

IMPROVER PLAN

Week one: threshold testing | total ride time: 3 hours 40 minutes - 4 hours 40 minutes



Goals of the week

1 Just get out on your bike for the first ride of the week.

2 The priority of the week is the [threshold test](#) to establish your correct training zone.

3 Find a suitable cross training activity. Remember this can be something restorative such as yoga or pilates.

MONDAY



Session type
Rest day

Session details

It might seem odd to start the plan with a rest day but it will give you a chance to ensure your bike, kit and clothing are ready.

TUESDAY



Session type
Outdoor/indoor

🕒 1 hour

📶 Low

Session details

Easy paced ride to get you back in the saddle.

Choose a flat route and ride at a pace that would allow you to have a conversation.

Use your gears to keep your cadence at 90 rpm+

Keep your upper body as stable as possible, try to limit movement in your upper body.

Focus

To get you out on your bike and used to riding at a steady and comfortable pace.

WEDNESDAY



Session type
Rest day

Session details

Today's rest day is especially important as you've got a [threshold test](#) tomorrow.

THURSDAY



Session type
Threshold test

🕒 1 hour 10 minutes

📶 Med/high

Session details

[Threshold test](#)

Focus

Pace the 30 mins effort as evenly as possible, don't start too hard and try to finish with nothing left in the tank

FRIDAY



Session type
Cross-training

🕒 1 hour

Session details

Bonus session – This is not an essential session; add it to your training if you have the time. Choose an activity to help develop all-round fitness and flexibility. If you already do another exercise session, structured or social, then continue to fit that into your week. If not, then try something new; for example gym, swim, jog or a fitness class. Remember to start all new activities slowly, don't overdo it and that gentle restorative exercise, such as yoga or pilates, can complement cycling well.

SATURDAY



Session type
Flexible day

Session details

You may have to adapt your training schedule around your work and family life. Leaving today blank will give more flexibility for this. If you do have to shuffle the sessions around, try to keep the structure of one day of training followed by a rest day or alternative activity, rather than riding on back to back days.

SUNDAY



Session type
Outdoor Ride

🕒 1 hour 30 minutes

📶 Low/med

Session details

[Improvers endurance ride](#)
Warm-up: [WU R](#)
Pacing is key. HRZ 1-2 may feel very easy to start with but be disciplined and stick to your zones.

Practice your fuelling and hydration strategies during these rides.

Focus

Your third ride of the week, you should be feeling more confident and comfortable on the bike. Keep your upper body relaxed.

IMPROVER PLAN

Week two: settling into a routine | total ride time: 3 hours 40 mins - 4 hours 40 mins



Goals of the week

1 Be disciplined about sticking to your training zones.

2 Complete all three rides.

3 Spend 10 minutes after each ride [working on your flexibility](#).

MONDAY



Session type
Rest day

Session details

Rest days are when you recover from your training and become stronger. Try to eat and drink well today and not do too much.

TUESDAY



Session type
Outdoor/indoor

🕒 1 hour

📶 Med

Session details

[Zone build](#)

Warm-up: n/a
The 1st block is HRZ 1 so acts as a warm up. Maintain a smooth pedal stroke, especially during the Zone 3 effort. Don't start stomping the pedals when you get tired. Aim to hit the middle of the Zone midway through each effort and then, if you feel good, push on a bit towards the top end.

Keep your cadence up during the Zone 1 blocks, use an easier gear to allow this.

Focus

Developing a feel for your training zones and ability to accurately pace.

WEDNESDAY



Session type
Rest day

Session details

Your second rest day of the week. Check out some techniques you can use to [maximise your recovery](#).

THURSDAY



Session type
Outdoor/indoor

🕒 1 hour

📶 Med

Session details

[Tempo intervals](#)

Warm-up: [WU T1](#)
Maintain a smooth pedal stroke, especially during the HRZ 3 effort. Don't start stomping the pedals when you get tired.

Pace the tempo efforts evenly and avoid major fluctuations in heart rate.

Keep your legs turning over during the recoveries but back your resistance right off.

Focus

Building your ability and confidence to ride at a higher intensity.

FRIDAY



Session type
Cross-training

🕒 1 hour

Session details

Bonus session – This is not an essential session; add it to your training if you have the time. Choose an activity to help develop all-round fitness and flexibility. If you already do another exercise session, structured or social, then continue to fit that into your week. If not, then try something new; for example gym, swim, jog or a fitness class. Remember to start all new activities slowly, don't overdo it and that gentle restorative exercise, such as yoga or pilates, can complement cycling well.

