

Santa Dash Training Plan

The Basics

These are the minimum things you need to be doing. If you do nothing else, these things will make your body fitter and better able to cope during your run:

Hydration - 2 to 3 litres of water per day. This is on top of all the other things you are drinking.

Nutrition - Whatever your food choices, keep things simple. Lots of vegetables and fruit, protein, good fats and minimal junk.

Rest - Most of us need around 8 hours of sleep a night. The NHS has some good advice on their website about how to get a good night's sleep and why it's important.

Walk - Absolute minimum 5000 steps. It would be brilliant if you can get 10,000 in. Find ways to minimise time sat down during the day.

Mobility

It's good to get your joints nice and lubed up before going for a run. Spend around 5 minutes pre run trying to take your joints to their end range. As a minimum do the following:

Ankles - circles, point toes down, pull toes up

Hips - circles, leg swings forward back, leg swings side to side, deep squat sit

Training from Zero

If you've entered the dash and are currently doing no running or exercise, then don't worry. Let's keep things simple.

Set aside at least 20 minutes for your training. Any less than this will mean your body won't have time to get used to the impact that running has on your body. Aim to do 2-5 training sessions per week. However if that's too much, start slow. If you're not training at all at the moment, getting just 1 session in is better than nothing.

Start to explore different paces. Try a brisk walk then run at an easy pace, then medium and finally hard. Get to know these places. Start to realise that your body can do this without falling apart! At first I wouldn't worry too much about structure. Just get moving!

Training Plan to 5k

If you want a bit more structure then follow the below plan. Work at your own pace. If you feel like jumping a few steps then that's fine. It's equally fine to slow things down a bit if you don't feel like pushing on too far.

Week 1 - 3 kilometres - brisk walk 60s/jog 30s

Week 2 - 4 kilometres - brisk walk 60s/jog 30s

Week 3 - 5 kilometres - brisk walk 60s/jog 30s

Etc....

Work up to the full 5k. Once there, drop the distance down and reduce walk time to 30s with a jog of 30s. Work your way up again. Work at your pace. If you can go straight into a full 5k at the 60s walk phase then do it. If it's taking a bit longer, don't worry. This is a personal challenge, no one else's. Do what you can.

Weather

As you know, the weather on the Yorkshire Coast can be a bit challenging when starting to train outside. For those really horrible days I'd recommend getting a skipping rope. Skipping has a really good carry over to running and means you can keep progressing with your training even if you don't fancy fighting a biting northerly!

Having said that, the Santa Dash is going to be outside. So you need to know what running in bad weather feels like. You don't want to have your first rainy run on race day! Don't worry, you aren't made of sugar, you won't melt.

I hope the above helps and gives you some ideas to get race ready. Please try to enjoy your training. The effort you put in now will mean on race day you'll feel great. There's nothing better than that post race high! Any questions, drop me a line.

Good luck!

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