

OXYGEN ADVANTAGE The Nasal 5K Challenge



Intro Guide

This 8-week program is designed to help you run with nasal breathing while improving oxygen efficiency, endurance, and breathing control. You'll train smarter, not harder—using your breath as a guide to unlock better performance and recovery.

Whether you're a beginner or an experienced runner, this program will help you build CO₂ tolerance, reduce breathlessness, and complete a 5K while breathing exclusively through your nose.

Throughout this program, you will:

- **Master Nasal Breathing:** Transition from mouth breathing to sustained nasal breathing during runs.
- **Build Endurance Efficiently:** Train at optimal effort-based training zones for sustainable energy.
- **Improve CO₂ Tolerance:** Increase breath-hold ability and air hunger control for greater efficiency.
- **Enhance Recovery & Focus:** Learn how breathing techniques can help you recover faster and reduce fatigue.
- **Track Your Breathing Progress:** Measure improvements using the BOLT Score (Body Oxygen Level Test).

What You'll
Learn

This challenge is about breathing smarter, running better, and feeling great.

THE 4 PHASES OF THE CHALLENGE

Adaptation Phase (Weeks 1-2)

- **Week 1: Foundations of Breath** – Learn to use nasal breathing during exercise, adjust to air hunger, and establish your baseline BOLT score.
- **Week 2: Building the Basics** – Extend workout duration, reduce air hunger, and begin to see improvements in CO₂ tolerance and breathing efficiency.

Endurance Building Phase (Weeks 3-4)

- **Week 3: Finding Your Flow** – Increase steady-state runs, build aerobic endurance, and find comfort in longer nasal-breathing sessions.
- **Week 4: Strengthening the System** – Extend endurance further with longer sessions and refine breathing mechanics for efficiency.

Intensity Introduction Phase (Weeks 5-6)

- **Week 5: Embracing the Challenge** – Begin Zone 3 intervals and moderate-intensity workouts while sustaining nasal breathing.
- **Week 6: Mastering Control** – Push through harder efforts with improved breathing control, building anaerobic capacity and CO₂ tolerance.

Performance Preparation Phase (Weeks 7-8)

- **Week 7: Refining Your Edge** – Prepare for race day by incorporating tempo runs and fine-tuning breathing efficiency under higher efforts.
- **Week 8: The Nasal 5K Experience** – Execute your first nasal-only 5K or equivalent effort, putting all your practice and preparation into action.

HOW TO TRAIN & RECOVER

The Nasal 5K focuses on effort-based training instead of pace. **Your breathing, not your speed, determines intensity.**

- Zone 1 (Recovery & Warm-Up) – Easy effort, full nasal breathing, relaxed pace.
- Zone 2 (Aerobic Base Building) – Conversational pace, fully nasal breathing, sustainable effort.
- Zone 3 (Moderate Threshold Effort) – Breathing gets harder, but nasal breathing is still possible.
- 🔥 Zone 4-5 (High Intensity & Sprints) – Some may need to inhale through the nose, exhale through the mouth.
- 💡 **Training Tip:** If nasal breathing feels unsustainable, slow down or take short walking breaks.

A good warm-up prepares your airways, enhances oxygen delivery, and helps you train more efficiently. Recovery ensures you maintain CO₂ tolerance and avoid breathlessness.

✓ Warm-Up Routine

- Perform your entire warm-up using nasal breathing (inhale & exhale through the nose).
- Breathe light, slow, and deep (LSD) to activate the diaphragm.
- For experienced participants, add breath holds to help open the airways (skip if new to nasal breathing).

🔴 Recovery Routine

- Finish workouts with slow, light nasal breathing to bring your system back to balance.
- Zone 1 effort is ideal for cooling down—keep it easy and controlled.
- Avoid heavy mouth breathing after workouts—gradually slow your breath instead.

By following effort-based training & proper warm-up/recovery techniques, you'll breathe easier, run stronger, and build lasting endurance.





BOLT SCORE & YOUR TRAINING READINESS

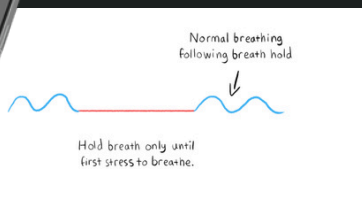
The Body Oxygen Level Test (BOLT) Score is a simple, powerful way to measure your breathing efficiency and CO₂ tolerance. Your BOLT score directly impacts your ability to maintain nasal breathing during exercise and daily life.

How to Measure Your BOLT Score

- 1** Sit comfortably and breathe normally through your nose.
- 2** Take a normal inhale & exhale through your nose. Then, pinch your nose to hold your breath.
- 3** Count the seconds until you feel the first natural urge to breathe. (Not how long you can force yourself to hold!)
- 4** Release your nose and resume breathing through your nose. Your first breath should be calm—if it's gasping, the hold was too long. Your BOLT score (in seconds) indicates how efficiently your body uses oxygen.

BOLT Considerations

-  <10 seconds: Breathing efficiency is low. Focus on light activities, walking, and breath training. Avoid intervals or high-intensity efforts.
-  10–20 seconds: Moderate efficiency. You can begin gentle running with nasal breathing but may need walking breaks.
-  20–30 seconds: Good efficiency. You're ready for steady-state running and interval training with nasal breathing.
-  >30 seconds: Excellent efficiency. You can sustain nasal breathing at higher intensities, including tempo runs and moderate sprints.



