arms with good long entry and glide and push phase of the stroke. 10 sec recovery between each one. Odd number use bilateral breathing drill (note: do not use this in harder efforts and the race)
5) 1 x 200m or 2-4mins (5.5RPE) building pace and arm turnover. Practice an intermittent 6 beat leg kick action to replicate the start and turns techniques, focus on lengthening stroke but incorporate a strong catch and pull phase of the stroke. Breathing every two strokes with popeye technique and good crocodile eyes sighting. **(if not sure see NOWCA online plans)**

Cool down (open water) 5-10mins

1) 200m or 2-4mins easing pace and stretching out. Add a strong leg kick at the end of the swim to ensure you don't feel lightheaded.
2) Exit the water and make sure you don't get cold. If possible, take off the wetsuit and start progressive stretches for the upper and lower body. Include shoulder instep/ankle stretches if you have poor flexibility. Drink plenty of water.

(NOTE: please see NOWCA online courses for more information on core knowledge such as stretching and technique)

Workout Recap info:

- **A.** Technique and short intervals x 2
- **B.** Progressively longer Interval sessions x 2
- **C.** Longer slower endurance workouts x 1
- **D.** Threshold endurance workouts x 1

Raising threshold phase (ability to work with oxygen) and increasing endurance use A.>J. intervals @ (6 - 8.5RPE)

- **A.** 4-8 x 50m or 45seconds-1min with 30 secs recovery
- **B.** 4-6 x 100m or 1-2mins with 60 secs recovery
- **C.** 4-8 x 100m or 1-2mins with 20 secs recovery
- **D.** 2-4 x 200m or 2-4mins with 60 secs recovery
- **E.** 4-8 x 200m or 2-4mins with 120 secs recovery
- **F.** 1-4 x 400m or 6-8mins with 60 secs recovery
- **G.** 1-3 x 750m or 10-15mins with 120 secs recovery
- **H.** 1-3 x 1000m or 15-20mins with 120 secs recovery
- **I.** 1-3 x 1500m or 25-35mins with 120 secs recovery
- **J.** 1-2 x 3000m or 50-90mins with 5mins recovery
- **K.** 1 x 5000m or 90-120mins
- **L.** 8 x 50m or 45seconds-1min with 120 secs recovery

(only get to 8.5 on A workouts)

Block 2

From 5 to 8 weeks

45min – 1hr30mins approx

Equipment needed



Bright coloured hat ✓



Goggles ✓



Digital watch ✓



Stretch cord ✓



Wetsuit ✓



Anti-fog + Anti-chafing crème ✓

Week session plans: (main sets, not including warm up & cool down)

Week 1	
Day 1 (A)	a. + d. + f.
Day 2 (B)	c. + b. + e.
Day 3 (C)	a. + e. + h.
Day 4 (A)	a. + e.
Day 5 (B)	b. + a. + c.
Day 6	Social or club swim

Week 2	
Day 1 (B)	c. + e. + d.
Day 2 (A)	a. + f. + b.
Day 3 (C)	b. + f. + g.
Day 4 (B)	a. + b. + d.
Day 5 (A)	a. + b.
Day 6	Social or club swim

Week 3	
Day 1 (A)	a. + b. + f.
Day 2 (B)	c. + d. + e.
Day 3 (C)	d. + f. + h.
Day 4 (A)	a. + c. + e.
Day 5 (B)	f. + d. + h.
Day 6 (C)	k.

Week 4	
Day 1 (A)	c. + e. + d.
Day 2 (B)	e. + g.
Day 3 (C)	g. + h. + i.
Day 4 (A)	c. + b. + f.
Day 5 (B)	d. + f. + a.
Day 6 (C)	j.

