16 weeks to 70.3 Nelson Mandela Bay

Free IRONMAN 70.3 training plan · ~10 h a week (standard) · most age-groupers — race it, not just finish
Race day Sunday, 31 January 2027 · week 1 starts Monday, 12 October 2026

10 h	13 h	3:30	1:40
average week (1-15)	peak, week 11	longest ride	longest run

The plan in brief

- This free 16-week training plan for IRONMAN 70.3 Nelson Mandela Bay averages 10 hours a week, peaking at 13 hours in week 11, with recovery weeks 4, 8 and 12 and a two-week taper.
- It starts on Monday, 12 October 2026 and ends on race day, Sunday, 31 January 2027.
- A typical week has about 10 sessions — three swims, three rides, three runs and, in the first half, strength — with the time split roughly 45% bike, 30% run and 21% swim; the longest ride is 3:30 and the longest run 1:40.
- Adjusted for this course: rolling bike course; warm race day.

Adjusted for this course

Rolling bike course
About 532 m of climbing. Ride your long rides on rolling terrain and practise holding race power over the tops instead of spiking it on every rise.

Warm race day
Race-day highs around 26 °C. Rehearse your race-day drinking and sodium on the long rides from week 9 and do a few runs in the warm part of the day in the peak weeks.

Five phases

Base	weeks 1-4	Aerobic engine and technique. Mostly easy, a little sweet spot, strength on Mondays.
Build 1	weeks 5-8	Threshold work on the bike and run, longer weekends, longer bricks.
Build 2	weeks 9-12	Race-specific: long efforts at 70.3 power and pace, the biggest weeks of the plan.
Peak	weeks 13-14	Race rehearsals: full fuelling, race kit, race pace off the bike.
Taper	weeks 15-16	Volume drops, intensity stays. Arrive fresh, not flat.

Weekly hours

WEEK	PHASE	DATES	TOTAL	SWIM	BIKE	RUN	STRENGTH
1	Base	12 Oct - 18 Oct	**8:40**	2:00	3:45	2:25	0:30
2	Base	19 Oct - 25 Oct	**9:10**	2:05	4:05	2:30	0:30
3	Base	26 Oct - 1 Nov	**10:05**	2:15	4:25	2:55	0:30
4	Base (recovery)	2 Nov - 8 Nov	**6:35**	1:15	3:05	1:55	0:20
5	Build 1	9 Nov - 15 Nov	**10:30**	2:20	4:35	3:05	0:30
6	Build 1	16 Nov - 22 Nov	**11:15**	2:25	5:05	3:15	0:30
7	Build 1	23 Nov - 29 Nov	**11:55**	2:35	5:20	3:30	0:30
8	Build 1 (recovery)	30 Nov - 6 Dec	**7:35**	1:25	3:30	2:20	0:20
9	Build 2	7 Dec - 13 Dec	**11:35**	2:30	5:15	3:25	0:25
10	Build 2	14 Dec - 20 Dec	**12:20**	2:35	5:40	3:40	0:25
11	Build 2	21 Dec - 27 Dec	**13:00**	2:40	5:55	4:00	0:25
12	Build 2 (recovery)	28 Dec - 3 Jan	**8:05**	1:25	3:50	2:30	0:20
13	Peak	4 Jan - 10 Jan	**11:30**	2:35	5:15	3:40	-
14	Peak	11 Jan - 17 Jan	**10:25**	2:20	4:55	3:10	-
15	Taper	18 Jan - 24 Jan	**7:55**	1:55	3:35	2:25	-
16	Race week	25 Jan - 31 Jan	**3:35**	1:15	1:20	1:00	-

Shaded rows are recovery weeks: about a third less, so the three weeks before turn into fitness.

Week by week

Every session with its duration and what to do. Key sessions are the ones to protect when life gets busy; the rest can move or shrink. Miss a few days? Pick the plan up where you are - don't try to catch up.

Week 1 Base · 12 Oct - 18 Oct — 8:40 h

Settle into the routine. Every session easy enough to finish wanting more.