SATURDAY



Session type
Flexible day

Session details

You may have to adapt your training schedule around your work and family life. Leaving today blank will give more flexibility for this. If you do have to shuffle the sessions around, try to keep the structure of one day of training followed by a rest day or alternative activity, rather than riding on back to back days.

SUNDAY



Session type
Outdoor Ride

🕒 1 hour 40 minutes

📶 Low/med

Session details

[Improvers endurance ride](#)

Warm-up: [WU R](#)
Pacing is key. HRZ 1-2 may feel very easy to start with but be disciplined and stick to your zones.

Practice your [fuelling](#) and [hydration](#) strategies during these rides.

You may at some stage want to head out with some friends or a club. This is great and you'll learn vital [group riding skills](#) but don't be pushed to ride at a pace that's too fast for you.

Focus

How did your long ride go last week? Did you manage to pace it evenly or did you go off too hard and struggle towards the end? Really try and be disciplined about sticking to HRZ 1-2.

IMPROVER PLAN

Week three: building on solid foundations | total ride time: 3h 50m - 4h 50m



Goals of the week

- 1** You're repeating the sessions from last week so, as you're now familiar with the structures, there is no excuse for not getting them 100% right.
- 2** If you're feeling confident, add a couple of climbs to your weekend ride.
- 3** Did you manage the flexibility work last week? Try a [foam roller](#) this week.

MONDAY



Session type
Rest day

Session details

Rest days are when you recover from your training and become stronger. Try to eat and drink well today and not do too much.

TUESDAY



Session type
Outdoor/indoor

🕒 1 hour

📶 Med

Session details

Zone build
Warm-up: n/a
The 1st block is HRZ 1 so acts as a warm up. Maintain a smooth pedal stroke, especially during the Zone 3 effort. Don't start stomping the pedals when you get tired. Aim to hit the middle of the Zone midway through each effort and then, if you feel good, push on a bit towards the top end.

Keep your cadence up during the Zone 1 blocks, use an easier gear to allow this.

Focus

Aim to pace the session more accurately than last week.

WEDNESDAY



Session type
Rest day

Session details

Your second rest day of the week. Check out some techniques you can use to [maximise your recovery](#).

THURSDAY



Session type
Outdoor/indoor

🕒 1 hour

📶 Med

Session details

Tempo intervals
Warm-up: [WU T1](#)
Maintain a smooth pedal stroke, especially during the HRZ 3 effort. Don't start stomping the pedals when you get tired.

Pace the tempo efforts evenly and avoid major fluctuations in heart rate.

Keep your legs turning over during the recoveries but back your resistance right off.

Focus

Did you complete these intervals last week? If not, try to last a bit longer this week. If you managed them all, try pushing up to mid HRZ 3.

FRIDAY



Session type
Cross-training

🕒 1 hour

Session details

Bonus session – This is not an essential session; add it to your training if you have the time. Choose an activity to help develop all-round fitness and flexibility. If you already do another exercise session, structured or social, then continue to fit that into your week. If not, then try something new; for example gym, swim, jog or a fitness class. Remember to start all new activities slowly, don't overdo it and that gentle restorative exercise, such as yoga or pilates, can complement cycling well.

SATURDAY



Session type
Flexible day

Session details

You may have to adapt your training schedule around your work and family life. Leaving today blank will give more flexibility for this. If you do have to shuffle the sessions around, try to keep the structure of one day of training followed by a rest day or alternative activity, rather than riding on back to back days.

SUNDAY



Session type
Outdoor Ride

🕒 1 hour 50 minutes

📶 Low/med

Session details

Improvers endurance ride
Warm-up: [WU R](#)
Pacing is key. HRZ 1-2 may feel very easy to start with but be disciplined and stick to your zones.

Practice your [fuelling](#) and [hydration](#) strategies during these rides.

You may at some stage want to head out with some friends or a club. This is great and you'll learn vital [group riding skills](#) but don't be pushed to ride at a pace that's too fast for you.

Focus

You should be getting a feel for pacing now and what your heart rate zones feel like. Try adding a couple of climbs to your ride this week and allowing your heart rate to rise to HRZ 3.

