



YWCA WOMEN'S TRIATHLON BEGINNER 12-WEEK TRAINING PLAN

SPRINT AND SUPERSPRINT
DISTANCE

Sprint: 500 yd. swim, 15.5 mi. bike, 5k (3.1 mi.) run/walk
SuperSprint: 200 yd. swim, 7 mi. bike, 1 mi. run/walk

Self-coached training plan with balanced emphasis
on swimming, biking and running.

Sunday, August 13, 2024
Lake Nokomis, Minneapolis, MN

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DISCLAIMER: The information contained in this training plan is for educational and instructive purposes only and is not intended as prescriptive advice. All forms of exercise pose some inherent risks.



Hello Triathletes!

Welcome to the 2024 YWCA Women's Triathlon Training Plan

I am so glad you're here.

Are you excited? Ready to get started? Want to do it all right now? Or, maybe you're nervous. Does it seem like a daunting insurmountable chore? Are you quietly wishing race registrations were refundable? Maybe a little bit of everything?

If you're reading this, I have faith in you. You took the brave first steps. You registered. You clicked on the link that brought you here. You're reading one word at a time. If you just keep reading one word at a time, and then just do each workout one at a time, you will get there.

Why follow a training plan? Could you wing it? Sure. Some people will not train at all. Some people will train spontaneously. That can work, but it can also end disastrously. You want to follow a plan so you can feel confident that you'll have the experience you wanted on race morning. You need a plan because life is messy, and motivation is inconsistent. A good plan will challenge you just enough while also keeping you from overdoing it. A plan allows you to have little wins every week and gives you a journey you can feel proud of.

Thank you for choosing YWCA Minneapolis for yourself and our community.

Trust the process.

All my best,



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kym Zest". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Kym Zest,
2024 Race Director
kzest@ywcamppls.org

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ywcamppls.org/womens-triathlon

Show us your training
selfies and use
#YWCAWomensTri

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INSTRUCTIONS

Read this! Please please please don't skip ahead, or if you do, please come back. Just like how you should read a recipe all the way through before turning on the stove, you should read the whole plan before putting on your shoes. Or you might end up burning your quadriceps while whipping up your biceps.

— Define “Beginner”

- Being a “beginner” is relative. This plan is designed for someone who is not new to exercise, but is new to triathlon and has zero to little experience following a training plan. You may find that this plan fits you in some ways and not in others. That's okay. While a personally written coached training plan can be a treasure, it is not necessary for you to make progress and meet your goals as a beginner.
- This plan focuses more on consistency than the load/unload cycle of training. While I am a huge advocate of sports science with periodized training in macro, meso and micro cycles (feel free to Google that); as a beginner without a coach to guide you week by week, it is more important to build a consistent foundation.

— Changes from Previous Years

- KISS (Keep It Simple, Stupid)! What I've always preached about transitions, I'm bringing to the training plan. Could you gamify it and plan every minute of every workout? Sure, but instead I want to make the training plan easy to read and simple to follow.
- No pool is required! Do I recommend you do some pool laps? Absolutely. A pool is an excellent place to work on techniques and build confidence for lake (AKA Open Water) swimming. Unfortunately, lots of people have limited or no access to a pool. While it is required that you swim in deep water for the triathlon, it is not required that you practice in a pool first.
- Time all the time. All workouts are written by time, not distance. Personally, I hate training to time and much prefer distance. I did it for a reason. It is important to be able to add up your total workout time. It helps put one number on the volume (not intensity) of training stress/load you put on your body. Another reason is because the average finish time for YWCA Women's Triathlon is around two hours. I can be confident if you are prepared for two hours of continuous effort you will finish well even if it takes you three hours.



— Adapting the Plan for Yourself

- There are so many ways you can modify the plan. For example, if running/walking for 20 minutes is demoralizing, you can set yourself a distance goal that you will think will take about 20 minutes. Here are some other guidelines:
 - If you are training for the SuperSprint distance, do 50-75% of the plan. For example, if the workout says 60 minutes, you'd do 30-45 minutes.
 - Have a week that is just not good for training? No worries, there is one rest week in the plan. You can move that rest week where you need to. You can also create another rest week. If you're feeling super fatigued from training or life, take an easy week.
 - If you take more than one easy week you have two options:
 - A) Let it go and continue with the plan as it's written. This can work if you've been feeling like the plan hasn't been very challenging.
 - B) Resume where you left off. This means you won't get to the end of the plan before the taper week. That's okay! This is the better option if the total training time is a lot for you or if you feel an injury sneaking up on you.
 - What to do about missed workouts? Sometimes you can make them up within that week or early the next week. Often the best choice is to just let it go and keep moving with the plan.
 - When changing the order of the workouts, try to keep them in the same week. Try not to pile all the workouts on top of each other. If you put all three run/walk workouts back-to-back and then have three or more days before your next run/walk workout, that's going to be rough on the body and tempt injury.

