

ATHLETE EDITION · AGES 14 AND OVER

Football Conditioning: Train Like a Pro

Get fitter for football on your own. Do one simple test, and every session in this guide tells you exactly how far or how fast to run. 15 sessions, step-by-step instructions and ready-made weekly plans.

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HOW HARD: THE INTENSITY SCALE

1 Easy RPE 1 to 3	2 Steady RPE 4 to 5	3 Hard RPE 6 to 7	4 Very hard RPE 8 to 9	5 Maximal RPE 9 to 10
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1 Before you start

This guide is for footballers aged 14 and over who want to get fitter for football, on their own or alongside club training. You need a pitch or a field, some cones, a stopwatch or phone, and sometimes a treadmill.

1. **Do a test.** The 6-minute run takes 15 minutes including the warm-up (Section 3).
2. **Enter your result.** Type it into the calculator at the top of the session list. Every session then shows your own target.
3. **Pick a plan.** Use a weekly plan (Section 5), or choose sessions by what you want to improve.
4. **Start at Stage 1.** Move up a stage only when the rules in Section 2 say so.

READ THIS FIRST

This guide is general advice, not medical advice. If you are injured, have been ill, or have a medical condition, check with a doctor or physio before you start. Tell a parent or guardian and your coach what you are doing. Stop straight away and tell an adult if you feel chest pain, dizziness, faintness or unusual breathlessness. Sore muscles the next day are normal; sharp pain, or pain in a joint or bone, is not.

2 How it works

Every session has three labels: what it improves, how hard it is, and how much of it to do.

What it improves

OUTCOME	WHAT IT DOES	WHERE YOU NOTICE IT IN A MATCH
● RECOVER	Helps you feel fresh again after hard days.	Being ready for the next session or match.
● BASE	Your aerobic base: the fitness everything else is built on.	Lasting the full match and recovering quicker between efforts.
● ENGINE	Makes your engine bigger so you can work harder for longer.	Covering more ground and still having energy late in the game.
● SURGE	Short, fast runs with short rests.	Getting up and down the pitch, pressing, and getting back into shape.
● REPEAT	Sprinting again and again with little rest.	Pressing, counter - attacks and repeated duels.
● SPEED	Running at your true top speed.	Getting in behind, chasing back and winning races to the ball. It also protects your hamstrings.

How hard: intensity 1 to 5

Intensity is how hard each rep feels. Use the talk test or rate your effort out of 10. If you have a heart rate monitor, use that too.

LEVEL	NAME	TALK TEST	EFFORT OUT OF 10	HEART RATE (% OF MAX)
1	Easy	Could hold a conversation	1 to 3	Under 70%
2	Steady	Short sentences	4 to 5	70 to 80%
3	Hard	A few words at a time	6 to 7	80 to 90%
4	Very hard	Cannot talk	8 to 9	90% and above
5	Maximal	All-out or close to it	9 to 10	Not useful: too short

How much: stage 1 to 5

Stage is how much work you do: more reps, more sets, or shorter rests. The intensity stays the same. Everyone starts at **Stage 1**.

- **Move up one stage** when you have hit your target on every rep, at the right effort, two sessions in a row.
- **Drop a stage** if you miss your target on more than two reps, it feels much harder than it should, or you are ill, sore or short of sleep.
- **Only one stage a week.** Never jump two stages, and never move up in every session in the same week.
- **After 2 weeks or more off,** go back one or two stages.

3 Test yourself

Your test result sets your targets, so they are right for you: not too easy, not too hard. Do one of these. Doing both is even better.

6-minute run **MAIN TEST**

You need: a track or measured loop, or a GPS watch or phone.

1. Find a flat loop you can measure: a running track (400 m a lap) or the outside of a pitch. A GPS watch or phone app also works.
2. Warm up with 10 min easy running and a few strides.
3. Run as far as you can in exactly 6 minutes. Try to keep an even pace: most people start too fast.
4. Write down the distance in metres. Count full laps, then pace out the last part.
5. Type the distance into the calculator. That is all you need.
6. Do the test again every 6 to 8 weeks on the same loop, so you can see yourself improve.

Bronco test **OPTION**

You need: 4 cones and a stopwatch.