THE 5 TRAINING ZONES

Zone 1: Very Easy (Recovery Zone)

- Breathing: Effortless nasal breathing. Quiet, steady, and relaxed.
- Perceived Exertion: RPE 1-2 (on a scale of 0-10).
- Examples: Warm-ups, cool-downs, or casual walking.

💡 Tip: Use Zone 1 for relaxation and building foundational breathing efficiency.

Zone 2: Easy (Aerobic Base Zone)

- Breathing: Mild air hunger with sustainable nasal breathing. Talking is easy.
- Perceived Exertion: RPE 3-4.
- Examples: Long, steady-state runs or brisk walking.

💡 Tip: This is your primary training zone for steady-state workouts in Weeks 1-4.

Zone 3: Moderate (Threshold Zone)

- Breathing: Noticeable air hunger; nasal breathing requires focus.
- Perceived Exertion: RPE 5-6.
- Examples: Tempo runs or sustained intervals.

💡 Tip: Practice nasal breathing with focus in Zone 3 to build strength for higher intensities.

Zone 4: Hard (High-Intensity Zone)

- Breathing: Nasal breathing becomes challenging; some athletes may exhale through the mouth if needed.
- Perceived Exertion: RPE 7-8.
- Examples: Short, intense intervals or hill repeats.

💡 Tip: Advanced participants with a BOLT score >20 can practice nasal breathing here. Beginners should avoid this zone.

Zone 5: Maximum Effort (Sprint Zone)

- Breathing: Nasal breathing is generally unsustainable; mouth breathing may be required.
- Perceived Exertion: RPE 9-10.
- Examples: Max sprints or short all-out efforts.

💡 Tip: Zone 5 is for highly trained athletes and is not required in this challenge.

YOUR NASAL 5K ROADMAP GOALS, EXPECTATIONS & TRAINING ESSENTIALS

Goals

Weeks 1-2: Adapt to nasal breathing & control air hunger.

Weeks 3-4: Build endurance while sustaining nasal breathing.

Weeks 5-6: Introduce moderate intensity & breathing control.

Weeks 7-8: Prepare for your first fully nasal 5K.

By the end of the program, you'll be able to run a full 5K using only nasal breathing while experiencing less breathlessness, better endurance, and improved overall performance.

What to Expect

- You may need to slow down at first. Nasal breathing feels more challenging initially due to increased air hunger. This is normal! Your body is adapting.
- Your nose might run. Increased airflow and CO₂ tolerance can stimulate nasal passages, but this improves over time.
- Gradual improvement in endurance. Each week, your BOLT score and ability to sustain nasal breathing will improve.
- Better recovery & breathing control. As you progress, you'll find it easier to run longer with less fatigue.
- Breathing drills will make a big difference. Short, daily exercises will boost your CO₂ tolerance and breathing efficiency.
- If air hunger feels overwhelming, slow down and focus on your breath. Over time, your body will adapt, and you'll find nasal breathing more natural and effortless.

Tools for Success

Oxygen Advantage® App – Track BOLT scores and follow guided breathing drills.

Nasal Dilator – Opens airways for those with congestion or small nasal passages.

Training Journal – Log sessions, progress, and milestones.

Join the Nasal 5K Facebook Community Group for support and tips.

OPTIONAL TOOL: NASAL DILATOR

If you find it challenging to breathe comfortably through your nose during workouts, you're not alone! Many people struggle with nasal breathing due to congestion, narrow nostrils, or a deviated septum. The Nasal Dilator can help by gently opening your nostrils to improve airflow, making nasal breathing feel more natural and comfortable.



What Does it Do:

- Gently opens your nostrils to improve airflow.
- Makes nasal breathing more comfortable during exercise.
- Reduces the sensation of air hunger, especially during higher-intensity efforts.

Ideal if you:

- Struggle to maintain nasal breathing during exercise.
- Experience airway irritation, asthma, or respiratory infections.
- Have a small nose, narrow nostrils, or a deviated septum.
- Want to maximize your performance while protecting your airway health.



With a Nasal Dilator, you can improve your breathing, build endurance, and make your workouts more enjoyable—all while staying committed to nasal breathing! Get one here: www.oxygenadvantage.com/breathing-exercise-tools

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You're Ready!

Next Steps to Get Started:

- ✓ Follow the Week 1 Plan - Check your email for the first week's training guide.
- ✓ Measure Your BOLT Score - Track your progress over the next 8 weeks.
- ✓ Join Our Community - Connect with others in the [Oxygen Advantage Nasal 5K Challenge Facebook Group].
- ✓ Share Your Journey - Tag @OxygenAdvantage to inspire and engage with fellow runners!

Stay Focused & Keep Moving

Nasal breathing takes time to adapt, but every run, every breath, and every session brings progress. If the challenge feels tough, slow down, adjust, and trust the process.

💡 Need help? Check out the Oxygen Advantage® app for guided breathing exercises and track your improvements.

📣 Stay Connected & Keep Training!

✉️ Questions? Reach out to our team!

Stay Connected

Happy running, and welcome to the Nasal 5K Challenge!