

SKYRUN - TRAINING PROGRAM

1. The SkyRun epitomises true mountain running. Rated by many as the toughest trail run in SA. It is harsh landscape, windswept, that can be hot by day and icy cold by night. Conditions can change in a few minutes. Whether you race the event or you are there just to complete it, you have to dig deep.
2. The race is marked at high altitude (On average around 2500m above sea level). So as far as possible it is important that you do some of your training sessions (especially your long runs / hikes) at similar altitudes. Practice technical running.
3. As it is important to simulate conditions it is as important to simulate race day in terms of clothing, shoes, backpack, hydration & nutrition.
4. It is a self-supported and self-navigational race. Participating in the full SkyRun event it is imperative that you understand and are familiar with navigation. No use you do all the training and don't know where to go! Sharpen up on GPS and map reading skills and ensure that you will be able to navigate during daytime and at night.
5. The training program stretches over 16 weeks. So there is enough time. It also allows you to start slowly and gradually increase volume and intensity. As far as possible have 1 rest day (non-running day) between every session
6. The program is designed on 3 running sessions per week. So your first question might be: Will this be enough? The answer is yes - if you stick to a few basics and supplement your running sessions with some cross training activities (E.g. Functional Strength training, Mountain Biking, Swimming etc.)
7. The basics of 3 sessions per week: a) Run efficiently b) Run three times per week and no more c) focus on your long runs/hikes d) Put some variety in your sessions e) Cross-train, aim to do 2 sessions per week f) Don't make up for lost time. If you get sick or injured don't double up trying to catch up. Stick to the program. Stuff happens. g) Don't push to the end - ensure a 3 taper.
8. The main objective of the program (apart from getting you to the finish line) is to ensure high quality training sessions on weekends (LSD's / Fast Hike's). Get the true value of your weekend's sessions by looking after yourself during the week.
9. Your 3 sessions per week:
 - Early Week Session: A time trail. Don't let the wording put you off. It merely suggest that you find a route that works for you and run it at your pace gradually trying to increase your time on the course over the 16 week period. It is a tool to monitor your progress.
 - Mid Week Session: A Tempo Run / Session. Here the aim is do a run at a slightly higher intensity were your heart rate will increase and decrease a few times during the duration of your session. For example do a run/hike at moderate to high intensity were there is some climbs, flats and descents
 - Weekend Session: Priority #1. On the weekend's session it is not so much about the distance as it is about time. You want to go out with your training partners and spend some time in the outdoors. Plan your route. Gear up and hit the trails. In the training program Double Sessions are also indicated. It simply means you need to do two sessions on the weekend with some rest/recovery time in-between. For example go out late afternoon and do your PM run/hike into the night. Sleep a few hours or as needed and take on your early AM session the next morning. (Remember you will be racing in and possibly through the night on race day!)

| | Session 1 - Early Week Time Trail | Session 2 - Mid-Week Tempo | Session 3 - Weekend LSD |
|----------------|--|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Week 1 | 6km Time Trail Route | 30min Run | 30min LSD Trail Run |
| Week 2 | 6km Time Trail Route | 45min Run | 45min LSD Trail Run |
| Week 3 | 8km Time Trail Route | 45min Run | 60min LSD Trail Run |
| Week 4 | 45min Easy Run | 30min Run | 60min LSD Trail Run |
| Week 5 | 8km Time Trail Route | 45min Run | 2 Hour Trail Run/Hike |
| Week 6 | 8km Time Trail Route | 60min Run | 2 Hour Trail Run/Hike |
| Week 7 | 8km Time Trail Route | 60min Run | Double Session: PM: 4hrs & AM: 4hrs |
| Week 8 | 8km Time Trail Route | 60min Run | 4 Hour Trail Run/Hike |
| Week 9 | 30min Easy Run | 45min Run | 90min LSD Trail Run |
| Week 10 | 8km Time Trail Route | 60min Run | Double Session: PM: 4hrs & AM: 4hrs |
| Week 11 | 8km Time Trail Route | 45min Run | 5 Hour Trail Run/Hike |
| Week 12 | 8km Time Trail Route | 60min Run | Double Session: PM: 4hrs & AM: 6hrs |
| Week 13 | 8km Time Trail Route | 45min Run | 4 Hour Trail Run/Hike |
| Week 14 | 30min Easy Run | 45min Run | 2 Hour Trail Run/Hike |
| Week 15 | 6km Time Trail Route | 30-45min Run | 45 - 60min LSD Trail Run |
| Week 16 | 20 - 30min easy | Rest | SKYRUN |

The training program will not have the same training effect for everyone. It is a guideline. Do your training based on your known abilities and listen to your body