Mon 12 Oct	**Strength & mobility** - Squats, split squats, single-leg deadlifts, calf raises, planks — 3 sets of 8–12. Then 10 min mobility.	**0:30**
Tue 13 Oct	**Swim · technique** - Warm-up 300 m easy. Drills 8×50 m (catch-up, fingertip drag, 6-kick switch), 20 s rest. Main 6×100 m smooth at RPE 5, 20 s rest. Cool-down 200 m.	**0:45**
	Run · hills KEY - Easy 15 min. 8×30 s up a moderate hill, hard but smooth, walk/jog down. Easy to finish.	**0:45**
Wed 14 Oct	**Bike · sweet spot** KEY - 10 min warm-up. 3×10 min at 88–92% FTP (RPE 6–7), 5 min easy between. Cool-down.	**1:00**
Thu 15 Oct	**Swim · aerobic** - Warm-up 300 m. Main 3×400 m steady (RPE 4–5), 30 s rest, breathing every 3 strokes. Cool-down 200 m.	**0:45**
	Run · easy - Easy Z2, conversational. 4×20 s strides at the end.	**0:40**
Fri 16 Oct	**Bike · easy** - Easy Z2 spin, indoors is fine. Smooth pedalling, 85–95 rpm.	**0:45**
Sat 17 Oct	**Long ride** KEY - Steady Z2 (65–75% FTP, conversational). Eat 60 g of carbohydrate an hour from the first hour.	**2:00**
Sun 18 Oct	**Long run** KEY - Easy Z2. Walk the aid-station minute if you like — it's a habit worth having on race day.	**1:00**
	Swim · recovery *(optional)* - Optional, after the long run or later in the day: easy 1,200–1,500 m with a few drills. Loosens the legs.	**0:30**

Week 2 Base · 19 Oct - 25 Oct — 9:10 h

Same week, a little longer. Consistency is the whole game in base.

Mon 19 Oct	**Strength & mobility** - Squats, split squats, single-leg deadlifts, calf raises, planks — 3 sets of 8–12. Then 10 min mobility.	**0:30**
Tue 20 Oct	**Swim · technique** - Warm-up 300 m easy. Drills 8×50 m (catch-up, fingertip drag, 6-kick switch), 20 s rest. Main 6×100 m smooth at RPE 5, 20 s rest. Cool-down 200 m.	**0:50**
	Run · hills KEY - Easy 15 min. 8×30 s up a moderate hill, hard but smooth, walk/jog down. Easy to finish.	**0:45**
Wed 21 Oct	**Bike · sweet spot** KEY - 10 min warm-up. 3×12 min at 88–92% FTP (RPE 6–7), 5 min easy between. Cool-down.	**1:00**
Thu 22 Oct	**Swim · aerobic** - Warm-up 300 m. Main 3×400 m steady (RPE 4–5), 30 s rest, breathing every 3 strokes. Cool-down 200 m.	**0:45**
	Run · easy - Easy Z2, conversational. 4×20 s strides at the end.	**0:40**
Fri 23 Oct	**Bike · easy** - Easy Z2 spin, indoors is fine. Smooth pedalling, 85–95 rpm.	**0:50**
Sat 24 Oct	**Long ride** KEY - Steady Z2 (65–75% FTP, conversational). Eat 60 g of carbohydrate an hour from the first hour.	**2:15**
Sun 25 Oct	**Long run** KEY - Easy Z2. Walk the aid-station minute if you like — it's a habit worth having on race day.	**1:05**
	Swim · recovery *(optional)* - Optional, after the long run or later in the day: easy 1,200–1,500 m with a few drills. Loosens the legs.	**0:30**

Week 3 Base · 26 Oct - 1 Nov — 10:05 h

First brick run off the long ride. Find your swim CSS pace this week (400 m + 200 m test) if you don't know it.