— Undertraining vs Overtraining

- It is 110% better to be 30% undertrained than 10% over trained.
- Over trained is when you've pushed yourself too hard and too long in training and by race day you're fending off injuries, illness, and excessive fatigue. To meet your goals you damaged yourself. Prolonged overtraining affects hormonal balance and needs medical treatment. If you're doing the workouts and worried that you should be doing more, don't.
- Undertrained means you haven't reached your capacity and potential. That's fine, leave room to grow. Undertrained can yield unexpectedly high performances. Do not confuse 30% undertrained with completely untrained. If the summer keeps throwing you curve balls and you just can't do the training, don't think of it as quitting. Think of it as deferring. Consider transferring your registration.



– RPE = Rate of Perceived Exertion AKA the pain scale for workouts

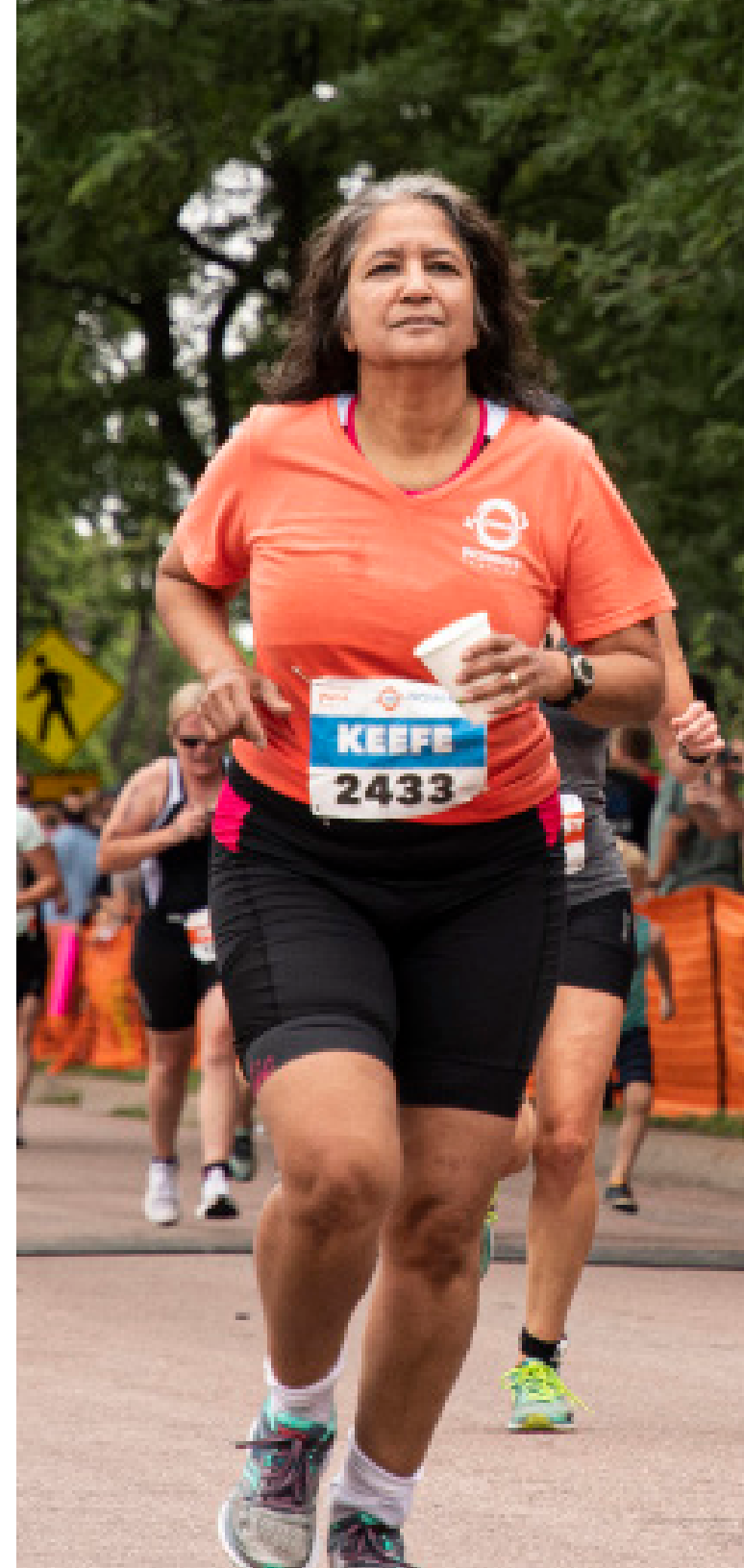
- If I hear “Listen to your body!” one more time. My body says “Let’s lie down with chips and a good show” It says “That workout sucks, let’s do this one instead” It says “That exercise looks too easy, I’m sure I can double that” and it often gets me in trouble.
- There are times to ask your body open-ended questions like “What do you want?” but in the middle of a workout you need more direct questions like “Is this painful or just uncomfortable?” or “Does this feel beneficial challenging or damaging challenging?” or “Is this hard because I’m crabby or because I’m sore?” The RPE chart is one tool to help you listen to your body and assess how intensely you are working out.