BLOCK THREE
RAISING THRESHOLD PACE + MAINTAINING

Warm ups (open water) 10-15mins

1) Upper body Mobilisation for 2>3mins (this can include stretch cord work if you have access to one)
2) Acclimatisation entry to open water 1 min approx. (cooling the skin and breathing slowly out with face in the water)
3) 4 x 50m or 30-50 seconds (3-4RPE) easy long slow stretch out (approx.) practice sighting, limit leg action and focus on higher recovery arms with good long entry and glide and push phase of the stroke. 10 sec recovery between each one. Odd number use bilateral breathing drill (note: do not use this in harder efforts and the race)
4) 2 x 100m or 60-90 seconds (4-5RPE) easy long slow stretch out (approx.) practice sighting, limit leg action and focus on higher recovery arms with good long entry and glide and push phase of the stroke. 10 sec recovery between each one. Odd number use bilateral breathing drill (note: do not use this in harder efforts and the race)
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Cool down (open water) 5-10mins

1) 200m or 2-4mins easing pace and stretching out. Add a strong leg kick at the end of the swim to ensure you don't feel lightheaded.
2) Exit the water and make sure you don't get cold. If possible, take off the wetsuit and start progressive stretches for the upper and lower body. Include shoulder instep/ankle stretches if you have poor flexibility. Drink plenty of water.

(NOTE: please see NOWCA online courses for more information on core knowledge such as stretching and technique)

Workout Recap info:

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Raising threshold phase (ability to work with oxygen) and increasing endurance use A.>J. intervals @ (6 - 8.5RPE)

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- **C.** 4-8 x 100m or 1-2mins with 20 secs recovery
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- **G.** 1-3 x 750m or 10-15mins with 120 secs recovery
- **H.** 1-3 x 1000m or 15-20mins with 120 secs recovery
- **I.** 1-3 x 1500m or 25-35mins with 120 secs recovery
- **J.** 1-2 x 3000m or 50-90mins with 5mins recovery
- **K.** 1 x 5000m or 90-120mins
- **L.** 8 x 50m or 45seconds-1min with 120 secs recovery
- **M.** 10 x 100 or 1-2mins with 120 seconds recovery

(Only get to 9RPE on I. workouts)

Block 3

From 9 to 12 weeks

1hr30mins – 2hr45mins session time approx

Equipment needed



Bright coloured hat ✓



Goggles ✓



Digital watch ✓



Stretch cord ✓



Wetsuit ✓



Anti-fog + Anti-chafing crème ✓

Week session plans: (main sets, not including warm up & cool down - only get to 8.5 on A workouts)

Week 1	
Day 1 (A)	I. + m.
Day 2 (B	a. + i. + k.
Day 3 (C)	k.
Day 4 (A)	m.
Day 5 (B)	g. + h.+ i.
Day 6	Social or club swim

Week 2	
Day 1 (B)	a. + g. + i.
Day 2 (A)	f. + m. + l.
Day 3 (C)	m. + j. + l.
Day 4 (B)	a. + b. + d.
Day 5 (C)	g. + k.
Day 6	(active recovery or complete rest and stretch)

Week 3	
Day 1 (A)	a. + b. + f.
Day 2 (B)	c. + d. + e.
Day 3 (C)	d. + f. + h.
Day 4 (C)	I. + k. + i.
Day 5 (B)	m.
Day 6	Social or club swim

Week 4	
Day 1 (A)	m.
Day 2 (B)	f.
Day 3 (C)	k.
Day 4 (C)	j. + l.
Day 5 (A)	a. + l. + m.
Day 6 (A)	m. + l.
Day 7 (A)	m.

YOUR RACE STRATEGY

- Take several days rest or light swim with plenty of stretching and drinking loads of water before the event. Don't do nothing. Active recovery is very important.
- You need to have your race plan written and verified by a coach or experienced 10KM swimmer.
- ***NOTE:*** **NOWCA online courses** – Advanced swimmer have a chapter on race strategy and race plans.
- A race plan includes; training, pacing, nutrition, what you'll wear, pre and post-race strategy, race strategy, who will help you on the day – support crew, what is your next goal?

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