



'My First Training Plan'

Nineteen-Week 50-Kilometer Race Plan



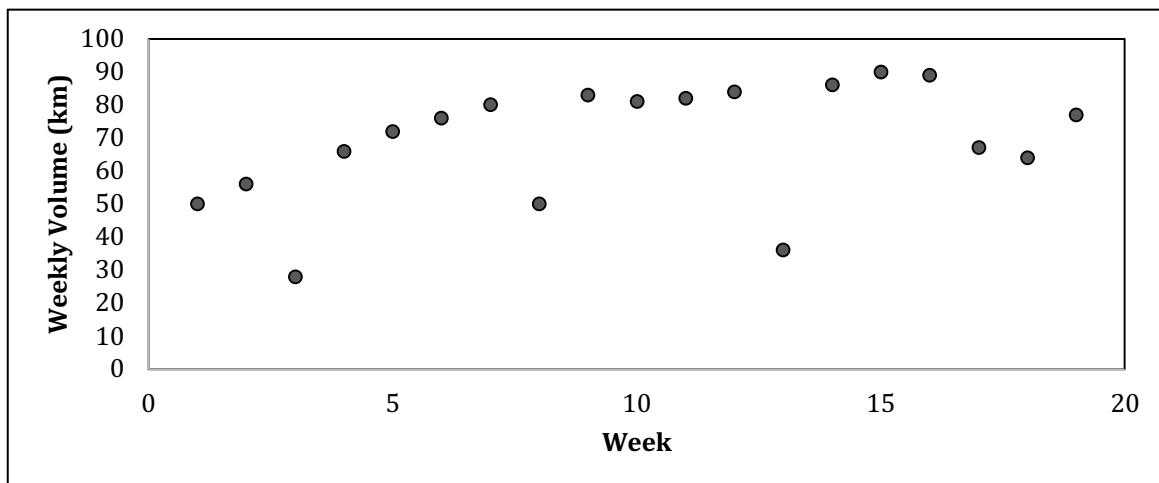
www.RidgelineAthletics.com

Eric Carter
Gary Robbins

Overview

This plan is designed to help athletes prepare for a mountainous trail 50-km ultramarathon. Please read through the Notes section before continuing on to the plan. The lead-up to the goal race is detailed over 19 pages, each containing one week of daily workout plans. Print me for best results!

Week	Important Events	Long Run	Total Km
1	Plan Start	20k	50
2		24k	56
3	Recovery Week	-	28
4	Beginning of Intervals	26k	66
5		28k	72
6		31k	76
7		34k	80
8	Recovery Week	30	50
9		32k+21k	83
10		34k	81
11		36k	82
12		38k	84
13	Recovery Week	-	36
14		37k	86
15		35k+25k	90
16		42k	89
17		40k	67
18	Taper	20k	64
19	Taper	RACE	72



Notes

A few notes on pacing:

We don't use HR as a prescription method in this program but do find it very valuable and use it frequently with our Coaching Program Athletes. Please use your HR monitor if you have one. We both love the Ambit3 from Suunto. Throughout the training plan you will find references to the exercise intensities defined below.

Easy: Essentially jogging. You can carry on a conversation with your partner. It might be necessary to walk big hills to stay in the easy zone (sometimes referred to as Level 1 or L1)

Tempo: Just above conversational pace. Here you feel like you are 'pushing it' and it should be tough to complete the entire prescribed workout at this pace but not shattering (sometimes referred to as Level 3).

Threshold: No longer 'fun hard' but really 'hard hard'. This is the maximum pace you could maintain over ~30min (Level 4).

Speed: You won't ever push this hard in an ultra unless you are trying to outkick someone at the finish 😊. Should be your maximum comfortable speed for the prescribed distance.

Race Pace: Use your goal time for the upcoming ultra to determine your race pace. It will likely be between Easy and Tempo.

Stretching/Release:

Stretching and myofascial release are a critical part of a running program but very few runners actually incorporate it! Designate a specific time (just like the rest of your training) to focus on stretching and using a release tool (including tennis balls and foam rollers). A quiet, comfortable floor space is ideal. Stretching should focus on the legs. Especially the glutes, calf, butt and lower back, which are under heavy stress with long running hours.