1. Place 4 cones in a straight line at 0, 20, 40 and 60 m. Measure with a tape if you can.
2. Warm up with 10 min easy running, some strides and a few practice turns.
3. Start your stopwatch. Run to the 20 m cone and back, to the 40 m cone and back, then to the 60 m cone and back. That is one set.
4. Go straight into the next set without stopping. Do 5 sets in total (1200 m).
5. Touch each line with your foot. Stop the watch as you cross the start line at the end of set 5.
6. Type your time into the calculator, for example 5:00.

Your Bronco time sets the two Bronco sessions. If you have not done the 6-minute run, it also gives an estimate for the other sessions, but the 6-minute run is more accurate.

Heart rate maximum (optional). If you have a heart rate monitor, use the highest number you have seen at the end of a flat-out test or sprint session. Formulas based on age are often wrong for young players, so leave it blank if you do not know it.

4 Your sessions

The targets on these cards are examples for one made-up player at Stage 1.

Use your 6-minute run to calculate MAS: distance in metres divided by 360.

Enter that MAS, or your Bronco result, in the online guide calculator:

appliedsportscience.co.uk/conditioning-guide/#calc

Continuous easy movement: jog, bike or swim

Helps you feel fresh again after hard days.

Where pitch, bike, pool **How hard** 1 Easy **You need** None, Bike optional

HOW TO DO IT

1. Choose your option: easy jog on grass, easy bike, or easy swim.
2. Keep the effort very easy for the full time on your stage (15 to 30 min). You should be able to hold a conversation throughout.
3. If you have a heart rate monitor, stay below 70% of your maximum.
4. Do not add any fast running or sprints.
5. Finish with 5 to 10 min of light mobility or stretching.
6. You should feel fresher at the end than at the start. If you feel worse, it was too hard.

TIPS

- Keep it genuinely easy: you should be able to talk throughout
- Finish fresher than you started

Minutes do not include the warm-up.

YOUR TARGET AT STAGE 1

Pace: **5:30 to 6:25 per km**
Effort: **Very easy: you can chat the whole time**
Heart rate: **under 140 bpm**
Effort out of 10: **2 to 3**

STAGES

STAGE	WHAT TO DO
1	15 min easy
2	20 min easy
3	25 min easy
4	30 min easy
5	30 min easy + 10 min mobility

Age and growth: Any age. If you are growing fast, the bike or pool is a good choice.

Steady continuous run

Your aerobic base: the fitness everything else is built on.

Where pitch, road, track **How hard** 2 Steady **You need** GPS watch or phone optional

HOW TO DO IT

1. Your target is on this card once you have entered your test result at the top of the session list. For a continuous run the target is a pace per km or a speed.
2. Warm up with 5 min easy jogging.
3. Run at your target pace for the time on your stage (20 to 40 min), on grass or a flat loop if possible.
4. Keep the pace even. The last 5 minutes should be the same pace as the first 5.
5. You should be able to speak in short sentences. If you cannot, slow down.
6. Cool down with 5 min easy jogging or walking, then light stretching.
7. At the end of the session, rate how hard it was from 0 (rest) to 10 (maximal) and log it.

TIPS

- Even pace from start to finish
- Relaxed shoulders, short quick steps

Minutes do not include the warm-up.

YOUR TARGET AT STAGE 1

Pace: **4:48 to 5:30 per km**
Heart rate: **140 to 160 bpm**
Effort out of 10: **4 to 5**

STAGES

STAGE	WHAT TO DO
1	20 min continuous
2	25 min continuous
3	30 min continuous
4	35 min continuous
5	40 min continuous

Age and growth: Any age. Run on grass where you can.

Run a touchline (100 m) in a target time, walk the goal line (about 68 m) in 45 to 60 s, repeat

Your aerobic base: the fitness everything else is built on.

Where pitch **How hard** 2 Steady **You need** Cones, Stopwatch

HOW TO DO IT

1. Use a full-size pitch. You will run the touchlines (about 100 m) and walk the goal lines (about 68 m).
2. Your target is on this card once you have entered your test result at the top of the session list. For this session your target is a time for each 100 m length.
3. Warm up with 5 min easy jogging.
4. Start at a corner flag. Run the length of the touchline, aiming to arrive exactly on your target time. Not faster.
5. Walk across the goal line to the next corner, taking 45 to 60 s.
6. Run the other touchline back, then walk the goal line again. Each run counts as one length.
7. Repeat for the number of lengths on your stage (10 to 20).
8. Cool down with 5 min easy jogging or walking, then light stretching.
9. At the end of the session, rate how hard it was from 0 (rest) to 10 (maximal) and log it.