IMPROVER PLAN

Week four: rest week and a 50 km ride | total ride time: 3 hours 50 mins



Goals of the week

- 1 Rest up well during the week and [maximise your recovery](#) ahead of the weekend ride.
- 2 Spend some time during the week planning your route for the weekend and don't forget to include a café stop.
- 3 Give your bike a good clean and service ready for the ride on Sunday.

MONDAY



Session type
Rest day

Session details

Rest days are when you recover from your training and become stronger. Try to eat and drink well today and not do too much.

TUESDAY



Session type
Outdoor/indoor

🕒 1 hour

📶 Low

Session details

[Spin out session](#)
Warm-up: [WU T1](#)
Lift the leg up as quickly as possible, aiding the leading leg in the down stroke and decreasing the amount of 'bobbing' in the saddle.

Keep the upper body as stable as possible, there should be limited movement.

If you bob on the saddle, lower your cadence slightly to stop this and regain control.

Focus

It's all about high cadence and leg speed, back your resistance and gearing right off and spin away!

WEDNESDAY



Session type
Rest day

Session details

Your second rest day of the week. Check out some techniques you can use to [maximise your recovery](#).

THURSDAY



Session type
Outdoor/indoor

🕒 20 minutes

📶 Low/med

Session details

[20-minute warm-up](#)
Warm-up: n/a
Concentrate on a smooth and even pedal stroke
Hold your form as the cadences increase.
Shift one gear lower on your cassette on the rev outs to maximise cadence.

Focus

The 20 minute warm-up is used across all levels and disciplines at British Cycling. You will be using it next week as a warm-up so it's good to get familiar with its structure. It's also a great standalone session twice or three times through or, as in this case, as a short leg loosener

FRIDAY



Session type
Rest day

Session details

You've got an extra rest day this week ahead of your weekend ride. Use it to check that your bike and all your kit is ready for Sunday.

SATURDAY



Session type
Flexible day

Session details

You may have to adapt your training schedule around your work and family life. Leaving today blank will give more flexibility for this. If you do have to shuffle the sessions around, try to keep the structure of one day of training followed by a rest day or alternative activity, rather than riding on back to back days.

SUNDAY



Session type
Outdoor Ride

🕒 2 hours 30 minutes

📶 Low/med

Session details

[Improvers endurance ride](#)
Warm-up: [WU R](#)
Pacing is key. HRZ 1-2 may feel very easy to start with but be disciplined and stick to your zones.
Practice your [fuelling](#) and [hydration](#) strategies during these rides. You may at some stage want to head out with some friends or a club. This is great and you'll learn vital [group riding skills](#) but don't be pushed to ride at a pace that's too fast for you. Plan a café stop half way round. It's not a race and it's an ideal chance to re-fill your bottles.

Focus

Riding to a target distance that is half of your final goal

IMPROVER PLAN

Week five: increasing the intensity | total ride time: 4 hours - 5 hours



Goals of the week

- 1 How was your 50 km ride on Sunday? Take some time to think about what you did right and what needs working on.
- 2 Focus on accurate pacing of the intervals during the two midweek sessions.
- 3 Plan a few decent climbs into your long ride.

MONDAY



Session type
Rest day

Session details

Rest days are when you recover from your training and become stronger. Try to eat and drink well today and not do too much.

TUESDAY



Session type
Outdoor/indoor

🕒 1 hour
📊 Med

Session details

Sweet-spot Intervals
Warm-up: [20-minute warm-up](#)
Pace the efforts evenly aiming to finish each strongly. Start at the lower end of the zone and build through.

Maintain an even pedal stroke, don't stamp on the pedals.

Hold your upper body still, don't rock and keep your grip on the bars relaxed.

Focus

Raising the intensity from the Tempo efforts you have been doing. Sweet-spot is so named because it delivers great training gains without the need for much recovery.

WEDNESDAY



Session type
Rest day

Session details

Your second rest day of the week. Check out some techniques you can use to [maximise your recovery](#).

THURSDAY



Session type
Outdoor/indoor

🕒 1 hour
📊 Med/high

Session details

Pyramid Intervals 1
Warm-up: [20-minute warm-up](#)
Pace your efforts so that there's no drop off. Heart rate and intensity should remain consistent.

Keep your legs turning over during the recoveries but back your gear and resistance right off.

Keep your leg speed high, don't try and force a high gear.

Focus

A threshold boosting workout that is excellent for developing your ability to quickly find and maintain this key intensity.