Mon 26 Oct	**Strength & mobility** - Squats, split squats, single-leg deadlifts, calf raises, planks — 3 sets of 8–12. Then 10 min mobility.	**0:30**
Tue 27 Oct	**Swim · technique** - Warm-up 300 m easy. Drills 8×50 m (catch-up, fingertip drag, 6-kick switch), 20 s rest. Main 6×100 m smooth at RPE 5, 20 s rest. Cool-down 200 m.	**0:50**
	Run · hills KEY - Easy 15 min. 10×30 s up a moderate hill, hard but smooth, walk/jog down. Easy to finish.	**0:50**
Wed 28 Oct	**Bike · sweet spot** KEY - 10 min warm-up. 2×20 min at 88–92% FTP (RPE 6–7), 5 min easy between. Cool-down.	**1:05**
Thu 29 Oct	**Swim · aerobic** - Warm-up 300 m. Main 3×400 m steady (RPE 4–5), 30 s rest, breathing every 3 strokes. Cool-down 200 m.	**0:50**
	Run · easy - Easy Z2, conversational. 4×20 s strides at the end.	**0:45**
Fri 30 Oct	**Bike · easy** - Easy Z2 spin, indoors is fine. Smooth pedalling, 85–95 rpm.	**0:50**
Sat 31 Oct	**Long ride** KEY - Steady Z2 (65–75% FTP, conversational). Eat 60 g of carbohydrate an hour from the first hour.	**2:30**
	Brick run - Straight off the bike: easy, short strides, find your run legs.	**0:10**
Sun 1 Nov	**Long run** KEY - Easy Z2. Walk the aid-station minute if you like — it's a habit worth having on race day.	**1:10**
	Swim · recovery *(optional)* - Optional, after the long run or later in the day: easy 1,200–1,500 m with a few drills. Loosens the legs.	**0:35**

Week 4 Base · recovery week · 2 Nov - 8 Nov — 6:35 h

Recovery week: about a third less. Let the first block soak in.

Mon 2 Nov	**Strength & mobility** - Squats, split squats, single-leg deadlifts, calf raises, planks — 3 sets of 8–12. Then 10 min mobility.	**0:20**
Tue 3 Nov	**Swim · technique** - Warm-up 300 m easy. Drills 8×50 m (catch-up, fingertip drag, 6-kick switch), 20 s rest. Main 6×100 m smooth at RPE 5, 20 s rest. Cool-down 200 m.	**0:40**
	Run · easy + strides - Easy Z2 with 6×20 s relaxed strides.	**0:35**
Wed 4 Nov	**Bike · easy spin** - Easy spin with 4×1 min high cadence (100+ rpm). Keep it light — this is a recovery week.	**0:45**
Thu 5 Nov	**Swim · aerobic** - Warm-up 300 m. Main 3×400 m steady (RPE 4–5), 30 s rest, breathing every 3 strokes. Cool-down 200 m.	**0:35**
	Run · easy - Easy Z2, conversational. 4×20 s strides at the end.	**0:30**
Fri 6 Nov	**Bike · easy** - Easy Z2 spin, indoors is fine. Smooth pedalling, 85–95 rpm.	**0:40**
Sat 7 Nov	**Long ride · easy** KEY - Steady Z2. Practise eating every 20 minutes.	**1:40**
Sun 8 Nov	**Long run · easy** KEY - Easy Z2.	**0:50**

Week 5 Build 1 · 9 Nov - 15 Nov — 10:30 h

Threshold arrives. If you have a power meter, test FTP on Wednesday (20-min test) and set your zones.

Mon 9 Nov	**Strength & mobility** - Squats, split squats, single-leg deadlifts, calf raises, planks — 3 sets of 8–12. Then 10 min mobility.	**0:30**
Tue 10 Nov	**Swim · threshold** - Warm-up 400 m. Main 8×100 m at CSS pace (your 1,500 m time-trial pace), 15 s rest. 4×50 m fast/easy. Cool-down 200 m.	**0:55**
	Run · threshold KEY - Easy 15 min. 5×1 km at threshold (10 km race effort), 2 min jog. Easy to finish.	**0:50**
Wed 11 Nov	**Bike · threshold** KEY - 15 min warm-up. 4×8 min at 95–100% FTP, 4 min easy between. Cool-down.	**1:10**
Thu 12 Nov	**Swim · endurance** - Warm-up 400 m. Main 3×500 m steady at CSS + 5 s/100 m, 30 s rest. Cool-down 200 m.	**0:50**
	Run · easy - Easy Z2, conversational. Run by feel, not pace.	**0:45**
Fri 13 Nov	**Bike · easy** - Easy Z2 spin, indoors is fine. Smooth pedalling, 85–95 rpm.	**0:55**
Sat 14 Nov	**Long ride + tempo** KEY - Z2 on rolling roads, with 2×15 min at 80–85% FTP in the second hour. 60–80 g carbs an hour.	**2:30**
	Brick run - Straight off the bike: 5 min easy, then steady (RPE 6).	**0:15**
Sun 15 Nov	**Long run** KEY - Z2, last 15 min steady (RPE 6). Take a gel every 30–40 minutes.	**1:15**
	Swim · recovery *(optional)* - Optional, after the long run or later in the day: easy 1,200–1,500 m with a few drills. Loosens the legs.	**0:35**