TIPS

- Hit the target time every length, no faster
- Tall posture and relaxed arms

Minutes do not include the warm-up.

YOUR TARGET AT STAGE 1

Time for each 100 m: **31 s to 33 s**

Heart rate: **140 to 170 bpm**

Effort out of 10: **4 to 5**

STAGES

STAGE	WHAT TO DO
1	10 x 100 m; 50 s walk
2	12 x 100 m; 50 s walk
3	16 x 100 m; 50 s walk
4	18 x 100 m; 50 s walk
5	20 x 100 m; 50 s walk

Age and growth: Any age.

Steady run at 1% incline

Your aerobic base: the fitness everything else is built on.

Where treadmill **How hard** 2 **Steady** **You need** Treadmill

HOW TO DO IT

1. Set the treadmill incline to 1%. This makes the effort match running outdoors.
2. Your target is on this card once you have entered your test result at the top of the session list. For the treadmill your target is a belt speed in km/h.
3. Warm up with 5 min easy jogging at a slower speed.
4. Run at your target speed for the time on your stage (20 to 40 min). Do not hold the rails.
5. You should be able to speak in short sentences. If you cannot, lower the speed by 0.5 km/h.
6. Cool down with 5 min easy jogging or walking, then light stretching.
7. At the end of the session, rate how hard it was from 0 (rest) to 10 (maximal) and log it.

TIPS

- Hold the speed; do not hold the handrails

Minutes do not include the warm-up.

YOUR TARGET AT STAGE 1

Treadmill speed: **10.9 to 12.5 km/h**
Heart rate: **140 to 160 bpm**
Effort out of 10: **4 to 5**

STAGES

STAGE	WHAT TO DO
1	20 min
2	25 min
3	30 min
4	35 min
5	40 min

Age and growth: Any age. Good for bad weather.

4 x 4 around the pitch

ENGINE

4

4 min runs around the pitch perimeter, 3 min easy jog between

Makes your engine bigger so you can work harder for longer.

Where pitch **How hard** 4 Very hard **You need** Cones, Whistle, Heart rate monitor optional

HOW TO DO IT

1. Use the outside of a full pitch. One lap of a 105 × 68 m pitch is about 346 m.
2. Your target is on this card once you have entered your test result at the top of the session list. Your target is a distance for each 4 min run, usually around 3 laps.
3. Place a start cone at a corner flag. Walk round the perimeter and place your finish cone at your target distance.
4. Do the standard warm-up: 2 min very easy, 2 min easy, 2 min steady, 2 min hard, 2 min dynamic mobility, then 2 to 3 strides. Start the first rep within 2 minutes.
5. On the whistle or your watch, run round the pitch aiming to reach your finish cone exactly at 4 min.
6. Jog easily for 3 min back to the start cone. Do not stop and stand still.
7. Repeat for the number of reps on your stage (3 to 5).
8. Heart rate should reach about 90% of your maximum by minute 2 of each rep. If you miss the cone twice, move your cone back by 5%.
9. Cool down with 5 min easy jogging or walking, then light stretching.
10. At the end of the session, rate how hard it was from 0 (rest) to 10 (maximal) and log it.

TIPS

- Reach your finish cone as the whistle goes
- Heart rate should reach 90% by minute 2 of each rep
- Jog the recovery, do not stop

Minutes do not include the warm-up.

YOUR TARGET AT STAGE 1

Distance each rep: **700 to 740 m**

Heart rate: **180 to 190 bpm**

Effort out of 10: **8 to 9**

STAGES

STAGE	WHAT TO DO
1	3 x 3 min; 3 min jog
2	3 x 4 min; 3 min jog
3	4 x 4 min; 3 min jog
4	5 x 4 min; 3 min jog
5	5 x 4 min; 2 min 30 s jog

Age and growth: Any age. Run on grass. If you are growing fast, stay at Stage 1 to 2.

Treadmill 3 min repeats

● ENGINE

4

3 min runs, 90 s easy jog or walk, 1 % incline

Makes your engine bigger so you can work harder for longer.

