

# INVEST IN YOUR HEALTH AND YOUR WEALTH

8-week  
Olympic training plan  
for newbie triathletes

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## Key notes

AJ Bell have teamed up with RG Active in putting together training plans to make sure your preparation for The AJ Bell London Triathlon goes to plan and you stay injury free.

Please find below an 8-week Olympic triathlon training plan to help you prepare for your event. This plan has the main objective of COMPLETING.

- ▶ Congratulations on your decision to tackle an Olympic distance triathlon. If you can apply yourself to the training over the next 8 weeks then you can really enjoy the day of the race and hopefully reap the beneficial fitness rewards that it can bring. In order to be able complete the training you should have a reasonable level of fitness at the start of the training.
- ▶ Before you begin the training it is worth considering your current state of health, and if you have any reservations as to whether you are able to complete the training or the race then you should consult your GP first. However, if you are generally healthy, know how to swim, how to ride a bike and you are not too overweight then you are ready to begin training for your triathlon experience. In 8 weeks your fitness can be drastically improved from where you are today and the thousands of men and women who compete in these events every year would testify that if you can be committed to the task in hand then you will be ready on race day.
- ▶ As a pre-requisite you should be able to swim 400m without stopping (16 lengths of a standard 25m pool), cycle for 40mins and run for 25mins. If you feel that you are not quite at that point yet then you will need to put a bit of extra work into the areas where you are weaker.
- ▶ This 8-week schedule will guide you through the training period, allowing enough time for rest and recovery in between sessions, and at a pace that builds gradually from a base of 4hrs 30mins per week through to a maximum of 7-8hrs per week. The programme is structured in such a way that you work in 4 week blocks, progressively building through weeks 1, 2 & 3, and then having a recovery week in week 4.
- ▶ The programme is self-explanatory and each session is broken down into what you need to do. The swim sessions are broken down and some swim drills are explained on the final page of the program.
- ▶ The intensity of the training in this programme is to be executed using the RPE (Rate of Perceived Exertion) scale, this allows the athlete to work to their limits with specific barriers. We would advise that if this kind of training is new to you that you are cautious to begin with until you can understand how your body reacts to the training. The full RPE scale is at the back of the programme.
- ▶ There is no strength or core training included in this programme. If you are already doing strength and core exercises we would advise that you continue with your regime but think about decreasing the number of strength and core sessions per week as the triathlon training should take priority. If you are not doing any strength and core work already then we would suggest that you could consider doing some light core work twice per week, but a strength training programme should not be started as well as trying to begin a triathlon.
- ▶ We would strongly advise that as you get closer to the race day you ensure that you train using the exact equipment that you intend to use on race day, the same clothes, the same wetsuit, the same bike and trainers. You should not turn up on race day with brand new equipment to use.

Week 1			
	Swim	Bike	Run
Monday	150m warm up 150m drills of your choice 1 x 300m 3 x 100m with last 25m very hard with 60 secs rest between 4 x 50m with 15 secs rest between 100m cool down		
Tuesday		5 mins RPE-5 3 x 5mins RPE-8 / 3 mins RPE-4 5 mins RPE-5	
Wednesday			5 mins RPE-5 4 x 3 mins RPE-8 / 2 mins RPE-4 5 mins RPE-5
Thursday	150m warm up 150m drills of your choice 1 x 400m 1 x 300m 4 x 50m with 15 secs rest between 100m cool down		
Friday	Rest	Rest	Rest
Saturday			35 mins RPE-6/7 Include some hills
Sunday		<b>BRICK SESSION</b> 45 mins RPE-6/7 (include hills) Do run straight after the bike	<b>BRICK SESSION</b> 10 mins RPE-5 Do run straight after the bike
<b>Total</b>	<b>2500m</b>	<b>1 hr 19 mins</b>	<b>1 hr 15 mins</b>