FRIDAY



Session type
Cross-training

🕒 1 hour

Session details

Bonus session – This is not an essential session; add it to your training if you have the time. Choose an activity to help develop all-round fitness and flexibility. If you already do another exercise session, structured or social, then continue to fit that into your week. If not, then try something new; for example gym, swim, jog or a fitness class. Remember to start all new activities slowly, don't overdo it and that gentle restorative exercise, such as yoga or Pilates, can complement cycling well.

SATURDAY



Session type
Flexible day

Session details

You may have to adapt your training schedule around your work and family life. Leaving today blank will give more flexibility for this. If you do have to shuffle the sessions around, try to keep the structure of one day of training followed by a rest day or alternative activity, rather than riding on back to back days.

SUNDAY



Session type
Outdoor Ride

🕒 2 hours
📊 Low/med

Session details

Improvers endurance ride
Warm-up: [WU R](#)
Pacing is key. HRZ 1-2 may feel very easy to start with but be disciplined and stick to your zones.

Practice your [fuelling](#) and [hydration](#) strategies during these rides.

You may at some stage want to head out with some friends or a club. This is great and you'll learn vital [group riding skills](#) but don't be pushed to ride at a pace that's too fast for you.

Focus

This will probably end up being a bit shorter than last weekends ride, but try to correct any mistakes you made with your pacing or fuelling.

IMPROVER PLAN

Week six: consolidation | total ride time: 4 hours 15 minutes - 5 hours 15 minutes



Goals of the week

- Midweek sessions are the same as last week, try and complete all the efforts if you didn't quite manage them.
- Add 15 minutes to the long ride, maybe make this a hill rep or two.
- The sessions are starting to get more demanding, maybe consider making your cross training more restorative or consider an extra rest day.

MONDAY



Session type
Rest day

Session details

Rest days are when you recover from your training and become stronger. Try to eat and drink well today and not do too much.

TUESDAY



Session type
Outdoor/indoor

🕒 1 hour
📊 Med

Session details

Sweet-spot Intervals
Warm-up: [20-minute warm-up](#)
Pace the efforts evenly aiming to finish each strongly. Start at the lower end of the zone and build through.

Maintain an even pedal stroke, don't stamp on the pedals.

Hold your upper body still, don't rock and keep your grip on the bars relaxed.

Focus

If you comfortably managed this session last week, add a minute to each of the 3-minute efforts.

WEDNESDAY



Session type
Rest day

Session details

Your second rest day of the week. Check out some techniques you can use to [maximise your recovery](#).

THURSDAY



Session type
Outdoor/indoor

🕒 1 hour
📊 Med/high

Session details

Pyramid Intervals 1
Warm-up: [20-minute warm-up](#)
Pace your efforts so that there's no drop off. Heart rate and intensity should remain consistent.

Keep your legs turning over during the recoveries but back your gear and resistance right off.

Keep your leg speed high, don't try and force a high gear.

Focus

Did you manage the 5-minute effort last week? If not, ride the efforts leading up to it at sweet-spot intensity.

FRIDAY



Session type
Cross-training

🕒 1 hour

Session details

Bonus session – This is not an essential session; add it to your training if you have the time. Choose an activity to help develop all-round fitness and flexibility. If you already do another exercise session, structured or social, then continue to fit that into your week. If not, then try something new; for example gym, swim, jog or a fitness class. Remember to start all new activities slowly, don't overdo it and that gentle restorative exercise, such as yoga or Pilates, can complement cycling well.

SATURDAY



Session type
Flexible day

Session details

You may have to adapt your training schedule around your work and family life. Leaving today blank will give more flexibility for this. If you do have to shuffle the sessions around, try to keep the structure of one day of training followed by a rest day or alternative activity, rather than riding on back to back days.

SUNDAY



Session type
Outdoor Ride

🕒 2 hours 15 minutes
📊 Low/med

Session details

Improvers endurance ride
Warm-up: [WU R](#)
Pacing is key. HRZ 1-2 may feel very easy to start with but be disciplined and stick to your zones.

Practice your [fuelling](#) and [hydration](#) strategies during these rides.

You may at some stage want to head out with some friends or a club. This is great and you'll learn vital [group riding skills](#) but don't be pushed to ride at a pace that's too fast for you.

Focus

Do some research about your sportive route and try to mimic the terrain on this ride.