Where treadmill **How hard** 4 Very hard **You need** Treadmill, Heart rate monitor optional

HOW TO DO IT

1. Set the treadmill incline to 1%.
2. Your target is on this card once you have entered your test result at the top of the session list. Your target is a belt speed in km/h for the 3 min runs.
3. Do the standard warm-up: 2 min very easy, 2 min easy, 2 min steady, 2 min hard, 2 min dynamic mobility, then 2 to 3 strides. Start the first rep within 2 minutes.
4. Run for 3 min at your target speed.
5. Slow the belt to a walk or very easy jog for 90 s (60 s at Stage 5).
6. Speed the belt back up and repeat for the number of reps on your stage (3 to 6).
7. You should be working at 8 to 9 out of 10 by the end of each rep. If you have a heart rate monitor, check it at the end of each rep against the target on the card.
8. Cool down with 5 min easy jogging or walking, then light stretching.
9. At the end of the session, rate how hard it was from 0 (rest) to 10 (maximal) and log it.

TIPS

- Change speed smoothly; hold the rails only while changing

Minutes do not include the warm-up.

YOUR TARGET AT STAGE 1

Treadmill speed: **14 to 14.8 km/h**

Heart rate: **180 to 190 bpm**

Effort out of 10: **8 to 9**

STAGES

STAGE	WHAT TO DO
1	3 x 3 min; 90 s easy
2	4 x 3 min; 90 s easy
3	5 x 3 min; 90 s easy
4	6 x 3 min; 90 s easy
5	6 x 3 min; 60 s easy

Age and growth: Any age. If you are growing fast, stay at Stage 1 to 2.

5 to 6 min runs, 2 min easy between; pitch perimeter or treadmill

Makes your engine bigger so you can work harder for longer.

Where pitch, treadmill **How hard** 3 Hard **You need** Cones or treadmill

HOW TO DO IT

1. Choose the pitch perimeter or a treadmill at 1% incline.
2. Your target is on this card once you have entered your test result at the top of the session list. On the pitch your target is a distance per rep; on the treadmill it is a belt speed.
3. On the pitch, place a start cone and a finish cone at your target distance.
4. Do the standard warm-up: 2 min very easy, 2 min easy, 2 min steady, 2 min hard, 2 min dynamic mobility, then 2 to 3 strides. Start the first rep within 2 minutes.
5. Run each rep (5 or 6 min, depending on your stage) at an even, controlled pace. It should feel hard but steady: about 6 to 7 out of 10.
6. Jog or walk easily for 2 min between reps.
7. Repeat for the number of reps on your stage (2 to 4). The last rep should be the same pace as the first.
8. Cool down with 5 min easy jogging or walking, then light stretching.
9. At the end of the session, rate how hard it was from 0 (rest) to 10 (maximal) and log it.

TIPS

- Controlled and even: last rep the same pace as the first

Minutes do not include the warm-up.

YOUR TARGET AT STAGE 1

Distance each rep: **1105 to 1170 m**

Heart rate: **170 to 180 bpm**

Effort out of 10: **6 to 7**

STAGES

STAGE	WHAT TO DO
1	2 x 5 min; 2 min easy
2	3 x 5 min; 2 min easy
3	3 x 6 min; 2 min easy
4	4 x 5 min; 2 min easy
5	4 x 6 min; 2 min easy

Age and growth: Any age. A good first interval session.

Two Bronco sets back to back (480 m) at about your test pace, 2 min walk between

Makes your engine bigger so you can work harder for longer.

Where pitch **How hard** 4 Very hard **You need** Cones, Stopwatch

HOW TO DO IT

1. Place 4 cones in a straight line at 0, 20, 40 and 60 m.
2. One rep is two Bronco sets back to back: 20 m and back, 40 m and back, 60 m and back, then all three again. That is 480 m with 12 turns.
3. Find your target time for the rep. With a Bronco time: divide your Bronco time by 5 and double it. That is your test pace for two sets. The app works it out for you.
4. Do the standard warm-up: 2 min very easy, 2 min easy, 2 min steady, 2 min hard, 2 min dynamic mobility, then 2 to 3 strides. Start the first rep within 2 minutes.
5. Run the rep at your target pace, touching each line with your foot. Do not sprint the first shuttle.
6. Walk for 2 min (90 s at Stage 5).
7. Repeat for the reps on your stage (2 to 5).
8. Aim to finish every rep within 3 s of your target. If you have a heart rate monitor, check it at the end of each rep against the target on the card.
9. Cool down with 5 min easy jogging or walking, then light stretching.
10. At the end of the session, rate how hard it was from 0 (rest) to 10 (maximal) and log it.