Week 6 Build 1 · 16 Nov - 22 Nov 11:15 h

Longer threshold blocks; the weekend gets bigger.

Mon 16 Nov	**Strength & mobility** - Squats, split squats, single-leg deadlifts, calf raises, planks — 3 sets of 8–12. Then 10 min mobility.	**0:30**
Tue 17 Nov	**Swim · threshold** - Warm-up 400 m. Main 8×100 m at CSS pace (your 1,500 m time-trial pace), 15 s rest. 4×50 m fast/easy. Cool-down 200 m.	**0:55**
	Run · threshold KEY - Easy 15 min. 4×1.6 km at threshold (10 km race effort), 2 min jog. Easy to finish.	**0:55**
Wed 18 Nov	**Bike · threshold** KEY - 15 min warm-up. 3×12 min at 95–100% FTP, 4 min easy between. Cool-down.	**1:15**
Thu 19 Nov	**Swim · endurance** - Warm-up 400 m. Main 3×500 m steady at CSS + 5 s/100 m, 30 s rest. Cool-down 200 m.	**0:55**
	Run · easy - Easy Z2, conversational. Run by feel, not pace.	**0:45**
Fri 20 Nov	**Bike · easy** - Easy Z2 spin, indoors is fine. Smooth pedalling, 85–95 rpm.	**1:00**
Sat 21 Nov	**Long ride + tempo** KEY - Z2 on rolling roads, with 2×15 min at 80–85% FTP in the second hour. 60–80 g carbs an hour.	**2:50**
	Brick run - Straight off the bike: 5 min easy, then steady (RPE 6).	**0:15**
Sun 22 Nov	**Long run** KEY - Z2, last 15 min steady (RPE 6). Take a gel every 30–40 minutes.	**1:20**
	Swim · recovery *(optional)* - Optional, after the long run or later in the day: easy 1,200–1,500 m with a few drills. Loosens the legs.	**0:35**

Week 7 Build 1 · 23 Nov - 29 Nov 11:55 h

The hardest week of the first build. Sleep is training.

Mon 23 Nov	**Strength & mobility** - Squats, split squats, single-leg deadlifts, calf raises, planks — 3 sets of 8–12. Then 10 min mobility.	**0:30**
Tue 24 Nov	**Swim · threshold** - Warm-up 400 m. Main 10×100 m at CSS pace (your 1,500 m time-trial pace), 15 s rest. 4×50 m fast/easy. Cool-down 200 m.	**1:00**
	Run · threshold KEY - Easy 15 min. 3×2 km at threshold (10 km race effort), 2 min jog. Easy to finish.	**0:55**
Wed 25 Nov	**Bike · threshold** KEY - 15 min warm-up. 3×15 min at 95–100% FTP, 4 min easy between. Cool-down.	**1:15**
Thu 26 Nov	**Swim · endurance** - Warm-up 400 m. Main 3×500 m steady at CSS + 5 s/100 m, 30 s rest. Cool-down 200 m.	**0:55**
	Run · easy - Easy Z2, conversational. Run by feel, not pace.	**0:50**
Fri 27 Nov	**Bike · easy** - Easy Z2 spin, indoors is fine. Smooth pedalling, 85–95 rpm.	**1:00**
Sat 28 Nov	**Long ride + tempo** KEY - Z2 on rolling roads, with 3×15 min at 80–85% FTP in the second hour. 60–80 g carbs an hour.	**3:05**
	Brick run - Straight off the bike: 5 min easy, then steady (RPE 6).	**0:20**
Sun 29 Nov	**Long run** KEY - Z2, last 15 min steady (RPE 6). Take a gel every 30–40 minutes.	**1:25**
	Swim · recovery *(optional)* - Optional, after the long run or later in the day: easy 1,200–1,500 m with a few drills. Loosens the legs.	**0:40**

Week 8 Build 1 · recovery week · 30 Nov - 6 Dec — 7:35 h

Recovery week. Short, easy, nothing to prove.