RPE LEVEL CHART

There are a zillion fancy ways to measure and manage training intensity. All that data won’t do you any good if you don’t pay attention to what it FEELS LIKE. Your app might give you a 100%, 1,000 points, a bazillion stars but does that match your actual experience? When they say, listen to your body what does that mean? What are you listening for? What do you want it to say?

Level		Feels like	Examples of activities and workouts
10	AM I DYING!!!	Muscles failing. Lungs past burning. Vision compromised. Gut shutting down.	Heroic, olympian, the world is watching this is my life’s purpose, sacrifice everything, go beyond limits.
9	MAXIMUM EFFORT!!!	All systems at 100%. Extraordinary intensity. Everything on fire.	Race or personal test event/expedition. Workouts to test personal best capacity.
8	EVERYTHING BURNS	Muscles and lungs screaming. Can only speak one word at a time.	Full body strength endurance interval workouts. Race pace or personal best intervals.
7	DEEPLY UNCOMFORTABLE	Breath is strained. Muscles intensely fatigued. Great mental fortitude needed.	Lactate threshold workouts. Most interval workouts.
6	FOCUSED EFFORT	Breath is strong and rhythmic. Can speak a sentence at a time. Muscles getting heavy.	Sweet spot/tempo workouts. Moderate intervals. Moderate strength training.
5	SUSTAINABLE WORK	Breath is noticeable. Conversation is possible but difficult. Muscles feel worked.	Satisfyingly challenging workouts, don’t take too much focus and don’t leave you drained. Chores like floor cleaning.
4	EASY ACTIVITY	Breath is elevated but conversational. Fatigue is only felt after sustaining for hours.	Part of warm-ups, recovery workouts. Long endurance workouts. All day at a fair or mall. Chores like laundry.
3	DOING SOMETHING	Breathing rate up but still easy. Body is moving more.	Some chores like taking out the trash and recycling. Recovery exercises.
2	SOME MOVEMENT	Breathing rate low and easy. Body holding itself up and moving a bit.	Standing, some walking. Chores like dishes. Some self massage. Passive supported stretching.
1	COMFORTABLY RESTFUL	Breathing rate low and easy. Body fully supported.	Probably awake. Most screen time. Eating. Seated meditation. Getting a massage.

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— Swim — What Stroke?

- You can swim any way you want. You can swim part doggy paddle, part frog, part Olympian. We just want you to be safe and have a good time. That said, done correctly front crawl AKA freestyle is the most efficient stroke. Focus on ease and relaxation. Fast comes later. Practice staying calm, practice in different conditions, practice different strokes.

— Bike – Don't Underestimate It

- The bike is the biggest percentage of triathlons. How comfortable and fit you are on your bike will make a huge difference in your overall experience. Even if you are most concerned about the swim or run, do not dismiss the importance of training on the bike. Biking continuously with no stopping feels quite different than biking casually through the city with intersections or stopping for drinks. Practice shifting, turning, eating and drinking while biking.

— To Walk, to Run? That is the Question.