TIPS

- Hold the same pace for both sets
- Touch each line with a foot
- Walk the full recovery

Minutes do not include the warm-up.

YOUR TARGET AT STAGE 1

Time for each 480 m: **1:58 to 2:04**

Heart rate: **180 to 190 bpm**

Effort out of 10: **8 to 9**

STAGES

STAGE	WHAT TO DO
1	2 x 480 m; 2 min walk
2	3 x 480 m; 2 min walk
3	4 x 480 m; 2 min walk
4	5 x 480 m; 2 min walk
5	5 x 480 m; 90 s walk

Age and growth: 15 and over. Lots of turning, so if you are growing fast, stay at Stage 1 to 2.

15 s run to your cone, 15 s rest, 15 s run back

Short, fast runs with short rests.

Where pitch **How hard** 4 Very hard **You need** Cones, Whistle

HOW TO DO IT

1. Set a start line near one penalty box.
2. Your target is on this card once you have entered your test result at the top of the session list. Your target is the distance you cover in 15 s, usually 70 to 85 m.
3. Place your finish cone at that distance from the start line.
4. Do the standard warm-up: 2 min very easy, 2 min easy, 2 min steady, 2 min hard, 2 min dynamic mobility, then 2 to 3 strides. Start the first rep within 2 minutes.
5. On the whistle or your watch, run to your cone in 15 s.
6. Rest for 15 s at the cone, standing or walking.
7. Run back to the start line in 15 s. Each run is one rep.
8. Keep going for the number of reps in each set, rest 3 min, then do the next set. Your stage tells you the sets and reps.
9. If you miss your cone twice in a set, move it 5 m closer. If you have a heart rate monitor, check it at the end of each rep against the target on the card.
10. Cool down with 5 min easy jogging or walking, then light stretching.
11. At the end of the session, rate how hard it was from 0 (rest) to 10 (maximal) and log it.

TIPS

- Hit your cone on the 15 s
- Miss it twice in a set: move it 5 m closer

Minutes do not include the warm-up.

YOUR TARGET AT STAGE 1

Distance each rep: **70 to 80 m**

Heart rate: **180 to 200 bpm**

Effort out of 10: **8 to 9**

STAGES

STAGE	WHAT TO DO
1	2 sets x 10; 15 s on/15 s off
2	2 sets x 12; 15 s on/15 s off
3	2 sets x 16; 15 s on/15 s off
4	3 sets x 12; 15 s on/15 s off
5	3 sets x 16; 15 s on/15 s off
3 min between sets.	

Age and growth: Any age. Start at Stage 1.

30/30 straight runs

● SURGE

4

30 s run in a straight line, 30 s rest

Short, fast runs with short rests.

Where pitch **How hard** 4 Very hard **You need** Cones

HOW TO DO IT

1. Your target is on this card once you have entered your test result at the top of the session list. Your target is the distance you cover in 30 s.
2. Mark a straight lane with a start cone and a finish cone at your target distance.
3. Do the standard warm-up: 2 min very easy, 2 min easy, 2 min steady, 2 min hard, 2 min dynamic mobility, then 2 to 3 strides. Start the first rep within 2 minutes.
4. Run for 30 s, aiming to reach your finish cone as the 30 s ends.
5. Rest 30 s, standing or walking back towards the start.
6. Repeat for the reps on your stage, with 3 min between sets.
7. If you miss your cone twice in a set, move it 5 m closer. If you have a heart rate monitor, check it at the end of each rep against the target on the card.
8. Cool down with 5 min easy jogging or walking, then light stretching.
9. At the end of the session, rate how hard it was from 0 (rest) to 10 (maximal) and log it.

TIPS

- Reach the cone as the time ends, not before
- Same distance on the last rep as the first

Minutes do not include the warm-up.