Mon 30 Nov	**Strength & mobility** - Squats, split squats, single-leg deadlifts, calf raises, planks — 3 sets of 8–12. Then 10 min mobility.	**0:20**
Tue 1 Dec	**Swim · threshold** - Warm-up 400 m. Main 10×100 m at CSS pace (your 1,500 m time-trial pace), 15 s rest. 4×50 m fast/easy. Cool-down 200 m.	**0:45**
	Run · easy + strides - Easy Z2 with 6×20 s relaxed strides.	**0:40**
Wed 2 Dec	**Bike · easy spin** - Easy spin with 4×1 min high cadence (100+ rpm). Keep it light — this is a recovery week.	**0:50**
Thu 3 Dec	**Swim · endurance** - Warm-up 400 m. Main 3×500 m steady at CSS + 5 s/100 m, 30 s rest. Cool-down 200 m.	**0:40**
	Run · easy - Easy Z2, conversational. Run by feel, not pace.	**0:35**
Fri 4 Dec	**Bike · easy** - Easy Z2 spin, indoors is fine. Smooth pedalling, 85–95 rpm.	**0:40**
Sat 5 Dec	**Long ride · easy** KEY - Steady Z2 on rolling roads. Practise eating every 20 minutes.	**2:00**
	Brick run - Straight off the bike: 5 min easy, then steady (RPE 6).	**0:10**
Sun 6 Dec	**Long run · easy** KEY - Easy Z2.	**0:55**

Week 9 Build 2 · 7 Dec - 13 Dec — 11:35 h

Race-specific: long efforts at 70.3 power and pace. Practise race fuelling on every long session.

Mon 7 Dec	**Strength & mobility** - Maintenance: 2 sets of the same moves, lighter. Then 10 min mobility.	**0:25**
Tue 8 Dec	**Swim · race-pace sets** - Warm-up 400 m. Main 3×(4×100 m at CSS, 10 s rest), 60 s between rounds. Cool-down 200 m.	**1:00**
	Run · race pace KEY - Easy 15 min. 3×2.5 km at 70.3 run pace (a little slower than half-marathon pace), 2 min jog. Easy to finish.	**0:55**
Wed 9 Dec	**Bike · race power** KEY - 15 min warm-up. 3×15 min at 75–82% FTP (70.3 race power), 5 min easy between. Cool-down.	**1:15**
Thu 10 Dec	**Swim · endurance** - Warm-up 400 m. Main 3×500 m steady at CSS + 5 s/100 m, 30 s rest. Cool-down 200 m.	**0:55**
	Run · easy - Easy Z2, conversational. Run by feel, not pace.	**0:45**
Fri 11 Dec	**Bike · easy** - Easy Z2 spin, indoors is fine. Smooth pedalling, 85–95 rpm.	**1:00**
Sat 12 Dec	**Long ride + race power** KEY - Z2 on rolling roads, with 2×20 min at 70.3 race power (75–82% FTP). Race-day fuelling: 70–90 g carbs an hour.	**3:00**
	Brick run · race pace - Straight off the bike: first 5 min easy, then at 70.3 run pace. Hold form, quick cadence.	**0:20**
Sun 13 Dec	**Long run + race pace** KEY - Z2 with the last 20 min at 70.3 run pace. Race-day gels.	**1:25**
	Swim · recovery *(optional)* - Optional, after the long run or later in the day: easy 1,200–1,500 m with a few drills. Loosens the legs.	**0:35**

Week 10 Build 2 · 14 Dec - 20 Dec 12:20 h

Bigger race-power blocks. The brick runs are where race pace starts to feel normal.