Long Hills:

Find a hill that allows 14-18 minutes of ascent time. Grade should allow running for the majority of the ascent but if short sections of power hiking are required, that's OK. Long hills should be completed at approximately threshold pace. These workouts are time based rather than distance because of the nature of differences in hills. A moderate warm-up is required and should be completed on flat or rolling terrain. Between ascents, descend via the easiest route at a walk or very easy jog. Rest should be roughly equal to ascent time. In the absence of a proper hill, a treadmill can be set on its steepest incline with the front of the machine literally raised off the floor with wood scraps. Intervals will be approximately 4km each including descent. Hill intervals are *NOT* descent intervals. Make sure you are descending at an easy pace.

Short Hills:

Similar to long hills but find a hill that requires 4-7 minutes to ascend. Rest should be approximately equal on the descent and at a slightly higher intensity than long

hills. Intervals will be approximately 1.5km for the ascent and descent but could vary greatly.

Speed:

There are several speed workouts in the lead-up weeks to the goal race. You will need a flat section of trail, road, or a track.

- 1) Get yourself warmed-up: about 4-km total running mostly at easy pace. During your warm-up, complete 4-8 successively faster pickups. Each pickup should last 15-30 seconds and approach your maximum pace.
- 2) Complete each speed interval prescribed with a full rest between. The rest should be enough to allow your heart rate and breathing to recover. Walk or jog between intervals.
- 3) Cool-down jog.

Descent Intervals:

Descending is a critical aspect of ultra trail running. Many racers have made the mistake of thinking down hills are for resting and don't require training. Races such as the KneeKnacker, DV50 and the Squamish50k feature significant technical descents that place an enormous eccentric strain on the legs, especially when you are trying to maintain high speeds. For descending intervals, complete a thorough warm-up (4km with speed ups) and find a hill that allows 5-15min of continuous descent. This is very location dependent and for this reason we have not given specific number of reps. If your hill allows for 5min of descent, complete 5-8 reps. If your hill allows 15-20 min of descent complete 2-3 reps. In total, you should have approximately 40min of descent. Ascend the climb at a very easy jog or walk and descend as quickly as possible. Don't worry about HR zones; just descend as quickly, smoothly, and safely as you can. After the workout, cool down on easy, flat terrain. We have listed the workout as approx. 12km for the sake of the training plan but don't worry about distance. It is a time-based workout.

B2B:

Back-to-Back (B2B) workouts are doubling up long runs over a weekend. Rather than a single long run on Saturday. It is broken into to moderately long runs on Saturday and Sunday that allow you to cover a longer distance overall.

AM/PM Workouts:

Not everyone can just train all day - some people have to work! We have given a suggested time of day in the form of AM/PM for each workout to show you how we would do things but the best training plan is the one that fits best in your schedule. If you need to move things around, go for it. Just make sure it remains in the "spirit of the workout".

Extra Racing:

We don't expect anyone to be running just one race a year. It is easy to replace a weekend's long run with a race. Just make sure to give a little extra focus to recovery

(consider taking Sunday off if you race Saturday) and think about the possibility of dialing back a few of the following week's workouts.

OFF:

MEANS OFF!! No workouts. Don't push it.

Training Log:

All athletes should keep track of their training. You can record hours or mileage. Just make sure you keep a log of how much you run and how hard. It is also important to self-reflect on race performances (both the positives and negatives).

Core Routine:

Just like stretching, a strong core is important for ultra-runners. The next page details the core routine that Eric uses for running and ski mountaineering (an even more core-dependent sport).

Nutrition:

Both Gary and Eric use a variety of nutrition methods. Proper fueling and hydration is critical for training and race success. Check out our Ridgeline Athletics website and FaceBook Page for more info on fueling strategies that we use! We can't get too heavy into details here but the most important things during this program are to: 1) ensure you have plenty of water. Use a trail vest or bladder pack. 2) Use electrolytes on especially hot days. 3) Carry sufficient calories to get you back through the door at the end of the day. If you stick to these three bits of basic advice, you will avoid many of the common problems that we see!