YOUR TARGET AT STAGE 1

Distance each rep: **130 to 135 m**

Heart rate: **180 to 200 bpm**

Effort out of 10: **8 to 9**

STAGES

STAGE	WHAT TO DO
1	8 x 30 s; 30 s rest
2	2 sets x 6; 30 s on/off
3	2 sets x 8; 30 s on/off
4	2 sets x 10; 30 s on/off
5	3 sets x 8; 30 s on/off

3 min between sets.

Age and growth: Any age. Run it in a straight line, no turn.

Treadmill 60/30

● SURGE

4

Sets of 60 s on / 30 s off, 2 min between sets, 1% incline

Short, fast runs with short rests.

Where treadmill **How hard** 4 Very hard **You need** Treadmill

HOW TO DO IT

1. Use a treadmill you know how to stop safely.
Attach its safety clip and set 1% incline.
2. Warm up at an easy speed for 8 to 10 min,
then do 2 to 3 controlled strides.
3. Increase the belt gradually to your target
speed. Run for 60 s.
4. Reduce the belt to an easy walk or jog for
30 s. Stay on the belt during recovery.
5. Repeat the number of reps and sets shown
at your stage. Take 2 min walking between sets.
6. If changing speed takes too long, use a
longer recovery rather than jumping on or off.
7. Stop if you cannot control the pace or form.
Cool down with 5 min easy walking.
8. Record your effort out of 10 after the session.

TIPS

Stay on the moving belt; change speed smoothly.
Keep the safety clip attached throughout.

YOUR TARGET AT STAGE 1

Treadmill speed: **15.6 to 16.4 km/h**

Heart rate: **180 to 200 bpm**

Effort out of 10: **8 to 9**

STAGES

STAGE	WHAT TO DO
1	2 sets x 4; 60 s on/30 s easy
2	3 sets x 4; 60 s on/30 s easy
3	4 sets x 4; 60 s on/30 s easy
4	4 sets x 5; 60 s on/30 s easy
5	5 sets x 5; 60 s on/30 s easy
2 min walk between sets; slow belt for each rest.	

Age and growth: Any age. If you are growing fast, stay at Stage 1 to 2.

Minutes do not include the warm-up.

20 s dribble through cones then drive with the ball into space, 40 s jog back and reset

Short, fast runs with short rests.

Where pitch **How hard** 4 Very hard **You need** Ball, Cones, Heart rate monitor optional

HOW TO DO IT

1. Set out 4 to 6 cones in a line, 2 to 3 m apart, over about 15 m. Leave 25 to 30 m of open space beyond the last cone.
2. You need a ball. This session is set by effort and heart rate, not distance.
3. Do the standard warm-up: 2 min very easy, 2 min easy, 2 min steady, 2 min hard, 2 min dynamic mobility, then 2 to 3 strides. Start the first rep within 2 minutes.
4. On your watch, dribble through the cones with small, quick touches.
5. Once through, push the ball out in front and drive into the open space with big touches at speed until 20 s is up.
6. Jog back to the start with the ball in 40 s and reset.
7. Repeat for the reps on your stage, with 3 min between sets.
8. Aim for an effort of 8 to 9 out of 10. If you have a monitor, heart rate should be above 88% of maximum by the end of each set.
9. Cool down with 5 min easy jogging or walking, then light stretching.
10. At the end of the session, rate how hard it was from 0 (rest) to 10 (maximal) and log it.

TIPS

- Small, quick touches through the cones
- Big touches and drive at speed for the last 10 s

Minutes do not include the warm-up.

YOUR TARGET AT STAGE 1

Effort: Set by how hard it feels (and heart rate if you have a monitor)

Heart rate: 176 to 190 bpm

Effort out of 10: 8 to 9

STAGES

STAGE	WHAT TO DO
1	6 x 20 s; 40 s jog
2	2 sets x 6; 20 s/40 s
3	2 sets x 8; 20 s/40 s
4	3 sets x 8; 20 s/40 s
5	3 sets x 10; 20 s/40 s
3 min between sets.	

Age and growth: Any age. Great if you want the ball involved.

Single Bronco sets (20 m, 40 m and 60 m shuttles, 240 m), a little faster than your test pace, rest as long as the rep took

Short, fast runs with short rests.