Week 2			
	Swim	Bike	Run
Monday	150m warm up 150m drills of your choice 1 x 400m 5 x 100m with last 25m very hard with 60 secs rest between 5 x 50m with 15 secs rest between 100m cool down		
Tuesday		5 mins RPE-5 4 x 5 mins RPE-8 / 2 mins RPE-4 5 mins RPE-5	
Wednesday			5 mins RPE-5 5 x 3 mins RPE-8 / 2 mins RPE-4 5 mins RPE-5
Thursday	150m warm up 150m drills of your choice 1 x 600m 1 x 400m 6 x 50m with 15 secs rest between 100m cool down		
Friday	Rest	Rest	Rest
Saturday			35 mins RPE-6/7 Include some hills
Sunday		<b>BRICK SESSION</b> 60 mins RPE-6/7 (include hills) Do run straight after the bike	<b>BRICK SESSION</b> 12 mins RPE-5 Do run straight after the bike
<b>Total</b>	<b>3250m</b>	<b>1 hr 38 mins</b>	<b>1 hr 32 mins</b>

Week 3			
	Swim	Bike	Run
Monday	150m warm up 150m drills of your choice 1 x 400m 5 x 100m with last 25m very hard with 60 secs rest between 5 x 50m with 15 secs rest between 100m cool down		
Tuesday		5 mins RPE-5 5 x 5mins RPE-8 / 1 min RPE-4 5 mins RPE-5	
Wednesday			5 mins RPE-5 6 x 3 mins RPE-8 / 2 mins RPE-4 5 mins RPE-5
Thursday	150m warm up 150m drills of your choice 1 x 600m 1 x 400m 6 x 50m with 15 secs rest between 100m cool down		
Friday	Rest	Rest	Rest
Saturday			45 mins RPE-6/7 Include some hills
Sunday		<b>BRICK SESSION</b> 75 mins RPE-6/7 (include hills) Do run straight after the bike	<b>BRICK SESSION</b> 15 mins RPE-5 Do run straight after the bike
<b>Total</b>	<b>3250m</b>	<b>1 hr 55 mins</b>	<b>1 hr 40 mins</b>

Week 4			
	Swim	Bike	Run
Monday	150m warm up 150m drills of your choice 1 x 300m 3 x 100m with last 25m very hard with 60 secs rest between 4 x 50m with 15 secs rest between 100m cool down		
Tuesday		10 mins RPE-5 3 x 6 mins RPE-8 / 3 mins RPE-4 5 mins RPE-5	
Wednesday			5 mins RPE-5 3 x 4 mins RPE-8 / 2 mins RPE-4 5 mins RPE-5
Thursday	150m warm up 150m drills of your choice 1 x 400m 1 x 300m 4 x 50m with 15 secs rest between 100m cool down		
Friday	Rest	Rest	Rest
Saturday			40 mins RPE-6/7 Include some hills
Sunday		<b>BRICK SESSION</b> 60 mins RPE-6/7 (include hills) Do run straight after the bike	<b>BRICK SESSION</b> 10 mins RPE-5 Do run straight after the bike
<b>Total</b>	<b>2500m</b>	<b>1 hr 42 mins</b>	<b>1 hr 18 mins</b>

Week 5			
	Swim	Bike	Run
Monday	150m warm up 150m drills of your choice 8 x 100m with last 25m very hard with 60 secs rest between 8 x 50m with 15 secs rest between 100m cool down	5 mins RPE-5 4 x 6 mins RPE-8 / 2 mins RPE-4 5 mins RPE-5	
Tuesday			5 mins RPE-5 4 x 5 mins RPE-8 / 2 mins RPE-4 5 mins RPE-5
Wednesday		5 mins RPE-5/6 30 mins RPE-8 5 mins RPE-4	
Thursday	150m warm up 150m drills of your choice 2 x 600m with 60 secs rest 2 x 300m with 30 secs rest 100m cool down		
Friday	Rest	Rest	Rest
Saturday			45 mins RPE-6/7 Include some hills
Sunday		<b>BRICK SESSION</b> 75 mins RPE-6/7 (include hills) Do run straight after the bike	<b>BRICK SESSION</b> 15 mins RPE-5 Do run straight after the bike
<b>Total</b>	<b>3700m</b>	<b>2 hrs 37 mins</b>	<b>1 hr 38 mins</b>