IMPROVER PLAN

Week seven: longer intervals | total ride time: 5 hours 10 minutes - 6 hours 10 minutes



Goals of the week

- 1** The longer midweek intervals may need a bit more fuel, try taking an energy gel halfway through
- 2** On your long ride, get into the habit of standing out of your saddle every 5-10 minutes to give your back a bit of a stretch
- 3** Are you eating and drinking properly on the bike? If not, try setting an alarm to remind you

MONDAY



Session type
Rest day

Session details

Rest days are when you recover from your training and become stronger. Try to eat and drink well today and not do too much.

TUESDAY



Session type
Outdoor/indoor

🕒 1 hour 20 minutes

📊 Med/high

Session details

3x10 minutes
Warm-up: [20-minute warm-up](#)
Pace the efforts as evenly as possible, don't go off too hard and maintain a consistent cadence.

Try to hold a stable racing position without excessive movement of the upper body.

Make sure you have a bottle of water to hand as these are fairly long efforts.

As you get stronger and more confident with the session, try to ride predominately in HRZ 4

Focus

Longer efforts at sweet-spot. Use the whole training zone. Start each effort in HRZ 3 and build through it

WEDNESDAY



Session type
Rest day

Session details

Your second rest day of the week. Check out some techniques you can use to [maximise your recovery](#).

THURSDAY



Session type
Outdoor/indoor

🕒 1 hour 20 minutes

📊 Med/high

Session details

3x10 minutes
Warm-up: [20-minute warm-up](#)
Pace the efforts as evenly as possible, don't go off too hard and maintain a consistent cadence.

Try to hold a stable racing position without excessive movement of the upper body.

As you get stronger and more confident with the session, try to ride predominately in HRZ 4.

Focus

How did the Tuesday session go? Adjust your pacing of the first two efforts if necessary so you can ride the final one at the same intensity

FRIDAY



Session type
Cross-training

🕒 1 hour

Session details

Bonus session – This is not an essential session; add it to your training if you have the time. Choose an activity to help develop all-round fitness and flexibility. If you already do another exercise session, structured or social, then continue to fit that into your week. If not, then try something new; for example gym, swim, jog or a fitness class. Remember to start all new activities slowly, don't overdo it and that gentle restorative exercise, such as yoga or Pilates, can complement cycling well.

SATURDAY



Session type
Flexible day

Session details

You may have to adapt your training schedule around your work and family life. Leaving today blank will give more flexibility for this. If you do have to shuffle the sessions around, try to keep the structure of one day of training followed by a rest day or alternative activity, rather than riding on back to back days.

SUNDAY



Session type
Outdoor Ride

🕒 2 hours 30 minutes

📊 Low/med

Session details

[Improvers endurance ride](#)
Warm-up: [WU R](#)
Pacing is key. HRZ 1-2 may feel very easy to start with but be disciplined and stick to your zones.

Practice your [fuelling](#) and [hydration](#) strategies during these rides.

You may at some stage want to head out with some friends or a club. This is great and you'll learn vital [group riding skills](#) but don't be pushed to ride at a pace that's too fast for you.

Focus

Still building up endurance but try to ride all climbs in HRZ 3

IMPROVER PLAN

Week eight: second rest week and a 60 km ride | total ride time: 4 hours 40 minutes



Goals of the week

1 Ride at least 60 km on your long ride.

2 Use the extra rest day to check your bike over thoroughly.

3 Have you entered your sportive yet? If not, check out our [calendar](#).

MONDAY



Session type
Rest day

Session details

Rest days are when you recover from your training and become stronger. Try to eat and drink well today and not do too much.

TUESDAY



Session type
Outdoor/indoor

🕒 40 minutes

📊 Low/med

Session details

Warm-up:
[20-minute warm-up](#)

Concentrate of a smooth and even pedal stroke.

Hold your form as the cadences increase.

Shift one gear lower on your cassette on the rev outs to maximise cadence.

Work through the warm-up twice to give you a 40-minute session.

Focus

You should be very familiar with this warm-up by now. Keep the resistance low and concentrate on smooth pedalling.

WEDNESDAY



Session type
Rest day

Session details

Your second rest day of the week. Check out some techniques you can use to [maximise your recovery](#).

THURSDAY



Session type
Outdoor/indoor

🕒 1 hour

📊 Low

Session details

[Spin out session](#)

Warm-up:
[WU T1](#)

Lift the leg up as quickly as possible, aiding the leading leg in the down stroke and decreasing the amount of 'bobbing' in the saddle.

Keep the upper body as stable as possible, there should be limited movement.

If you bob in the saddle, lower you cadence slightly to stop the bobbing and regain control.