- Do what doesn't injure you and gets you to the finish line. Remember that ultra runners (over marathon distance) walk a lot of their races. Pay more attention to the RPE value of the workout rather than if you should be walking or running. There are many "Run/Walk: 30 RPE 4" workouts. An RPE 4 feels pretty easy and is not very tiring after only 30 minutes.
- If running very, very slowly still doesn't feel like an easy activity, then walk. If walking feels too easy, mix in a little running or just walk faster. As the weeks progress you may find that you need to do more slow running to have the 30 minutes feel like an RPE of 4. Or, perhaps you had a big weekend of training and family fun and you need to do more walking for it to feel easy.
- If you are a more experienced runner perhaps you don't need to walk at all. Still, focus on the RPE level. Trust that some workouts are supposed to feel pretty easy. Do the easy so you can make other workouts more intense.

— Bricks

- In triathlon, a brick workout is two sports done back to back. This is different than two workouts done on the same day such as doing a bike in the morning and a swim in the afternoon. A brick workout puts no more than 10 minutes between the two sports. It is most often a bike to run brick to simulate transition two (T2). It can also be a run to bike, or a swim to bike, or bike to swim, or my personal favorite a bike to run to bike to run to bike to run...



— Transitions

- While practicing transitions does not build your fitness or burn many calories, they are essential to a smooth race day experience. Practicing transitions is the only way to know if your clothing plan is going to work for you. Without transition practice, it is easy to get very flustered and frustrated. Our Mini Tri is an excellent way for you to practice your transition in a small-scale race simulation. You can also practice on your own if a friend watches your bike while you swim and run.

— Training Support AKA Injury Prevention

- Injury prevention sounds like such a chore. It also goes by the name of “cross-training” but that’s also not really what it is. This is the exercise you do to be more successful in your triathlon training. Maybe running always hurts, maybe biking makes your hands numb, maybe swimming bothers your shoulder; there are exercises you can do to help with these things. Those exercises vary widely for each individual. It could be physical therapy exercises you should be doing, or yoga, or lifting weights or any number of other types of exercise. These exercises could also be considered “longevity training” because other than helping you achieve a short-term goal of completing YWCA Women’s Triathlon, they help keep your body moving and healthy for your whole life.

— Logging!

“Remember kids, the only difference between screwing around and science is writing it down.”

— Adam Savage, Myth Busters

- Do you need to follow a plan? Nope. Do you need to log what you do? Nope. Will following a plan and writing down what you do help you learn more about yourself? Yup! You can log your training in any way that works for you; paper journal, calendar, spreadsheet or app. The critical components are that you can:
 - ✓ Compare what you actually did to the original plan.
 - ✓ See your time totals for the week. Total time spent training and for each sport.
 - ✓ Record notes or comments about workouts completed or missed.
 - ✓ Use the log.

Remember, this is recommended, not required.



YWCA TRAINING CLASSES



TRI BASICS TALK ON ZOOM **FREE!**

Sunday, May 19 • 7:00 pm

Understand what happens on race day from arrival through post race party. Find out what your options are for what to wear, what to ride and how to train. This is a great learning opportunity.

TRI CLASSES AT LAKE NOKOMIS BEACH

June 5	Tri Talk Basics FREE!	6:00 pm	July 10	Open Water Swim \$38	5:00 pm
June 9	Tri Talk Basics FREE! Mini Tri \$22	11:00 am 12:00 pm	July 14	Tri Skills \$67	11:00 am
June 12	Mini Tri \$22	6:00 pm	July 17	Mini Tri \$22 Mini Tri \$22	5:00 pm 6:00 pm
June 16	Tri Skills \$67	11:00 am	July 21	Mini Tri \$22 Open Water Swim \$38	11:00 am 12:00 pm
June 19	Open Water Swim \$38	5:00 pm	July 24	Open Water Swim \$38	5:00 pm
June 23	Mini Tri \$22 Open Water Swim \$38	11:00 am 12:00 pm	July 28	Mini Tri \$22 Tri Talk Basics FREE! Mini Tri \$22	11:00 am 12:00 pm 1:00 pm
June 26	Tri Talk Basics FREE! Mini Tri \$22	5:00 pm 6:00 pm			

Registration is required.
ywcamppls.org/training



SOCIAL TIME AT LAKE NOKOMIS BEACH **FREE!**

(Thursdays) June 6 - July 25 • 5:00-7:00 pm

Not held on Thursday, July 4. Registration not required.

Race director, Kym Zest and her toddler Sprout will be playing at the Lake Nokomis beach. Get a high-five for doing your workout, ask a question or just kick back and enjoy the summer.



MINI RACE GUIDE

The Real Race Guide – Released in June. Go Read It.