Mon 14 Dec	**Strength & mobility** - Maintenance: 2 sets of the same moves, lighter. Then 10 min mobility.	**0:25**
Tue 15 Dec	**Swim · race-pace sets** - Warm-up 400 m. Main 3×(4×100 m at CSS, 10 s rest), 60 s between rounds. Cool-down 200 m.	**1:00**
	Run · race pace KEY - Easy 15 min. 3×2.5 km at 70.3 run pace (a little slower than half-marathon pace), 2 min jog. Easy to finish.	**0:55**
Wed 16 Dec	**Bike · race power** KEY - 15 min warm-up. 3×15 min at 75–82% FTP (70.3 race power), 5 min easy between. Cool-down.	**1:20**
Thu 17 Dec	**Swim · endurance** - Warm-up 400 m. Main 2×1,000 m steady at CSS + 5 s/100 m, 30 s rest. Cool-down 200 m.	**0:55**
	Run · easy - Easy Z2, conversational. Run by feel, not pace.	**0:50**
Fri 18 Dec	**Bike · easy** - Easy Z2 spin, indoors is fine. Smooth pedalling, 85–95 rpm.	**1:00**
Sat 19 Dec	**Long ride + race power** KEY - Z2 on rolling roads, with 2×30 min at 70.3 race power (75–82% FTP). Race-day fuelling: 70–90 g carbs an hour.	**3:20**
	Brick run · race pace - Straight off the bike: first 5 min easy, then at 70.3 run pace. Hold form, quick cadence.	**0:25**
Sun 20 Dec	**Long run + race pace** KEY - Z2 with the last 20 min at 70.3 run pace. Race-day gels.	**1:30**
	Swim · recovery *(optional)* - Optional, after the long run or later in the day: easy 1,200–1,500 m with a few drills. Loosens the legs.	**0:40**

Week 11 Build 2 · 21 Dec - 27 Dec 13:00 h

The biggest week of the plan. Nail the fuelling, protect the sleep.

Mon 21 Dec	**Strength & mobility** - Maintenance: 2 sets of the same moves, lighter. Then 10 min mobility.	**0:25**
Tue 22 Dec	**Swim · race-pace sets** - Warm-up 400 m. Main 3×(4×100 m at CSS, 10 s rest), 60 s between rounds. Cool-down 200 m.	**1:00**
	Run · race pace KEY - Easy 15 min. 3×3 km at 70.3 run pace (a little slower than half-marathon pace), 2 min jog. Easy to finish.	**1:00**
Wed 23 Dec	**Bike · race power** KEY - 15 min warm-up. 2×30 min at 75–82% FTP (70.3 race power), 5 min easy between. Cool-down.	**1:20**
Thu 24 Dec	**Swim · endurance** - Warm-up 400 m. Main 2×1,000 m steady at CSS + 5 s/100 m, 30 s rest. Cool-down 200 m.	**1:00**
	Run · easy - Easy Z2, conversational. Run by feel, not pace.	**0:50**
Fri 25 Dec	**Bike · easy** - Easy Z2 spin, indoors is fine. Smooth pedalling, 85–95 rpm.	**1:05**
Sat 26 Dec	**Long ride + race power** KEY - Z2 on rolling roads, with 2×40 min at 70.3 race power (75–82% FTP). Race-day fuelling: 70–90 g carbs an hour.	**3:30**
	Brick run · race pace - Straight off the bike: first 5 min easy, then at 70.3 run pace. Hold form, quick cadence.	**0:30**
Sun 27 Dec	**Long run + race pace** KEY - Z2 with the last 30 min at 70.3 run pace. Race-day gels.	**1:40**
	Swim · recovery *(optional)* - Optional, after the long run or later in the day: easy 1,200–1,500 m with a few drills. Loosens the legs.	**0:40**

Week 12 Build 2 · recovery week · 28 Dec - 3 Jan — 8:05 h

Recovery week before the peak. Feeling flat midweek is normal.