Critical Workouts and Keys to Success:

Look for a bold **C** that delineates the most critical workouts of the week. Try your best to adhere to these workouts and don't move them around in the schedule.

The **key** icon shows workouts that our coaches have identified as keys to successful preparation for an ultra and make up a unique part of our training strategy.



Orientation Runs:

The single best piece of advice we can give to runners participating in the difficult mountain events is to run on the trails that the race covers. If you are unfamiliar with Coastal trails for example, you will be shocked on race day of Squamish50. This goes for pretty much any race. The best way to experience race trails locally is to run on them in one of the free organized SQ50 orientations runs or in the Coast Mountain Trail Series. Other events likely organize their own orientation runs so do some investigating and get some time on the trails you will be racing!

Core

Core strength is critical for ultra-runners. Racers with weak cores lose efficiency as the race goes on. You can watch as their upper and lower bodies get out of sync and they become unable to effectively transmit upper body power. A strong core is critical to keeping the upper and lower bodies in sync. Core strength is also important for injury prevention. Running is heavily dependent on the gluteal muscles (your butt). Long days of running causes these muscles to tighten and can pull things out of alignment. A strong core balances the glutes and prevents tightness. We have two routines detailed here. The first is for absolute beginners who do no core work at the moment. The second is for those who already do some core strength and want to take things up a notch.

First, find a comfortable spot to lie down (yoga mat). Make sure you have enough space around you for errant limbs.

Beginner Routine:

Assume the plank position! Face down on your mat and get into a pushup position with your back straight, weight on your toes and elbows. Hold your core tight to keep your back straight. Don't let your body sag or your butt stick up in the air.

Hold this position for as long as you can! If you are just starting off this will be difficult. Keep working at it until you can hold the position for 90 seconds continuously. Once you can do 90 seconds, switch to a side-plank. Roll onto the one side, facing outward with all your weight on one foot and elbow. The other foot and arm go in the air. After 90 seconds there, switch to the other side. Don't let your hips sag!

Once you have mastered the plank and side-plank, add time to your routine. Three minutes of each without stopping is a good goal. Eventually work your way up to ten. To further complicate things, throw a medicine ball into the mix. When you are in the front-plank position, face a wall and bounce the ball off it to your other hand going back and forth switching hands.

Advanced Routine:

The routine is performed as a cycle with options to lengthen by adding repetitions, adding entire cycles, or adding exercises. Forward crunches are the first and last exercise bracketing the routine. Oblique crunches make up the bulk of the routine and bracket each additional exercise. Starting position is on your back with your hips AND knees bent at 90 degrees. Return to this position between each exercise without resting.

- 10 Forward Crunches: Make sure you are smooth throughout the movement and keep your legs up in the air
- 10 Bicycles: Alternate extending your leg from the starting position to straight at the hip and knee (but don't touch the ground) and only count reps on one leg.
- 10 Oblique Crunches: Return to the starting position (legs up). With your hands on your head, touch your left elbow to right knee, then right elbow to left knee. Count reps on only one side.
- 10 Leg Extensions: From the starting position, slowly extend the knees and hips until your legs are straight and then return to 90 degrees.
- 10 Oblique Crunches
- 10 Pistons: Keeping your hips bent at 90 degrees, straighten your knees so your legs point into the air and your body is an L shape. Hold this position and lift your hips off the ground and then lower back down slowly. It is only a few centimeters movement.
- 10 Oblique Crunches
- 10 Forward Crunches

Perform each movement slowly to maximize strength gains. This routine can be performed on its own or followed by additional core work such as planks. When the effects of the routine are no longer significant, increase individual exercise reps to 15 or 20 per exercise and then by adding a second full cycle.

The following medicine ball exercises (there are many more – these are just my favorites) can be included in the routine as well. Grab a medicine ball that you are able to throw comfortably and safely. Most are performed in the upright starting position. You should be sitting partially upright on your butt with your hips and knees still bent at 90 degrees. Your feet should not be touching the ground and you should be slightly reclined.

