



# ORDINARY MARATHONER



Couch to 5k Program

As Presented by the Professionals  
at Ascension Multisport



Written by: Nicholas Cumbo, M.s. CSCS  
Head Coach and Founder of Ascension Multisport  
[www.AscensionMultisport.com](http://www.AscensionMultisport.com)

Table of Contents

Foreword, By Scott..... [3](#)

Who is Coach Nick, and Ascension Multisport? ..... [4](#)

Disclaimers..... [5](#)

Step 1: How do you know if you are ready? ..... [6](#)

Step 2: Run Safety Tips ..... [7](#)

Step 3: The Plan ..... [8](#)

Week 1: Your first steps

Week 2:

Week 3:

Week 4:

Week 5: Time to rest

Week 6:

Week 7:

Week 8:

Week 9:

Week 10: K-Day- Conquering 5 kilometers of glory

# Foreword

It's hard to believe there was a time, not so long ago, when I couldn't even run a quarter-mile. It always seemed like there were obstacles in my way every time I got going. One of which was the complete lack of a plan. I had no path to follow, no one to show me the way, no one to say, "Hey, get off the couch and do this today."

In recent years, as the sport of running has become more and more popular, the Couch-to-5k Plan has emerged as a popular tool to get people on this path to fitness and health. 5k races are popular and fairly abundant in most areas. Gaining enough fitness in order to complete one is typically more achievable than you might think.

As the Ordinary Marathoner podcast has gained popularity, I often get the question, "Which Couch-To-5k program would you recommend?" The truth is, there are so many out there that I have no idea which one to recommend – I usually wind up recommending a Google search, and then I feel bad that I don't have a more specific answer.

So I decided it was time to fix that and create the Ordinary Marathoner Couch-To-5k Program. As you all know, I am completely unqualified to design such a program, so I found someone who was – Triathlon Coach Nick Cumbo from Ascension Multisport. Nick has spent the last few weeks putting this together and we dedicated almost an [entire podcast discussing it](#). If you have the motivation and have been just looking to find a way to get moving, here is your chance. We would love to hear your C-To-5k stories or questions in our [Facebook discussion group](#).

*Thank you* for being an Ordinary Marathoner listener.

# About Us

Founded in February 2014, Ascension Multisport has been the vision of Head Coach Nicholas Cumbo since he was a child. To help athletes ascend to the peak of their capabilities. Attacking performance through not only running, cycling, and swimming, but also through implementation of strength training and nutrition coaching. Our motto of Somnium Credo Laureola is latin for Dream Believe Succeed. This mantra has been on every motivational document head coach Nick has designed for himself for the past 10+ years. Anyone can exceed their expectations if they have enough heart and determination to do it. We are here to guide you, believe in you, and coach you to your goals.

Nick is currently in his 10th year of working with athletes, and has been competing for the past 15 years. Currently, he is working in the Boston as a General Manager in corporate wellness. In the past, he has learned the methodology designed by EXOS (Formerly Athletes Performance) proven to work with thousands of athletes, high level tactical forces, and countless individuals. He has worked with athletes of all levels from youth to elite national teams, NCAA varsity sports, nationally ranked athletes, and semi-professional teams. In his career of working in with endurance athletes, he has coached High School Cross Country and Track and Field, as well as building countless training plans and consultations for local athletes involved in running, triathlon, and strength training.

His own competing has taken him from his hometown of Buffalo, NY where he started in Track and Field at Lancaster High School, to SUNY Fredonia where he competed for the varsity NCAA Cross Country and Track and Field teams. After rehabilitating some injuries, years of dreaming, and many hours spent researching training methods and technique, he was finally able to take the plunge into triathlon during graduate school while living in Miami, Florida. He is currently residing and competing in Boston, Massachusetts with his eyes set on getting back in shape, and eventually breaking 16:30 in 5k, under 1:20 in half marathon, and 10:00 for 140.6. Follow his blog, or twitter for training updates and tips along the way!

Several of his favorite athletic achievements are finishing his second sprint triathlon ever in under an hour, coming in at 57:40 for 500yd/10mi/5k, and winning "Fastest Super Hero" at Miami Beach's Halloween Half Marathon. During his first ever triathlon, Nick had top 20 run and T2 times, ranking ahead of mostly every age group athlete and several professionals in the field. In his first season as Head Coach at Pasco High School (Wa) the team as a whole averaged over a minute faster in the 5k distance than in the previous season. Crossing the finish line for the first time (and every time!) or setting a new PR is a feeling he loves, and wants to help you achieve the same sense of accomplishment!

## Legal Disclaimers:

By downloading and following this Couch to 5k Plan you agree to abide by the following disclaimers:

- Ascension Multisport strongly recommends that you consult with your physician before beginning any exercise program. You should be in good physical condition and be able to participate in the exercise. Ascension Multisport is not a licensed medical care provider and represents that it has no expertise in diagnosing, examining, or treating medical conditions of any kind, or in determining the effect of any specific exercise on a medical condition.
- You should understand that when participating in any exercise or exercise program, there is the possibility of physical injury. If you engage in this exercise or exercise program, you agree that you do so at your own risk, are voluntarily participating in these activities, assume all risk of injury to yourself, and agree to release and discharge Ascension Multisport from any and all claims or causes of action, known or unknown, arising out of Ascension Multisport negligence.
- The information provided is not intended to be a substitute for professional medical advice, diagnosis or treatment. Never disregard professional medical advice, or delay in seeking it, because of something you have read on this website. Never rely on information on this website or document in place of seeking professional medical advice.
- Do not disregard professional medical advice or delay seeking professional advice because of information you have read in this document or received from us. Do not stop taking any medications without speaking to your physician or health care professional. If you have or suspect that you have a medical problem, contact your health care provider promptly.
- Ascension Multisport (AscensionMultisport.com) is not responsible or liable for any advice, course of treatment, diagnosis or any other information, services or products that you obtain through this site. You are encouraged to consult with your doctor with regard to this information contained on or through this website. After reading articles, watching videos or reading other content from this website, you are encouraged to review the information carefully with your professional healthcare provider.
- We are not medical health practitioners or mental health providers and we are not holding ourselves out to be in any capacity. Rather, we serve as coaches, mentors and guides who help you reach your own health and wellness goals.