Mon 28 Dec	**Strength & mobility** - Maintenance: 2 sets of the same moves, lighter. Then 10 min mobility.	**0:20**
Tue 29 Dec	**Swim · race-pace sets** - Warm-up 400 m. Main 3×(4×100 m at CSS, 10 s rest), 60 s between rounds. Cool-down 200 m.	**0:45**
	Run · easy + strides - Easy Z2 with 6×20 s relaxed strides.	**0:40**
Wed 30 Dec	**Bike · easy spin** - Easy spin with 4×1 min high cadence (100+ rpm). Keep it light — this is a recovery week.	**0:55**
Thu 31 Dec	**Swim · endurance** - Warm-up 400 m. Main 2×1,000 m steady at CSS + 5 s/100 m, 30 s rest. Cool-down 200 m.	**0:40**
	Run · easy - Easy Z2, conversational. Run by feel, not pace.	**0:35**
Fri 1 Jan	**Bike · easy** - Easy Z2 spin, indoors is fine. Smooth pedalling, 85–95 rpm.	**0:45**
Sat 2 Jan	**Long ride · easy** KEY - Steady Z2 on rolling roads. Practise eating every 20 minutes.	**2:10**
	Brick run · race pace - Straight off the bike: first 5 min easy, then at 70.3 run pace. Hold form, quick cadence.	**0:15**
Sun 3 Jan	**Long run · easy** KEY - Easy Z2.	**1:00**

Week 13 Peak · 4 Jan - 10 Jan — 11:30 h

Dress rehearsal: race kit, race fuel, race pace — find the problems now, not on race day.

Mon 4 Jan	Rest	
Tue 5 Jan	**Swim · open water** - Open water if you can (wetsuit): 2×15 min at race effort, sighting every 6 strokes, plus 3 practice starts. Pool fallback: 2×800 m at race pace.	**1:00**
	Run · race pace KEY - Easy 15 min. 2×4 km at 70.3 run pace, 3 min jog. Easy to finish.	**0:55**
Wed 6 Jan	**Bike · race power + spikes** KEY - 15 min warm-up. 3×15 min at race power with a 30 s surge to 110% FTP every 5 min (passing, climbs). Cool-down.	**1:15**
Thu 7 Jan	**Swim · endurance** - Warm-up 400 m. Main 2×1,000 m steady at CSS + 5 s/100 m, 30 s rest. Cool-down 200 m.	**0:55**
	Run · easy - Easy Z2, conversational. Run by feel, not pace.	**0:45**
Fri 8 Jan	**Bike · easy + cadence** - Easy Z2 with 5×1 min at 100+ rpm. Fresh legs for the weekend.	**1:00**
Sat 9 Jan	**Race rehearsal ride** KEY - Dress rehearsal on rolling roads: race kit, race bike, race breakfast. 2×45 min at race power with exactly your race-day fuel and fluids.	**3:00**
	Brick run · race pace - Straight off the bike: first 5 min easy, then at 70.3 run pace. Hold form, quick cadence.	**0:30**
Sun 10 Jan	**Long run + race pace** KEY - Z2 with 2×15 min at 70.3 run pace. Last long run.	**1:30**
	Swim · recovery *(optional)* - Optional, after the long run or later in the day: easy 1,200–1,500 m with a few drills. Loosens the legs.	**0:40**

Week 14 Peak · 11 Jan - 17 Jan — 10:25 h

Last block of real work. Confidence, not new fitness.

Mon 11 Jan	Rest	
Tue 12 Jan	**Swim · open water** - Open water if you can (wetsuit): 2×15 min at race effort, sighting every 6 strokes, plus 3 practice starts. Pool fallback: 2×800 m at race pace.	**0:55**
	Run · race pace KEY - Easy 15 min. 2×4 km at 70.3 run pace, 3 min jog. Easy to finish.	**0:50**
Wed 13 Jan	**Bike · race power + spikes** KEY - 15 min warm-up. 3×15 min at race power with a 30 s surge to 110% FTP every 5 min (passing, climbs). Cool-down.	**1:15**
Thu 14 Jan	**Swim · endurance** - Warm-up 400 m. Main 2×1,000 m steady at CSS + 5 s/100 m, 30 s rest. Cool-down 200 m.	**0:50**
	Run · easy - Easy Z2, conversational. Run by feel, not pace.	**0:40**
Fri 15 Jan	**Bike · easy + cadence** - Easy Z2 with 5×1 min at 100+ rpm. Fresh legs for the weekend.	**0:55**
Sat 16 Jan	**Long ride + race power** KEY - Z2 on rolling roads with 3×20 min at race power. Last big ride.	**2:45**
	Brick run · race pace - Straight off the bike: first 5 min easy, then at 70.3 run pace. Hold form, quick cadence.	**0:20**
Sun 17 Jan	**Long run + race pace** KEY - Z2 with 2×15 min at 70.3 run pace. Last long run.	**1:20**
	Swim · recovery *(optional)* - Optional, after the long run or later in the day: easy 1,200–1,500 m with a few drills. Loosens the legs.	**0:35**

Week 15 Taper · 18 Jan - 24 Jan — 7:55 h

Taper: about a third less volume, same intensity. Restlessness is a good sign.