- 10 MedBall Side Taps: From the upright starting position, tap the med ball gently on the ground to the left of your body, then lift it over your hips and tap on the right side. Only count left side taps.
- 10 MedBall Drops: In the upright starting position, with your partner standing above you, have them drop the ball into your outstretched hands and then try to quickly through it back up to them.

- 10 MedBall Throws: In the upright starting position, throw the med ball against a solid wall so that it bounces back into your hands. You should be facing the wall and it should be close by.

That's it! Find yourself a good gym and start working the core strength. Do it on its own or as part of a longer workout.





My First Training Plan
50km

Week One

			Description	Km
	Monday	AM	OFF	
		PM		
C	Tuesday	AM	Core Routine	
		PM	Tempo Run (6k)	10
	Wednesday	AM	Easy Run	5
		PM		
	Thursday	AM	Easy Run	10
		PM		
	Friday	AM	OFF	
		PM	Stretching (20min)	
C	Saturday	AM	Long Run	20
		PM		
	Sunday	AM	Easy Run	5
		PM		
Total Kilometers:				50

Notes:

The Tempo Run should begin with a 2-3km warm-up followed by the tempo segment (6km) and finished with a 1km cool-down running easy. The total goal volume for the workout is 10 km.

Stretching is included these first few weeks as a reminder but make sure to include stretching and release time throughout the preparatory period!



My First Training Plan
50km

Week Two

			Description	Km
	Monday	AM	OFF	
		PM		
C	Tuesday	AM	Core Routine	
		PM	Tempo Run (6k)	10
	Wednesday	AM	Easy Run	8
		PM		
	Thursday	AM	Easy Run	8
		PM		
	Friday	AM	OFF	
		PM	Stretching (20min)	
	Saturday	AM	Easy Run	6
		PM		
C	Sunday	AM	Long Run	24
		PM		
Total Kilometers:				56

Notes:

This week's tempo run should be the same as last week!



My First Training Plan
50km

Week Three

			Description	Km
Monday	AM	OFF		
	PM			
Tuesday	AM	Core Routine		
	PM	Easy Run		10
Wednesday	AM	Off		
	PM			
Thursday	AM	Easy Run		8
	PM			
Friday	AM	Core Routine		
	PM			
Saturday	AM	Easy Run		10
	PM			
Sunday	AM	OFF		
	PM			
Total Kilometers:				28

Notes:

Easy week! Woohoo!



My First Training Plan
50km

Week Four

		Description	Km
	Monday	AM OFF	
		PM	
	Tuesday	AM Core Routine	
		PM Easy Run	10
C	Wednesday	AM 4x Short Hills	12
		PM	
	Thursday	AM Core Routine	
		PM Easy Run	10
	Friday	AM OFF	
		PM	
C	Saturday	AM Long Run	26
		PM	
	Sunday	AM Easy Run	8
		PM	
Total Kilometers:			66

Notes:

Short hills - see notes in Introduction. Warm-up and cool-down are approx 3km each. Complete your intervals just above Threshold pace (L4 = you should not be able to carry on a conversation).



My First Training Plan
50km

Week Five

			Description	Km
Monday	AM	OFF		
	PM			
Tuesday	AM	Core Routine		
	PM	Easy Run		10
Wednesday	AM	Descent Intervals		12
	PM			
Thursday	AM	Core Routine		
	PM	Easy Run		10
Friday	AM	OFF		
	PM			
C Saturday	AM	Long Run		28
	PM			
Sunday	AM	Easy Run		12
	PM			
Total Kilometers:				72

Notes:

Head back to the notes page to read about descent intervals. There are one of Coach Gary's "keys to success"! The goal kilometers listed are an estimation based on our experience. It is more useful to gauge this workout on time.