Week 6			
	Swim	Bike	Run
Monday	150m warm up 150m drills of your choice 6 x 200m with last 50m hard with 60 secs rest between 10 x 50m with 15 secs rest between 100m cool down	5 mins RPE-5 4 x 6 mins RPE-8 / 2 mins RPE-4 5 mins RPE-5	
Tuesday			5 mins RPE-5 4 x 5 mins RPE-8 / 2 mins RPE-4 5 mins RPE-5
Wednesday		5 mins RPE-5/6 40 mins RPE-8 5 mins RPE-4	
Thursday	150m warm up 150m drills of your choice 4 x 25m with 10 secs rest between 1 x 1,500m 100m cool down		
Friday	Rest	Rest	Rest
Saturday			60 mins RPE-6/7 Include some hills
Sunday		<b>BRICK SESSION</b> 90 mins RPE-6/7 (include hills) Do run straight after the bike	<b>BRICK SESSION</b> 30 mins RPE-5 Do run straight after the bike
<b>Total</b>	<b>4100m</b>	<b>3hrs 02mins</b>	<b>2hrs 08mins</b>

Week 7			
	Swim	Bike	Run
Monday	150m warm up 150m drills of your choice 8 x 100m with last 25m very hard with 60 secs rest between 8 x 50m with 15 secs rest between 100m cool down	5 mins RPE-5 4 x 6 mins RPE-8 / 2 mins RPE-4 5 mins RPE-5	
Tuesday			5mins RPE-5 4 x 5mins RPE-8 / 2minsRPE-4 5mins RPE-5
Wednesday		5 mins RPE-5/6 30 mins RPE-8 5 mins RPE-4	
Thursday	150m warm up 150m drills of your choice 2 x 600m with 60 secs rest 2 x 300m with 30 secs rest 100m cool down		
Friday	Rest	Rest	Rest
Saturday			45 mins RPE-6/7 Include some hills
Sunday		<b>BRICK SESSION</b> 75 mins RPE-6/7 (include hills) Do run straight after the bike	<b>BRICK SESSION</b> 20 mins RPE-5 Do run straight after the bike
<b>Total</b>	<b>3700m</b>	<b>2 hrs 37 mins</b>	<b>1 hr 43 mins</b>

Week 8			
	Swim	Bike	Run
Monday	150m warm up 150m drills of your choice 1 x 400m 4 x 100m with last 25m very hard with 60 secs rest between 4 x 50m with 15 secs rest between 100m cool down	5 mins RPE-5 4 x 6 mins RPE-8 / 2 mins RPE-4 5 mins RPE-5	
Tuesday			5 mins RPE-5 15 mins RPE-7 5 min RPE-5
Wednesday	Rest	Rest	Rest
Thursday	150m warm up 150m drills of your choice 4 x 100m with 30 secs rest between 8 x 50m with 15 secs rest between 100m cool down		
Friday	Rest	Rest	Rest
Saturday			15 mins RPE-6/7
Sunday	<b>RACE DAY</b> 1500m	<b>RACE DAY</b> 40km	<b>RACE DAY</b> 10km
<b>Total</b>	<b>2600m + race</b>	<b>42 mins + race</b>	<b>40 mins + race</b>

## Rate of Perceived Exertion

We will use the Rate of Perceived Exertion (RPE) scale illustrated below to determine the intensity of your sessions.

These will be highlighted in each session text to make it clear as to what is expected. This table helps you understand exactly how you should feel when executing the training session. Due to the nature of the scale, it is subjective and requires you to feel how your body is responding to the exercise, when doing this consider how your heart is pumping, how quickly you are breathing, how much you are sweating and how much discomfort you are experiencing in your legs.

Please remember that everybody's RPE figure could be different to yours when exercising at the same speed because we all respond differently to exercise.