Mon 18 Jan	Rest	
Tue 19 Jan	**Swim · sharpen** - Warm-up 300 m. 6×100 m at race pace, 20 s rest. 4×25 m fast. Cool-down 200 m.	**0:45**
	Run · sharpen KEY - Easy 15 min. 5×2 min at 10 km pace, 2 min jog. Easy to finish.	**0:40**
Wed 20 Jan	**Bike · openers** KEY - 10 min easy. 3×5 min at race power, 3 min easy. 3×30 s fast. Spin out.	**1:00**
Thu 21 Jan	**Swim · easy** - Easy 1,500–2,000 m with 4×50 m at race pace. Leave the pool wanting more.	**0:40**
	Run · easy - Easy Z2, conversational. Run by feel, not pace.	**0:30**
Fri 22 Jan	**Bike · easy + cadence** - Easy Z2 with 5×1 min at 100+ rpm. Fresh legs for the weekend.	**0:45**
Sat 23 Jan	**Shorter long ride** KEY - Z2 with 3×10 min at race power. Check the bike: tyres, gears, nothing new from here.	**1:50**
	Brick run - Straight off the bike: 5 min easy, then steady (RPE 6).	**0:15**
Sun 24 Jan	**Long run · short** KEY - Easy Z2 with 3×3 min at race pace.	**1:00**
	Swim · recovery *(optional)* - Optional, after the long run or later in the day: easy 1,200–1,500 m with a few drills. Loosens the legs.	**0:30**

Week 16 Race week · 25 Jan - 31 Jan 3:35 h

Race week. Short, sharp, rested. Trust the work.

Mon 25 Jan	**Swim · race pace** - 10 min easy, 6×50 m at race pace, easy to finish.	**0:30**
	Run · openers - Easy with 4×1 min at 70.3 pace.	**0:30**
Tue 26 Jan	**Bike · openers** - Easy with 3×4 min at race power, 3 min easy between.	**0:50**
Wed 27 Jan	**Swim · easy** - Easy with a few race-pace 50s.	**0:25**
	Run · easy - Easy with 4 strides.	**0:20**
Thu 28 Jan	Rest	
Fri 29 Jan	**Swim · shake-out** - Easy, ideally on the course: sight the buoys, feel the water.	**0:20**
Sat 30 Jan	**Bike · check ride** - 30 min easy with 3×1 min at race power — check gears and brakes, then rack it.	**0:30**
	Run · shake-out - 10 min easy with 3 strides.	**0:10**
Sun 31 Jan	**RACE DAY** KEY - Swim calm, ride your power, run the first 5 km slower than you want to. Eat and drink to plan.	

How hard is "easy"?

INTENSITY	RPE	BIKE	RUN	FEELS LIKE
Z1–2 · easy	2–4	55–75% FTP	conversational	Most of the plan. You could talk in full sentences.
Z3 · steady	5–6	76–87% FTP	marathon effort	Comfortably hard; short sentences.
70.3 race pace	6–7	75–82% FTP	a touch slower than half-marathon pace	The effort you can hold for the whole race. Practise it until it feels boring.
Sweet spot	6–7	88–92% FTP	—	Big aerobic gains for the time spent. Base-phase bike work.
Z4 · threshold	7–8	95–100% FTP	10 km race effort	Hard, controlled, a few words at a time.
Z5 · hard	9	106%+ FTP	short hill reps	Short reps only. Full recovery between.

CSS is your critical swim speed, roughly your pace for a hard 1,500 m. FTP is the power you can hold for about an hour. No power meter or test yet? Ride and run by the effort column.

A general plan for healthy adults who already swim, ride and run a little - not medical advice. If you have an injury or a health condition, check with a professional first.

The interactive version, with the 7 / 10 / 13 h switch and a calendar export:
https://www.metrica.fit/races/im703-nelson-mandela-bay/training-plan