

# Determining Your Training Level: What Program is Right for Me?



## **Novice**

If you are new to running, haven't been training regularly, or if you are training for a specific race for the first time, it might be best to choose a training program geared towards the novice level. This will ensure that your first week of workouts is do-able for your level and that you do not overdo your training or injure yourself. Your main goal at this point should be to complete the training program and finish the race! After you are comfortable with the race distance and have built an endurance base, you will be ready to graduate to an intermediate level and focus more on time improvements and performance goals. If a novice program's beginning mileage seems a bit too much for you, try building up to it by completing a 5-K training program or the run/walk program first.

## **Intermediate**

If you are experienced with running and have recently completed at least one or more races at similar distances to that you are currently training for, you might want to gear yourself towards intermediate training programs. You should already be in good cardiovascular shape and have been consistently running over the past few months before beginning an intermediate program. Moving from the novice to the intermediate programs, you will experience an increase in difficulty, an increase in base mileage and the addition of some speed work. You should be familiar with how to complete speed work before beginning an intermediate program. For example, if you are training for a half-marathon and you have completed one or two half marathons in the past year, the intermediate program would be right for you!

## **Advanced**

If you are a veteran runner, or have regularly completed races at similar distances to that you are currently training for over the past year, you will be best suited for an advanced training program. You should be able to run 30-60 minutes a day at least 5 days a week and have a basic understanding of speed work. At this stage you might already have an excellent endurance base and now be looking to improve performance and speed for your distance races. If you are training for a specific distance for the first time, advanced programs might not be the best fit for you. Advanced programs will generally have more speed work than both the novice and intermediate programs, and the base mileage will generally be higher.