Focus

It's all about high cadence and leg speed, back your resistance and gearing right off and spin away!

FRIDAY



Session type
Rest day

Session details

You've got an extra rest day this week ahead of your weekend ride. Use it to check that your bike and all your kit is ready for Sunday.

SATURDAY



Session type
Flexible day

Session details

You may have to adapt your training schedule around your work and family life. Leaving today blank will give more flexibility for this. If you do have to shuffle the sessions around, try to keep the structure of one day of training followed by a rest day or alternative activity, rather than riding on back to back days.

SUNDAY



Session type
Outdoor Ride

🕒 3 hours / 60km

📊 Low/med

Session details

[Improvers endurance ride](#)

Warm-up: [WU R](#)

Pacing is key. HRZ 1-2 may feel very easy to start with but be disciplined and stick to your zones.

Practice your [fuelling](#) and [hydration](#) strategies during these rides.

You may at some stage want to head out with some friends or a club. This is great and you'll learn vital [group riding skills](#) but don't be pushed to ride at a pace that's too fast for you.

Focus

You should be feeling much stronger and more confident on the bike now but still be disciplined and stick to your training zones, fuelling and hydration routines

IMPROVER PLAN

Week nine: re-testing threshold | total ride time: 5 hours 30 minutes - 6 hours 30 minutes



Goals of the week

- 1 Repeat the [threshold test](#) and, if necessary, re-set your training zones.
- 2 Complete the tempo efforts within your long ride.
- 3 If you are tired on Friday, opt for some [flexibility work](#) or foam rolling for your [cross training](#).

MONDAY



Session type
Rest day

Session details

Rest days are when you recover from your training and become stronger. Try to eat and drink well today and not do too much.

TUESDAY



Session type
Threshold test

🕒 40 minutes

📊 Med/high

Session details

Don't worry if your FTTH hasn't changed, this doesn't mean that you haven't improved. Testing for Threshold is to set training zones, it's not a fitness test

Focus

You should find pacing the effort far easier than the first time you did the test.

WEDNESDAY



Session type
Rest day

Session details

Your second rest day of the week. Check out some techniques you can use to [maximise your recovery](#).

THURSDAY



Session type
Outdoor/indoor

🕒 1 hour 20 minutes

📊 Med

Session details

2x20 minutes
Warm-up: [20-minute warm-up](#)
Pace the efforts as evenly as possible, don't go off too hard and maintain a consistent cadence.

Try to hold a stable racing position without excessive movement of the upper body. If training for time trials, use your race position.

Make sure you have a bottle of water to hand as these are fairly long efforts.

Focus

Ride at least the first 15 minutes of each effort at Sweet-Spot. Only punch up to HRZ4 in the final 5 minutes if you're feeling strong.

FRIDAY



Session type
Cross-training

🕒 1 hour

Session details

Bonus session – This is not an essential session; add it to your training if you have the time. Choose an activity to help develop all-round fitness and flexibility. If you already do another exercise session, structured or social, then continue to fit that into your week. If not, then try something new; for example gym, swim, jog or a fitness class. Remember to start all new activities slowly, don't overdo it and that gentle restorative exercise, such as yoga or Pilates, can complement cycling well.

SATURDAY



Session type
Flexible day

Session details

You may have to adapt your training schedule around your work and family life. Leaving today blank will give more flexibility for this. If you do have to shuffle the sessions around, try to keep the structure of one day of training followed by a rest day or alternative activity, rather than riding on back to back days.

SUNDAY



Session type
Outdoor Ride / 75km

🕒 3 hours

📊 Low Med High

Session details

[Endurance with long tempo efforts and sprints](#)

Warm-up: [WU R](#)
Concentrate during the easier HRZ 2, don't switch off and allow intensity to drop lower.

You might find it easier to maintain the intensity during the longer efforts on a gradual climb.

No matter how tired your legs feel, attack the sprints with 100% effort. Make sure you allow at least 10 minutes of easy riding after the final sprint.

Focus

A tough ride that you should find testing. Think about your route choice to allow you to complete the 20-minute tempo efforts with minimal interruption.

IMPROVER PLAN

Week 10: into zone five | total ride time: 6 hours 5 minutes - 7 hours 5 minutes



Goals of the week

1 Improve your performance in the 2x20 minutes intervals.

2 Complete a 75 km long ride.

3 Check travel, sign on and accommodation arrangements for your event.

MONDAY



Session type
Rest day

Session details

Rest days are when you recover from your training and become stronger. Try to eat and drink well today and not do too much.

