



## URBANATHLON CARDIO PLAN

### Reach the finish line faster with this 4-week speed and endurance program.

Alternate between these cardio workouts and the strength-training sessions on this month's poster. Warm up with 10 minutes of light running followed by 10 accelerations (build to a sprint, then slow to a jog).

**MONDAY**

1	1
2	2
3	3
4	4
5	5
6	6
7	7
8	8
9	9
10	10

**WEEK: INTERVALS**  
Run a quarter mile as fast as you can, and then walk or jog for 3 minutes.

**WEDNESDAY**

1	1
2	2
3	3
4	4
5	5
6	6
7	7
8	8
9	9
10	10

**WEEK: INTERVALS**  
Run a half mile as fast as you can, and then walk or jog for 5 minutes.

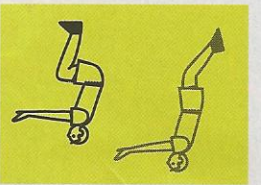
**FRIDAY**

1	1
2	2
3	3
4	4
5	5
6	6
7	7
8	8
9	9
10	10

**WEEK: INTERVALS**  
Weeks 1 to 3, run at your race pace; week 4, run at a conversational pace.

**HOW TO GET THERE**  
Do body-weight squat jumps: Stand with your feet shoulder-width apart and your fingers on the back of your head. Pull one leg back so they're in line with your body. Dip your knees and then leap vertically. When you land, squat down and pause for a count of two before you jump up again, says Frankel. Complete 3 to 5 sets of up to 6 reps, resting 30 seconds between sets.

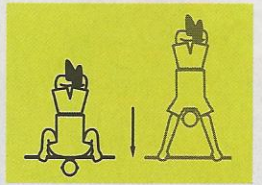
**TEST YOURSELF**  
Stand with your toes on a line and your feet shoulder-width apart. Jump as far as you can. Have a buddy measure the distance from the starting line to the back of your heels.



**SECRET 1**  
**Build Your Explosiveness**  
If you were to train for almost any other race, you could simply concentrate on secret #5—increasing your endurance. But you need more than stamina to take on the obstacles of the Urbanathlon. That's where explosiveness—your ability to generate force and release it powerfully—comes into play, says Chris Frankel, Ph.D. (c), the director of human performance for TRX Training. The more launch power you're able to muster, the easier and faster you'll hurtle the past your competition.

**HOW TO GET THERE**  
Add pullups to three of your weekly workouts, performing 5 sets of 3 reps each. Rest 30 seconds between each set. Too easy? "Do fewer sets of more reps, or add weight by clenching a dumbbell or medicine ball between your knees," says Frankel. If pullups are too difficult, do lat pulldowns.

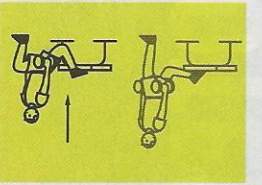
**TEST YOURSELF**  
Using an overhead grip that's just beyond shoulder width, grab a pair of dumbbells weighing approximately half your body weight and place the top of your right foot on a bench behind you. Slowly lower your body until your left thigh is parallel to the floor. Pause, and push yourself back up to the starting position.



**SECRET 2**  
**Boost Upper-Body Power**  
A bare chest and sleeve-busting biceps might look good in the mirror and turn heads at the beach, but they're not the only muscles you'll need to haul yourself over walls and swing across monkey bars. "You'll also need a strong back and good shoulder mobility," Frankel says. But bulking up isn't the ultimate goal. "The key is to optimize how strong you are in relation to how much you weigh," he says. "There's a point at which big muscles just become dead weight."

**HOW TO GET THERE**  
Add the exercise described above (called the Bulgarian split squat) to your weekly fitness regimen. Complete 2 to 4 sets of 6 to 12 reps per side. Rest 60 to 90 seconds between sets. For more unilateral moves, check out the Urbanathlon strength-training poster on this month's poster.

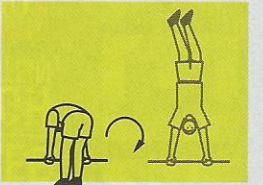
**TEST YOURSELF**  
Grab a part of dumbbells weighing approximately half your body weight and place the top of your right foot on a bench behind you. Slowly lower your body until your left thigh is parallel to the floor. Pause, and push yourself back up to the starting position.



**SECRET 3**  
**Enhance Your Balance**  
Most men would never consciously try to make one leg stronger or one arm more massive than the other, but that's what can happen if you do only bilateral exercises, which work both limbs in unison. The reason: "Your dominant limb can pick up the slack for your nondominant one," says Frankel. "Single-sided [unilateral] exercises have the opposite effect, increasing total-body stability and preventing imbalances and by training each limb independently of the other," says Frankel.

**HOW TO GET THERE**  
Add two of the core exercises from this month's Muscle department to each of your weekly workouts to build a rock-solid core. "Whatever you do, steer clear of exercises that round your back, like situps," says Frankel. "Repeat-ably flexing your spine can lead to an increased risk of developing lower-back pain."

**TEST YOURSELF**  
Using an overhead, shoulder-width grip, grab a chinup bar and hang with your knees slightly bent and feet together. Lift your legs until your shins touch the bar. Pause, and return to the starting position.



**SECRET 4**  
**Strengthen Your Core**  
A six-pack can be deceptive. That's because it's only one indication of a strong core, which encompasses every muscle between your hips and shoulders—muscles ignored by many men in their pursuit of washboard abs. Why should you care? "Without core strength, you can't transfer power efficiently through your body—from your legs to your arms, for example," says Frankel. "You also can't transfer that power effectively to the world around you, limiting your athletic performance."

**HOW TO GET THERE**  
Investing some time into pounding the pavement (or trails). But long-distance runs are only part of a successful full training plan. If you leave out intervals—repeated bouts of intense effort followed by active rest—you won't have the aerobic power to shift into a higher gear when it matters most. Follow the "Urbanathlon Cardio Plan" below to build the speed and stamina you need to go the distance.

**TEST YOURSELF**  
Run 1 1/2 miles on a track or flat trail as fast as you can. Run 1 1/2 miles 10 1/2 minutes.



**SECRET 5**  
**Increase Endurance**  
If you can't run 10 miles, then scrambling over vehicles and crawling under cargo nets will be the least of your worries. At the end of the day, the Urbanathlon is an endurance event, and you'll use most of your energy running between obstacles," says Frankel, who recommends gauging your stamina and aerobic capacity—the ability to deliver oxygen to muscles—with the 1 1/2-mile test run below. "The more efficiently you can cover those miles, the better you'll do in the race," says Frankel.