Seriously, go read the race guide. It's full of important information for you and your fans. Things like what to bring, what not to bring, fun things to do, parking, safety rules, etc.

Enforcing Safety Rules in 2024:

There has always been a no phones, no personal audio (headphones, etc.) rule. Phone use is a serious safety concern. It is critical to make communication as easy as possible for the 1,000+ racers, 300+ volunteers, spectators and the general public. During the race, you may not be projecting any audio to your ears or others. You may not message, stream, film or call people. We will be watching for any violations of this safety rule (along with others such as not wearing a helmet). During transition if you are told to change something you must do so immediately and there will be no penalty. **If you are seen violating any safety rules while out on the course, the penalty will be adding time to your results or disqualification, depending on the severity of the violation.** If you have questions or want to dispute a reported violation you are welcome to do so with the race director or lead YWCA staff.

Packet Pick-up: Saturday, August 10 from 10:00 am to 6:00 pm

If you can't come on Saturday, you can pay \$25 in advance for race day packet pick-up. Make sure you have seven matching race numbers: temporary tattoos, swim cap with a number, helmet number, bike number and bib number. You will pick up your timing chip on race morning. It goes on your left ankle.

Race Day Schedule:

- 5:45 am..... Transition area opens, chip pick-up begins
- 7:45 am..... Transition area closes, available only to racers in progress
- 8:00 am..... Pre-race celebration
- 8:10 am..... First racers start
- 9:15 am..... All racers out of the water
- 11:30 am..... Last racer starts the run, transition area reopens
- 12:00 pm..... Gratitude ceremony with awards and door prizes
- 1:00 pm..... Go home!

Spectators:

- No dogs, please. While we are fans of all fuzzy families, this is not a good environment for pets. It is safer for all involved if there are no dogs at the main venue of the race.
- There will be food trucks to purchase food.
- There will be tap water available for filling water bottles.
- Adults with babies and small children have some special amenities. There is an enclosed baby care tent for nursing, pumping, diapering or any other baby care needs. This year there will be a fenced-in area with toddler and child activities so adults can have a safer place to play with kids.



YWCA MINNEAPOLIS WOMEN'S TRIATHLON: 12-WEEK TRAINING PLAN

Week	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday	Notes
WEEK 12 MAY 20	Keep doing whatever workouts you've been doing and get ready to formally start a new schedule of workouts next week!	Training Support – write down what this will be for you. Don't just plan on winging it next week.	Do you have a route for your run/walks?	Are you bike ready? Tires inflated, cables moving smoothly, helmet dusted off?	Do you know what your bike route options are?	Prepare for the beach. Have your beach bag packed.	If you've been swimming in a pool, please continue to do so until July.	What is your logging plan?
WEEK 11 MAY 27	Training Support	Run/Walk :30 RPE 4		Run/Walk :30 RPE 4		Bike :30 RPE 5	Run/Walk :30 RPE 4	Total 2:00 Swim 0:00 Bike 0:30 Run 1:30
WEEK 10 JUNE 3	Training Support	Run/Walk :35 RPE 4	Swim :10 Continuous or not. In and out of the water, stop to stand as needed. TRI TALK BASICS 6:00 PM	Run/Walk :30 RPE 5		Bike :45 RPE 5	Run/Walk :30 RPE 4 TRI TALK BASICS 11:00 AM MINI TRI 12:00 PM	Total 2:30 Swim 0:10 Bike 0:45 Run: 1:35
WEEK 9 JUNE 10	Training Support	Run/Walk :40 RPE 4	Bike :30 hill repeats - :10 warmup, bike up and down the same hill for 10 min., then 10 min. easy cool down. Swim :15 Stop to stand as needed. MINI TRI 6:00 PM	Run/Walk Intervals :40 (:10 RPE 4, 6x 2 min. RPE 6, 3 min. RPE 4)		Bike 1:00 RPE 5	Run/Walk :30 RPE 4 TRI SKILLS 11:00 AM	Total 3:35 Swim 0:15 Bike 1:30 Run 1:50