TUESDAY



Session type
Outdoor/indoor

🕒 1 hour 20 minutes

📶 Med

Session details

2x20 minutes

Warm-up:
[20-minute warm-up](#)

Pace the efforts as evenly as possible, don't go off too hard and maintain a consistent cadence.

Try to hold a stable racing position without excessive movement of the upper body. If training for time trials, use your race position.

Make sure you have a bottle of water to hand as these are fairly long efforts.

Focus

Ride at least the first 15 minutes of each effort at Sweet-Spot. Only punch up to HRZ4 in the final 5 minutes if you're feeling strong.

WEDNESDAY



Session type
Rest day

Session details

Your second rest day of the week. Check out some techniques you can use to [maximise your recovery](#).

THURSDAY



Session type
Outdoor/indoor

🕒 1 hour

📶 High

Session details

V02 Intervals

Warm-up:
[20-minute warm-up](#)

Concentrate on a strong but even pedal stroke, don't let your technique slide when it gets tough.

You will get a better feel for the effort required to hit HRZ 5, when you do, try to hit it a bit earlier.

If you struggle with the penultimate effort, go straight into the cool down.

Focus

Pushing you above Threshold. Work through HRZ 3-4 during the first minute of each effort. Don't try and push your heart rate up too fast as there's always some lag.

FRIDAY



Session type
Cross-training

🕒 1 hour

Session details

Bonus session – This is not an essential session; add it to your training if you have the time. Choose an activity to help develop all-round fitness and flexibility. If you already do another exercise session, structured or social, then continue to fit that into your week. If not, then try something new; for example gym, swim, jog or a fitness class. Remember to start all new activities slowly, don't overdo it and that gentle restorative exercise, such as yoga or Pilates, can complement cycling well.

SATURDAY



Session type
Flexible day

Session details

You may have to adapt your training schedule around your work and family life. Leaving today blank will give more flexibility for this. If you do have to shuffle the sessions around, try to keep the structure of one day of training followed by a rest day or alternative activity, rather than riding on back to back days.

SUNDAY



Session type
Outdoor Ride - 75km

🕒 3 hours 45 minutes

📶 Low/med

Session details

Improvers endurance ride

Warm-up: [WU R](#)

Pacing is key. HRZ 1-2 may feel very easy to start with but be disciplined and stick to your zones.

Practice your fuelling and hydration strategies during these rides.

You may at some stage want to head out with some friends or a club. This is great and you will learn vital group riding skills but don't be pushed to ride at a pace that is too fast for you.

Focus

This is a dry run of your sportive. Try to ride at the same time of day, wear the kit you intend to and, if you haven't been riding with other riders, try to get out with a club or get some friends to ride with you.

IMPROVER PLAN

Week 11: starting to taper down | total ride time: 3 hours 45 min - 4 hours 45 min



Goals of the week

1 Give the VO2 session everything, it's your last tough workout.

2 Make a kit and clothing list for next weekend.

3 Don't be tempted to overdo it on your Sunday ride. You won't gain anymore fitness, only fatigue.

MONDAY



Session type
Rest day

Session details

Rest days are when you recover from your training and become stronger. Try to eat and drink well today and not do too much.

TUESDAY



Session type
Outdoor/indoor

🕒 1 hour

📶 High

Session details

VO2 Intervals
Warm-up: [20-minute warm-up](#)
Concentrate on a strong but even pedal stroke, don't let your technique slide when it gets tough.

You will get a better feel for the effort required to hit HRZ 5, when you do, try to hit it a bit earlier.

If you struggle with the penultimate effort, go straight into the cool down.

Focus

Pushing you above Threshold. Work through HRZ 3-4 during the first minute of each effort. Don't try and push your heart rate up too fast as there is always some lag.

WEDNESDAY



Session type
Rest day

Session details

Your second rest day of the week. Check out some techniques you can use to [maximise your recovery](#).

THURSDAY



Session type
Outdoor/indoor

🕒 45 minutes

📶 Low

Session details

Improvers recovery ride
Warm-up: [20-minute warm-up](#)
To gain the recovery benefits, you have to stay within the designated training zone.

Imagine your cranks are made of glass and, if you push too hard, you will crack them.

Expect to go very slowly. If you don't think you will have the discipline to do this outside, use your indoor trainer.

Focus

A really easy spin for your legs, don't be tempted to push hard.

