

TRAINING PLAN  
COACH DERMOTT HAYES



# MASTER THE OPEN WATER

## IN JUST 8 WEEKS!

GETTY IMAGES

**NEW TO SWIMMING?**  
Still not ready to take the plunge? Head to p116 for our top fear-busting tips and tricks.

As triathletes, there's a strong chance we've come to the sport from various other sporting backgrounds – or maybe no sports background at all! Either way, there's usually only a very small minority that have experienced swimming at the highest level when younger, and so when it comes to training for a triathlon the majority need to relearn how to swim efficiently. To make things more challenging, most triathlons are in open water, not in a pool, with its confidence-inducing lane ropes, clear water and the chance to stop every 25m. In short, swimming outdoors is a very different beast.

Over the next eight weeks, this training plan will help you build confidence, work on open-water technique and get you race ready. The plan is based on training for a standard-distance triathlon with a 1.5km swim. If you want to do a sprint tri, then reduce the volume by approximately 30%; if you're tackling a 70.3 tri then increase the volume by 30%.

Integral to this plan is the opportunity to swim in open water on a regular basis, so do

some research and find a lake, river or sea near to you. Being comfortable in open water and being able to quickly relax into your stroke will have a huge impact on the success of your experience. If possible, join an organised group-style swim where you can get used to swimming in close proximity to others. Coached group sessions will teach you skills such as how to draft off other swimmers and how to sight effectively. You'll also find swimmers of all abilities and experience levels.

The plan overleaf focuses on preparing for a triathlon with a strong bias towards swimming, to make sure you get your races off to a great start. So the plan includes 2-4 swim sessions per week with a mixture of both open water and pool. It covers some of the key open-water skills which can be replicated and practised in a pool, as well as building endurance and speed ready for racing. Also within the plan is time spent using a Pull Buoy (PB) or Paddles (PD), both of these can help to strengthen the shoulders, which is helpful to recreate the fatigue you might encounter. So get your wetsuit out, find some water and jump in! ▶

### COACH'S TIPS FIRST-RACE PREP



**BUDDY UP**

Swim where you know there are others in a safe environment that's managed. Please don't go off swimming on your own!



**FIND THE RIGHT SUIT**

A well-fitted wetsuit is crucial to enjoying your swim. Find a suit that provides flexibility, buoyancy and warmth in equal measure.



**SWIM WITH OTHERS**

Swim with others to experience the physicality of OW swimming. You need to get used to the occasional, yet inevitable, bumps or knocks.



**KNOW YOUR COURSE**

Take time to look at your course, see the turning points and look out for objects to 'sight'. No excuses for swimming extra distance!

*In just two months, coach Dermott Hayes will have you swimming with confidence and skill. Don't believe us? Simply turn the page...*

## TRAINING PLAN - WEEKS 1 TO 4

MONDAY TUESDAY WEDNESDAY THURSDAY FRIDAY SATURDAY SUNDAY

**WEEK 1** - OUR SIX DAYS/WEEK PLAN BEGINS ON A MONDAY, BUT YOU CAN START ANY DAY OF THE WEEK

<b>SWIM</b> 400m @RP • 3 x 200m PD • 400m @RP • 3 x 200m PB	<b>RUN</b> 2km faster than RP; 500m recovery • 2km faster than RP; 500m recovery • 2km faster than RP	<b>BIKE</b> 5 x [6mins @RP; 2mins @faster than RP; 2mins recovery]  <b>SWIM</b> 5 x 200m @RP off 20secs RI; 5 x 100m @RP off 10secs RI	<b>REST DAY</b>	<b>RUN</b> 12km moderate • Include 2 x 2km @RP, choose an undulating route	<b>OW SWIM</b> 2km Inc. 500m of smooth sighting & 500m of bilateral breathing	<b>BIKE</b> 50km moderate, inc. 2 x 15km @RP focusing on body position and power
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**WEEK 2** - TO GET THE MOST OUT OF THIS PLAN, MAKE THE WEEKEND SWIM SESSION AN OPEN-WATER ONE

<b>SWIM</b> 2 x [400m sighting every 4th length; 2 x 200m breathing every 4-5 strokes; 200m easy]	<b>RUN</b> 3km faster than RP; 500m recovery • 2.5km faster than RP; 500m recovery • 2km faster than RP	<b>BIKE</b> 5 x [6mins @RP; 2mins @faster than RP; 2mins recovery]	<b>REST DAY</b>	<b>RUN</b> 12km moderate, inc. 4 x 1km @ faster than RP, choose an undulating route	<b>OW SWIM</b> 2km Inc. 500m of drafting & 3 x 200m of simulating race starts	<b>BIKE</b> 50km moderate, inc. 3 x 6km @RP focusing on body position and power
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**WEEK 3** - DON'T FORGET, RP = RACEPACE; PD = PADDLES; PB = PULL BUOY; RI = REST INTERVAL