YWCA MINNEAPOLIS WOMEN'S TRIATHLON: 12-WEEK TRAINING PLAN

Week	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday	Notes
WEEK 8 JUNE 17	Training Support	Run/Walk :45 RPE 4	Bike :30 hill repeats :10 warmup, bike up and down the same hill for 10 min., then 10 min. easy cool down. Swim :20 Stop to stand as needed. OPEN WATER 5:00 PM	Run/Walk Intervals :50 (:15 RPE 4, 7x 2 min. RPE 6, 3 min. RPE 4)		Bike 1:15 RPE 5	Run/Walk :30 RPE 4 MINI TRI 11:00 AM OPEN WATER 12:00 PM	Total 4:10 Swim 0:20 Bike 1:45 Run 2:05
WEEK 7 JUNE 24	Training Support	Run/Walk :45 RPE 5	Bike :30 hill repeats :10 warmup, bike up and down the same hill for 10 min., then 10 min. easy cool down. Swim :20 Try continuous swimming. TRI TALK BASICS 5:00 PM MINI TRI 6:00 PM	Run/Walk Intervals :60 (:20 RPE 4, 8x 2 min. RPE 6, 3 min. RPE 4)		Bike 1:30 RPE 5	Run/Walk :30 RPE 4	Total 4:25 Swim 0:20 Bike 2:00 Run 2:15
WEEK 6 UNLOAD JULY 1	Training Support	Run/Walk :20 RPE 4	Swim :15 for fun!	4th of July Run/Walk :20 RPE 4		Bike :30 for fun!	Run/Walk :20 RPE 4	Total 1:45 Swim :15 Bike :30 Run 1:00

YWCA MINNEAPOLIS WOMEN'S TRIATHLON: 12-WEEK TRAINING PLAN

Week	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday	Notes
WEEK 5 JULY 8	Training Support	Run/Walk :30 RPE 4	Bike :30 RPE 6 Swim :30 Stop, stand and rest twice. OPEN WATER 5:00 PM	Run/Walk Intervals :45 (:15 RPE 4 10x 1 min. RPE 8, 2 min. RPE 4)		Brick Bike :60 RPE 5, Run :15 RPE 4	Brick Swim :20 RPE 4, Bike :30 RPE 5 TRI SKILLS 11:00 AM	Total 4:20 Swim :50 Bike 2:00 Run 1:30
WEEK 4 JULY 15	Training Support	Run/Walk :30 RPE 4	Bike :30 RPE 6 Swim :30 Try to stop to stand and rest just twice. MINI TRI 5:00 PM MINI TRI 6:00 PM	Run/Walk Intervals :45 (:15 RPE 4 10x 1 min. RPE 8, 2 min. RPE 4)		Brick Bike 1:15 RPE 5, Run :20 RPE 4	Brick Swim :25 RPE 4, Bike :45 RPE 5 MINI TRI 11:00 AM OPEN WATER 12:00 PM	Total 5:00 Swim :55 Bike 2:30 Run 1:35
WEEK 3 JULY 22	Training Support	Run/Walk :30 RPE 4	Bike :30 RPE 6 Swim :30 Try to stop to stand and rest just once. OPEN WATER 5:00 PM	Run/Walk Intervals :45 (:15 RPE 4, 10x 1 min. RPE 8, 2 min. RPE 4)		Brick Bike 1:30 RPE 5, Run :30 RPE 4	Brick Swim :30 RPE 4, Bike :60 RPE 5 MINI TRI 11:00 AM TRI TALK BASICS 12:00 PM MINI TRI 1:00 PM	Total 5:45 Swim :60 Bike 3:00 Run 1:45

YWCA MINNEAPOLIS WOMEN'S TRIATHLON: 12-WEEK TRAINING PLAN

Week	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday	Notes
WEEK 2 JULY 29	Training Support	Run/Walk :20 RPE 4	Swim :30 Try to stop to stand and rest just once.	Run/Walk :30 starting at RPE 4 and building to RPE 8 by the last minute.		3x Brick for transition practice. Swim :5 Bike :10, Run :5 Total work-out time 1:30 including breaks between attempts.	Reverse Brick: Run/Walk :30 starting at RPE 4 and building to RPE 8 by the last minute. Bike :60 RPE 6	Total 4:20 Swim :40 Bike: 1:30 Run 1:35
WEEK 1 TAPER! AUG. 5	Training Support	Run/Walk :20 RPE 4	Swim :15 RPE 4	Bike :20 RPE 4	Training Support	Packet Pick-Up 10:00 am - 6:00 pm	RACE DAY Register for 2025!	Bask in the glory of your accomplishment!
WEEK 0 AUG. 12	Fill out the race survey.	Training Support - Recover and take care of your body.	Review and reflect. Look back at your training log. Journal about your training and race experience.		Set new goals!		Start mapping out your plan for your new goals!	