Where pitch **How hard** 4 Very hard **You need** Cones, Stopwatch

HOW TO DO IT

1. Place 4 cones in a straight line at 0, 20, 40 and 60 m.
2. One Bronco set is: run from the start to the 20 m cone and back, to the 40 m cone and back, then to the 60 m cone and back. That is 240 m with 6 turns.
3. Find your target time for one set. With a Bronco time: divide your Bronco time by 5 to get your test pace per set, then aim to be about 5% faster. The app works it out for you.
4. Do the standard warm-up: 2 min very easy, 2 min easy, 2 min steady, 2 min hard, 2 min dynamic mobility, then 2 to 3 strides. Start the first rep within 2 minutes.
5. Run one Bronco set as fast as your target allows, touching each line with your foot.
6. Note your time. Rest for the same amount of time, walking back to the start.
7. Repeat for the reps on your stage (4 to 8, or 2 sets of 5 at Stage 5 with 3 min between sets).
8. If you miss your target time by more than 3 s on two reps, drop a stage next time. If you have a heart rate monitor, check it at the end of each rep against the target on the card.
9. Cool down with 5 min easy jogging or walking, then light stretching.
10. At the end of the session, rate how hard it was from 0 (rest) to 10 (maximal) and log it.

TIPS

- Touch each line with a foot
- Low, quick turns; accelerate out of every turn
- Even splits: do not blow up on the first rep

Minutes do not include the warm-up.

YOUR TARGET AT STAGE 1

Time for each 240 m: **56 s to 58 s**

Heart rate: **180 to 200 bpm**

Effort out of 10: **8 to 9**

STAGES

STAGE	WHAT TO DO
1	4 x 240 m; rest = rep time
2	5 x 240 m; rest = rep time
3	6 x 240 m; rest = rep time
4	8 x 240 m; rest = rep time
5	2 sets x 5; 3 min between sets

Stage 5: rest = rep time within each set.

Age and growth: 15 and over. Six turns every rep, so if you are growing fast, stay at Stage 1 to 2.

Straight repeated sprints

● REPEAT

5

30 m all-out sprint, one every 25 s (jog back in the remaining time)

Sprinting again and again with little rest.

Where pitch **How hard** 5 Maximal **You need** Cones, Stopwatch or GPS

HOW TO DO IT

1. Mark a 30 m sprint lane with cones, with a jog-back lane beside it.
2. You need a stopwatch or a friend to time you. This session is all-out, so there is no target distance.
3. Do the standard warm-up: 2 min very easy, 2 min easy, 2 min steady, 2 min hard, 2 min dynamic mobility, then 2 to 3 strides. Start the first rep within 2 minutes. Then add 3 to 4 sprints building up to about 90% speed.
4. Sprint 30 m flat out.
5. Jog back to the start. The next sprint starts 25 s after the last one started, so your rest is what is left of the 25 s.
6. Do 5 or 6 sprints in a set, then walk for 3 min 30 s. Your stage tells you the sets.
7. Note your time on the first sprint. If a sprint is more than about 5% slower than your best, end the set there.
8. Cool down with 5 min easy jogging or walking, then light stretching.
9. At the end of the session, rate how hard it was from 0 (rest) to 10 (maximal) and log it.

TIPS

- Every rep all-out
- End the set if your time drops more than about 5% from your best rep

Minutes do not include the warm-up.

YOUR TARGET AT STAGE 1

Effort: **Flat out every sprint. End the set when you slow down**

Effort out of 10: **9 to 10**

STAGES

STAGE	WHAT TO DO
1	6 x 30 m; start every 25 s
2	2 sets x 5; start every 25 s
3	2 sets x 6; start every 25 s
4	3 sets x 6; start every 25 s
5	3 sets x 6; start every 20 s

3 min 30 s between sets.

Age and growth: 15 and over, Stage 1 to 2 until you are 16.

Build up over 20 to 30 m, then 10 to 20 m at top speed; walk back

Running at your true top speed.