My First Training Plan
50km

Week Six

			Description	Km
	Monday	AM	OFF	
		PM		
	Tuesday	AM	Core Routine	
		PM	Easy Run	10
C	Wednesday	AM	5x Short Hills	13
		PM		
	Thursday	AM	Core Routine	
		PM	Easy Run	12
	Friday	AM	OFF	
		PM		
C	Saturday	AM	Long Run	31
		PM		
	Sunday	AM	Easy Run	10
		PM		
Total Kilometers:				76

Notes:



My First Training Plan
50km

Week Seven

		Description	Km
Monday	AM	OFF	
	PM		
Tuesday	AM	Core Routine	
	PM	Easy Run	12
C Wednesday	AM	2x Long Hills	12
	PM		
Thursday	AM	Core Routine	
	PM	Easy Run	12
Friday	AM	OFF	
	PM		
Saturday	AM	Long Run	34
	PM		
Sunday	AM	Long Run	10
	PM		
Total Kilometers:			80

Notes:

Make sure to refer to the Introduction for details on the Long Hill workout.



My First Training Plan
50km

Week Eight

		Description	Km
Monday	AM	OFF	
	PM		
Tuesday	AM	Stretching (20min)	
	PM	Easy Run	8
Wednesday	AM	OFF	
	PM		
Thursday	AM	Core Routine	
	PM	Tempo Run	8
Friday	AM	OFF	
	PM		
Saturday	AM	Easy Run	4
	PM		
Sunday	AM	Long Run	30
	PM		
Total Kilometers:			50



Notes:

Recovery week - YEAH! Take some time to relax. Get a massage. Go for a swim. We finish this week with a long run that marks the beginning of the next volume block.



My First Training Plan
50km

Week Nine

			Description	Km
Monday	AM	OFF		
	PM			
Tuesday	AM	Core Routine		
	PM	Easy Run		10
C	Wednesday	AM	Descent Intervals	12
		PM		
	Thursday	AM	Core Routine	
		PM	Easy Run	8
	Friday	AM	OFF	
		PM		
	Saturday	AM	B2B Long Run	21
		PM		
	Sunday	AM	B2B Long Run	32
		PM		
Total Kilometers:				83

Notes:

This week has a back to back (B2B) weekend workout with two longer runs. This is one of the most effective ways to prepare your body for the stress of an ultramarathon while reducing overuse injury risk.



My First Training Plan
50km

Week Ten

			Description	Km
	Monday	AM	OFF	
		PM		
	Tuesday	AM	Core Routine	
		PM	Easy Run	12
C	Wednesday	AM	3x Long Hills	15
		PM		
	Thursday	AM	Core Routine	
		PM	Easy Run	8
	Friday	AM	OFF	
		PM		
C	Saturday	AM	Long Run	34
		PM		
	Sunday	AM	Easy Run	12
		PM		
Total Kilometers:				81

Notes:



My First Training Plan
50km

Week Eleven

			Description	Km
	Monday	AM	OFF	
		PM		
	Tuesday	AM	Core Routine	
		PM	Easy Run	12
C	Wednesday	AM	4x Short Hills	14
		PM		
	Thursday	AM	Core Routine	
		PM	Easy Run	10
	Friday	AM	OFF	
		PM		
	Saturday	AM	Easy Run	10
		PM		
C	Sunday	AM	Long Run	36
		PM		
Total Kilometers:				82

Notes:



My First Training Plan
50km

Week Twelve

			Description	Km
	Monday	AM	OFF	
		PM		
	Tuesday	AM	Core Routine	
		PM	Easy Run	15
C	Wednesday	AM	4x 1mi Speed	9
		PM		
	Thursday	AM	Core Routine	
		PM	Easy Run	10
	Friday	AM	OFF	
		PM		
C	Saturday	AM	Long Run	38
		PM		
	Sunday	AM	Easy Run	12
		PM		
Total Kilometers:				84

Notes:

Find yourself a flat section of trail or head to a track for Wednesday's workout. Check out the notes for specifics on speed workouts.