RPE	DESCRIPTION
0	Complete rest
1	<b>Very weak:</b> I am just about moving
2	<b>Weak:</b> I am walking at a faster pace and can hold a conversation easily
3	<b>Light:</b> I am beginning to sweat a little, but can hold conversation throughout
4	<b>Moderate:</b> I am very happy at this effort
5	<b>Somewhat strong:</b> I am sweating more heavily and starting to feel my breathing is becoming more stressed
6	<b>Strong:</b> I am beginning to feel more out of breath but could maintain this pace for a few hours
7	<b>Very strong:</b> My breathing is very laboured, but I can still maintain pace for an hour without slowing
8	<b>Hard:</b> I am starting to struggle to hold this pace and my heart is racing and I am sweating heavily
9	<b>Very hard:</b> This is hurting and I can only hold this effort for up to 5 minutes
10	<b>Extremely hard:</b> I am absolutely flat out and this is sprinting. I will need to stop after 30 seconds

## Explanation of swim drills

*Included within the swim sessions are a number of drills. Please find an explanation of each drill below:*

**KICK:** Swim on your front and using a kickboard you use only your legs to aid propulsion. You must kick from the hips using a straight leg action. Concentrate on pointing your feet behind you and having floppy and flexible ankles. Engage your core to keep your hips elevated. When using the kickboard aim to keep the board horizontal by applying a small amount of pressure down on the board thus raising your chest. You can either keep your head up or pop your face into the water to simulate the correct body position. You can use fins to help with your kick if necessary.

**SIDE KICK:** Hold the kickboard in one hand and keep that hand outstretched in front of your head and body, your other arm will rest on your side. Kick from the hips with the hips facing the sides of the pool. Concentrate on pointing your feet towards the end of the pool with floppy and flexible ankles. Engage your core to keep your hips elevated. You should keep your face pointing down to the bottom of the pool only turning your head sideways to breathe. You can use fins to help with your kick if necessary.

**DEAD MAN FLOAT:** Push off the wall keeping your arms in front of the head then when you begin to lose momentum bring your arms back to being by your sides, where they now stay. Use only your kick for propulsion, using fins where necessary. Concentrate on body and head position, keep your head facing down with the chin slightly tucked inwards to your chest and push your chest out down towards the floor. The hips should gently break the surface of the water. If you become stationary simply do a few arm strokes to gain momentum again.

**PENCIL FLOAT:** Apply the same principles as for the Dead Man Float, except this time you keep your arms fully stretched out in front of the body and have your head squeezed in between your arms. Concentrate on keeping the arms straight and long.

**CATCH-UP:** When swimming a standard Front Crawl technique apply a slower arm revolution so that each arm is completing a full stroke before the other arm begins the next stroke. Complete a full stroke with your Right arm, holding your Left arm in a forward and outstretched position, with your Right hand coming through and making contact with your Left hand before you begin a full stroke with the Left arm. Continue to do this resisting the temptation to begin the next stroke too soon. A handy tip is to

use a kickboard or pull buoy and hold this in the leading hand and exchange hands between strokes. If you struggle to maintain body position doing this drill hold a pull buoy between your thighs.

**PULL:** Swim standard Front Crawl holding a pull buoy between your thighs. Concentrate on the power needed to complete the full stroke without any kick being applied. You must be strict to not use any kick doing this. Do not speed your stroke up to compensate for the lack of a leg kick.

**ZIPPER:** Swim standard Front Crawl, as your arm is beginning its movement up the body trail your thumb up from the thigh, past the hip and into towards the arm pit before allowing the hand to exit the water and reach forwards. This encourages a high elbow exit from the water as well as keeping your recovery arm in close proximity to the body.

**PADDLES:** Wear hand paddles to apply greater resistance to the water through each stroke. This promotes greater strength through your arms and shoulders. To use paddles properly ensure that you have the correct size paddle for your hand, then when using you must enter the water with the fingers pointing down to the bottom of the pool and pull through the water with your elbow always higher than your hand. Continue to push all of the way through the stroke past your hip to get full use of the paddle.

**POLO-SIGHTING:** Introduce some open water skills to your pool swim with this drill. When turning your head to breathe also turn your head forwards to look in front of you. When trying to look forwards activate a strong stroke that will allow you to bring your shoulders higher out of the water. Do not do this every breath, start with every four breathes and work up to every eight. Find the sighting/breathing pattern that works best for you.

**HYPOXIC BREATHING:** Swim standard Front Crawl and concentrate on the number of strokes per breath. Begin with your normal breathing pattern and then gradually try to increase by one stroke at a time, building to a maximum of seven strokes per breath. You must relax completely to be able to execute this drill, relax your chest, neck and jaw and focus on a very slow exhalation. Alternate between breathing patterns to simulate the unpredictability of open water swimming.