Where pitch **How hard** 5 Maximal **You need** Cones, GPS or timing gates

HOW TO DO IT

1. Mark a 20 to 30 m build-up zone, then a 10 to 20 m 'fly' zone with cones at each end.
2. You do not need timing for this. Work at full effort; if a friend can time the fly zone, even better.
3. Do the standard warm-up: 2 min very easy, 2 min easy, 2 min steady, 2 min hard, 2 min dynamic mobility, then 2 to 3 strides. Start the first rep within 2 minutes. Then add 3 to 4 sprints building up to about 90% speed.
4. Accelerate smoothly through the build-up zone so you reach top speed as you enter the fly zone.
5. Hold top speed through the fly zone, staying relaxed: loose shoulders, tall posture.
6. Walk back slowly. Take a full 3 min before the next rep.
7. Do the reps on your stage (3 to 6). Stage 1 to 2: build to about 90% effort. Stage 3 upwards: as fast as you can while staying relaxed.
8. Stop as soon as your speed drops or your technique fades. More reps at lower speed do not help.
9. Cool down with 5 min easy jogging or walking, then light stretching.

TIPS

- Relaxed at top speed
- Stop as soon as you slow down or your running gets messy

Minutes do not include the warm-up.

YOUR TARGET AT STAGE 1

Effort: **Build to about 90% of your top speed**

Effort out of 10: **9 to 10**

STAGES

STAGE	WHAT TO DO
1	3 reps; build to ~90%
2	4 reps; near full speed
3	4 reps; full speed
4	5 reps; full speed
5	6 reps; full speed

3 min walk between reps.

Age and growth: Any age, but technique first. If you are growing fast, 2 to 3 reps with full rest.

5 Weekly plans

Three ready-made weeks. Tap a session to jump to its card. Rest days matter as much as training days: that is when you get fitter.

Off-season

3 to 4 weeks after the season ends. Keep ticking over, stay fresh.

MON (Continuous run)	TUE Rest	WED (Long reps)	THU Rest
FRI (Solo ball surges)	SAT (Flying sprints)	SUN Rest	

Stage 1 to 2 all the way through. Play other sports too. Two full rest days every week.

Pre-season on your own

The 4 weeks before your club starts back.

MON (4 × 4 around the pitch)	TUE (Recovery flush)	WED (15/15 runs) (Flying sprints)	THU Rest
FRI (Tempo lengths)	SAT (Bronco singles)	SUN Rest	

Week 1 Stage 1, week 2 Stage 2, week 3 Stage 3, week 4 back to Stage 2, then retest. On Wednesday, do the flying sprints first, then the 15/15 runs. No Bronco time? Swap Saturday for 30/30 straight runs.

In-season

Your club trains you, so you only add a little. Example with a Saturday match.

SAT Match	SUN (Recovery flush)	MON Rest	TUE Club training
WED (4 × 4 around the pitch)	THU Club training	FRI Rest	

Add no more than 1 to 2 sessions a week, and nothing hard in the 2 days before a match. Didn't play much at the weekend? Swap Sunday for 15/15 runs at Stage 1.

6 If you are growing fast

Most players have a growth spurt somewhere between 12 and 16. During it, bones grow faster than muscles and tendons can keep up, so injuries around the knee, heel and hips are more common.

Signs you are in one: you have grown several centimetres in a few months, you need new boots often, you feel clumsy or less coordinated, or you get aches at the front of the knee or back of the heel.

- **Stay at Stage 1 to 2** for running sessions, especially ones with sprints or turns.
- **Swap some running** for the bike or pool, like the recovery session.
- **Keep some sprinting**, but fewer reps with full rest: 2 to 3 flying sprints is enough.
- **Tell your coach and a parent.** If a knee or heel ache lasts more than a week or makes you limp, see a physio.

7 Staying safe and getting better

- **Always warm up.** Every session includes one. Do not skip it.
- **Two hard days in a row is the limit.** Put an easy day or rest day after.
- **Sleep and eat well.** Fitness is built when you recover, not while you train.
- **Log every session.** Write the session, stage and your effort score out of 10. It shows you when to move up.
- **Retest every 6 to 8 weeks** and enter your new result. Your targets move up with you.
- **If in doubt, do less.** Missing one session never matters. Getting injured does.

8 For parents

Everything in this guide is set from your child's own test, starts at a low stage and builds slowly. The sessions are short: most take 20 to 40 minutes. The best way to help is to make sure there are rest days, check they warm up, and ask how hard sessions felt. If your child's club already trains them three or more times a week, one or two extra sessions is plenty. Speak to their coach so everyone knows the plan.

CONTACT

Want a plan built around you?

Testing, conditioning and support for players, parents and clubs. Start with the question that matters to you.



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