FRIDAY



Session type
Cross-training

🕒 1 hour

Session details

Bonus session – This is not an essential session; add it to your training if you have the time. Choose an activity to help develop all-round fitness and flexibility. If you already do another exercise session, structured or social, then continue to fit that into your week. If not, then try something new; for example gym, swim, jog or a fitness class. Remember to start all new activities slowly, don't overdo it and that gentle restorative exercise, such as yoga or Pilates, can complement cycling well.

SATURDAY



Session type
Flexible day

Session details

You may have to adapt your training schedule around your work and family life. Leaving today blank will give more flexibility for this. If you do have to shuffle the sessions around, try to keep the structure of one day of training followed by a rest day or alternative activity, rather than riding on back to back days.

SUNDAY



Session type
Outdoor Ride

🕒 2 hours

📶 Low/med

Session details

Improvers recovery ride
Warm-up: [WU R](#)
Pacing is key. HRZ 1-2 may feel very easy to start with but be disciplined and stick to your zones.

Practice your fuelling and hydration strategies during these rides.

You may at some stage want to head out with some friends or a club. This is great and you will learn vital group riding skills but don't be pushed to ride at a pace that is too fast for you.

Focus

A final chance to check your kit, clothing, pacing and fuelling. Keep the route flat this week and ride easy

IMPROVER PLAN

Week 12: event week | total ride time: 7 hours 30 minutes



Goals of the week

1 Complete the two spin out sessions to keep your legs fresh.

2 Use the extra rest day on Friday to double check all kit, equipment and the ride route

3 Enjoy your 100 km sportive!

MONDAY



Session type
Rest day

TUESDAY



Session type
Outdoor/indoor

🕒 1 hour

📶 Low

WEDNESDAY



Session type
Rest day

THURSDAY



Session type
Outdoor/indoor

🕒 1 hour

📶 Low

FRIDAY



Session type
Rest day

SATURDAY



Session type
Outdoor/indoor

🕒 30 minutes

📶 Low

SUNDAY



Session type
Outdoor Ride - 100km

🕒 5 hours approx

📶 Low/med

Session details

Rest days are when you recover from your training and become stronger. Try to eat and drink well today and not do too much.

Session details

[Spin out session](#)
Warm-up:
[WU T1](#)

Lift the leg up as quickly as possible, aiding the leading leg in the down stroke and decreasing the amount of 'bobbing' in the saddle.

Keep the upper body as stable as possible, there should be limited movement.

If you bob on the saddle, lower your cadence slightly to stop the bobbing and regain control.

Focus

Keeping your legs turning over without adding too much fatigue. If you just rested your legs would feel really stale and heavy by the weekend.

Session details

Your second rest day of the week. Check out some techniques you can use to [maximise your recovery](#).

Session details

[Spin out session](#)
Warm-up:
[WU T1](#)

Lift the leg up as quickly as possible, aiding the leading leg in the down stroke and decreasing the amount of 'bobbing' in the saddle.

Keep the upper body as stable as possible, there should be limited movement.

If you bob on the saddle, lower your cadence slightly to stop the bobbing and regain control.

Focus

Keeping your legs turning over without adding too much fatigue. If you just rested your legs would feel really stale and heavy by the weekend.

Session details

An extra rest day. Get your bike ready and your kit packed today up to avoid last minute panic.

Session details

[Improvers pre-event ride](#)
Warm-up:
[WU R](#)

On the spin-ups, keep the upper body as stable as possible, there should be limited movement

Keep the gear low, the aim isn't to produce a lot of power.

If you bob on the saddle, lower your cadence slightly to stop the bobbing and regain control.

Focus

It might seem counterintuitive to ride the day before your sportive but, especially if you have had to travel, it can help to loosen your legs off and prevent them from feeling stale and heavy tomorrow.

Session details

[Improvers endurance ride](#)
Warm-up: [WU R](#)

Don't get sucked into starting off too fast, stick to the pacing you have ridden in training. Try to find a group of a similar ability to yourself. Don't try and stay with a group that are pushing too hard though you may at some stage want to head out with some friends or a club. This is great and you will learn vital group riding skills but don't be pushed to ride at a pace that is too fast for you.

Eat and drink little and often right from the start of the ride. Remember, you are not eating or drinking for that moment but 10 - 15km down the road.

Focus

Have a great day out on your bike with lots of like-minded people. You have trained really well and deserve to enjoy yourself