<b>SWIM</b> 400m @RP • 3 x 200m PD • 400m @RP • 3 x 200m PB	<b>RUN</b> 2km faster than RP; 500m recovery • 2km faster than RP; 500m recovery • 2km faster than RP	<b>BIKE</b> 5 x [6mins @RP; 2mins @faster than RP; 2mins recovery]	<b>REST DAY</b>	<b>SWIM</b> 300m sighting every 8 strokes • 200m easy • 300m sighting every 6 strokes • 200m easy	<b>OW SWIM</b> 2.5km Inc. a timed 1.5km effort	<b>BRICK</b> 40km bike moderate • 10km run @ estimated Olympic RP
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**WEEK 4** - IF POSSIBLE, JOIN AN ORGANISED GROUP-STYLE SWIM WHERE YOU CAN GET USED TO SWIMMING WITH OTHERS

<b>SWIM</b> 2 x [400m sighting every 4th length; 2 x 200m breathing every 4-5 strokes; 200m easy]	<b>RUN</b> 3km faster than RP; 500m recovery • 2.5km faster than RP; 500m recovery • 2km faster than RP	<b>BIKE</b> 5 x [6mins @RP; 2mins @faster than RP; 2mins recovery]	<b>REST DAY</b>	<b>RUN</b> 8km moderate	<b>OW SWIM</b> 2.2km Inc. 500m of turning marker buoys & 5 x 100m sprints	<b>BIKE</b> 50km moderate, inc. 3 x 6km @RP focusing on body position and power
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## TRAINING PLAN - WEEKS 5 TO 8

MONDAY TUESDAY WEDNESDAY THURSDAY FRIDAY SATURDAY SUNDAY

**WEEK 5** - IN THE LAST MONTH, THERE ARE TWO OPEN-WATER SESSIONS/WEEK - TRY NOT TO MISS THEM

<b>SWIM</b> 2 x [300m @RP; 200m faster than RP; 5 x 100m PD vigorous]	<b>RUN</b> 3 x 1km vigorous off 60secs RI; 400m recovery • 3 x 800m vig off 50secs RI; 400m recovery • 3 x 600m vig off 40secs RI	<b>BIKE</b> 10 x 3mins starting @RP and gets faster each min 2mins recovery  <b>OW SWIM</b> 3 x 400m simulating race starts and pacing	<b>REST DAY</b>	<b>RUN</b> 12km moderate, inc. 2 x 3km @RP, choose an undulating route	<b>OW SWIM</b> 2.5km Concentrate on swimming with others in groups and drafting	<b>BIKE</b> 55km moderate, inc. 2 x 20km @RP focusing on body position and power
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**WEEK 6** - HOPEFULLY YOU'VE BEEN INCLUDING A WARM-UP (5-8MINS BUILDING FROM EASY TO VIGOROUS) WITH EVERY SESSION

<b>SWIM</b> 2 x [150m breathe 5th stroke; 150m breathe 4th stroke; 150m breathe 3rd stroke; 150m breathe 2nd stroke; 8 x 50m vigorous off 10secs RI]	<b>BRICK</b> 3 x 8km bike vigorous • 1.5km run @RP • 90secs rest between sets	<b>OW SWIM</b> 2 x 800m simulating race starts and pacing • Focus on sighting and high-arm relaxed recovery	<b>REST DAY</b>	<b>RUN</b> 12km moderate, inc. 4 x 1.5km @ faster than RP, choose an undulating route	<b>OW SWIM</b> 2.5km Include 4 x 200m, focus on simulating race starts and practise exiting the water and wetsuit removal	<b>BIKE</b> 50km moderate, inc. 3 x 8km @RP, focus on body position and power
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**WEEK 7** - ... AND A COOL-DOWN (3-5MINS OF EASY CARDIO FOLLOWED BY STRETCHES)

<b>SWIM</b> 2 x [300m @RP; 200m faster than RP; 5 x 100m PD vigorous]	<b>RUN</b> 3 x 1km vigorous off 60secs RI; 400m recovery • 3 x 800m vig off 50secs RI; 400m recovery • 3 x 600m vig off 40secs RI	<b>BIKE</b> 10 x 3mins starting @RP and gets faster each min • 2mins recovery  <b>OW SWIM</b> 3 x 400m simulating race starts and pacing	<b>REST DAY</b>	<b>SWIM</b> 300m sighting each 8 strokes • 200m easy • 300m sighting each 6 strokes • 200m easy	<b>OW SWIM</b> 2.5km Include a timed 1.5km effort	<b>BRICK</b> 40km bike moderate • 10km run @ estimated Olympic RP
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**WEEK 8** - ONCE COMPLETED, FIND A RACE, IF YOU HAVEN'T ALREADY, AND GET READY TO BLAST THE SWIM!

<b>SWIM</b> 2 x [150m breathe 5th stroke; 150m breathe 4th stroke; 150m breathe 3rd stroke; 150m breathe 2nd stroke; 8 x 50m vigorous off 10secs RI]	<b>BRICK</b> 3 x 8km bike vigorous • 1.5km run @RP • 90secs rest between sets	<b>OW SWIM</b> 2 x 800m simulating race starts and pacing • Focus on sighting and high-arm relaxed recovery	<b>REST DAY</b>	<b>RUN</b> 8km moderate	<b>OW SWIM</b> 2km Include 500m turning marker buoys & 5 x 100m sprints	<b>BIKE</b> 50km moderate, inc. 3 x 8km @RP, focus on body position and power
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