# How do you know if you are ready?

Step 1: Take the PAR-Q below.

1. Has your doctor ever said that you have a heart condition and that you should only do physical activity recommended by a doctor?

Yes No

2. Do you feel pain in your chest when you do physical activity?

Yes No

3. In the past month, have you had chest pain when you were not doing physical activity?

Yes No

4. Do you lose your balance because of dizziness or do you ever lose consciousness?

Yes No

5. Do you have a bone or joint problem (for example, back, knee or hip) that could be made worse by a change in your physical activity?

Yes No

6. Is your doctor currently prescribing drugs (for example, water pills) for your blood pressure or heart condition?

Yes No

7. Do you know of any other reason why you should not do physical activity?

Yes No

If you answered YES to any of these questions, consult with your physician prior to starting any physical activity program.

---

Also answer the following:

I am ready to commit to my goals and make the sacrifices necessary to achieve and finish my workout program. I want to not only complete my goal, but I want to put the work in necessary to do so, and will enjoy the journey, for the journey means as much as the finish line.

## Run Safety Tips

- Buddy System! It is always safer to run with someone than alone
- Skip the headphones if running alone, this will help you be more aware of your surroundings as well as in tune with your body. How hard are you breathing, how heavy is your stride, etc.
- Stick to routes you know, avoid running on busy roads, alongside parked cars in the street, etc.
- Assume all drivers do not see you, including those pulling up to stop signs and backing out of drive ways. Be responsible for your own safety, do not assume that the car backing up will stop for you.
- Plan routes around water stops, especially for longer workouts, in hot weather; or carry water with you to avoid dehydration
- Pay attention to the weather, if there is a high chance of thunderstorm or severe winds, probably not the best time to go out for a run
- If running at night, wear a headlamp
- Wear bright reflective clothing, both when running at night and during the day. The more visible you are, the better
- When running in the street, run against traffic (rather than with, like a cyclist)

# The Plan

## Notes:

Cross training is any exercise modality that is not running. Several possible modes of cross training include: swimming, elliptical, cycling, roller blading, rowing ergometer.

We start with 3 days run, 1 cross train and build to 4 run (with cross training included).

If no ratio is given, it is a straight run meaning it is not a walk run, but running nonstop

Warmup before each workout, starting with a brisk 5 minute walk. Adding in a dynamic stretching routine prior to the workout would be beneficial. Cool down after each workout as well, 5 minute walk followed by static stretching.

The intervals do not always line up nicely with the amount of time for each workout, stick to the ratio and finish when the time is up, regardless of where you are in the ratio

Have questions? Email Nick @ [AscensionMultisport@gmail.com](mailto:AscensionMultisport@gmail.com)

## Week 1

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat	Sun
	Cross Train 30 mins	15 Minutes Ratio: 1 min run 1 min walk		15 Minutes Ratio: 1 min run 1 min walk		21 Minutes Ratio: 2 min run, 1 min walk

## Week 2

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat	Sun
	Cross Train 30 mins	20 Minutes Ratio: 2 min Run 1 min Walk		20 Minutes Ratio: 3 min Run 1 min Walk		24 Minutes Ratio: 3 min run, 1 min walk



## Week 3

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat	Sun
	Cross Train 35 Mins	22 Minutes Ratio: 2 min Run 1 min Walk		22 Minutes Ratio: 3 min Run 1 min Walk		27 Minutes Ratio: 2 min run, 1 min walk

## Week 4

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat	Sun
	Cross Train 40 mins	22 Minutes Ratio: 3 min Run 1 min Walk		20 Minutes Ratio: 3 min Run 1 min Walk		25 Minutes Ratio: 4 min run, 1 min walk

## Week 5

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat	Sun
	Cross Train 45 mins	20 Minutes Ratio: 4 min Run 1 min Walk		20 Minutes Ratio: 4 min Run 1 min Walk		30 Minutes Ratio: 4 min run, 1 min walk

## Week 6

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat	Sun
	10 Min Run 25 min CT	25 Minutes Ratio: 4 min Run 1 min Walk		25 Minutes Ratio: 4 min Run 1 min Walk		35 Minutes Ratio: 5 min run, 1 min walk

## Week 7

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat	Sun
	13 Mins Run 25 min CT	28 Minutes Ratio: 4 min Run 1 min Walk		28 Minutes Ratio: 6 min Run 1 min Walk		35 Minutes Ratio 6 min run, 1 min walk

## Week 8

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat	Sun
	16 Mins Run 30 min CT	30 Minutes Ratio: 6 min Run 1 min Walk		30 Minutes Ratio: 7 min Run 1 min Walk		40 Minutes 7 min run, 1 min walk

## Week 9

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat	Sun
	18 Mins Run 30 min CT	30 Minutes Ratio: 7 min Run 1 min Walk		30 Minutes Ratio: 8 min Run 1 min Walk		40 Minutes 8 min run, 1 min walk

## Week 10

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat	Sun

	20 Mins Run		Cross Train 40 minutes	Cross Train 20 minutes		Race Day!
--	----------------	--	---------------------------	---------------------------	--	-----------