My First Training Plan
50km

Week Thirteen

			Description	Km
Monday	AM	OFF		
	PM			
Tuesday	AM	Stretching (20min)		
	PM	Easy Run		8
Wednesday	AM	OFF		
	PM			
Thursday	AM	Core Routine		
	PM	Easy Run		8
Friday	AM	OFF		
	PM			
Saturday	AM	Easy Run		10
	PM			
Sunday	AM	Easy Run		10
	PM			
Total Kilometers:				36

Notes:



My First Training Plan
50km

Week Fourteen


			Description	Km
	Monday	AM	OFF	
		PM		
	Tuesday	AM	Core Routine	
		PM	Easy Run	12
C	Wednesday	AM	5x Short Hills	15
		PM		
	Thursday	AM	Core Routine	
		PM	Easy Run	10
	Friday	AM	OFF	
		PM		
C	Saturday	AM	Long Run	37
		PM		
	Sunday	AM	Easy Run	12
		PM		
Total Kilometers:				86

Notes:



My First Training Plan
50km

Week Fifteen

		Description	Km	
Monday	AM	OFF		
	PM			
Tuesday	AM	Core Routine		
	PM	Tempo Run	10	
C	Wednesday	AM	Descent Intervals	12
		PM		
	Thursday	AM	Core Routine	
		PM	Easy Run	8
	Friday	AM	OFF	
		PM		
	Saturday	AM	Long Run	35
		PM		
	Sunday	AM	Long Run	25
		PM		
Total Kilometers:			90	

Notes:



My First Training Plan
50km

Week Sixteen

			Description	Km
Monday	AM	OFF		
	PM			
Tuesday	AM	Core Routine		
	PM	Easy Run		12
C	Wednesday	AM	5x Short Hills	15
		PM		
	Thursday	AM	Core Routine	
		PM	Easy Run w/ Short DIs	10
	Friday	AM	OFF	
		PM		
C	Saturday	AM	Long Run	42
		PM		
	Sunday	AM	Easy Run	10
		PM		
Total Kilometers:				89

Notes:

This Thursday's run is slightly different than previous Descent Intervals. As we get closer to the race date you don't want to overload you legs with eccentric contractions that cause muscle pain. This workout should be completed on a hilly trail. On your easy run, start in L1 as usual, but in the middle third of your run, push above race pace on the descents. Let your legs roll into the next climb but then transition back to easy pace.



My First Training Plan
50km

Week Seventeen

			Description	Km
	Monday	AM	OFF	
		PM		
	Tuesday	AM	Core Routine	
		PM	Easy Run	12
C	Wednesday	AM	6x 1000m Speed	10
		PM		
	Thursday	AM	Core Routine	
		PM	Easy Run	5
	Friday	AM	OFF	
		PM		
C	Saturday	AM	Long Run	40
		PM		
	Sunday	AM	OFF	
		PM		
Total Kilometers:				67

Notes:

Your speed work is dialled back to 1000 meters this week. Maintain the same pace from week 12 but with slightly less distance.



My First Training Plan
50km

Week Eighteen

		Description	Km
	Monday	AM OFF	
		PM	
	Tuesday	AM Core Routine	
		PM Easy Run	7
C	Wednesday	AM 2x Long Hills	12
		PM	
	Thursday	AM Core Routine	
		PM Easy Run	10
	Friday	AM OFF	
		PM	
C	Saturday	AM Long Run	20
		PM	
	Sunday	AM Easy Run	15
		PM	
Total Kilometers:			64

Notes:



My First Training Plan
50km

Week Nineteen

		Description	Km
Monday	AM	OFF	
	PM	Stretching (20min)	
Tuesday	AM	Steady Run	12
	PM		
C Wednesday	AM	Easy Run	5
	PM		
Thursday	AM	OFF	
	PM	Stretching (20min)	
Friday	AM	Easy w/ Race Strides	5
	PM		
Saturday	AM	RACE	50
	PM		
Sunday	AM	Walk (30min)	
	PM		
Total Kilometers:			72

Notes:

Race week! Best part is you get Monday to relax!

Tuesday's Steady run should be approximately 12km. Take the first 4km at an easy pace. The middle 4km at your goal race pace, and the final 4km at easy pace.

Friday's workout should be primarily an easy run with 6-8 speedups to race-pace. Each speedup should be pickup should be 30 seconds to 1.5 minutes with 3-4 minutes recovery in between.