

Valerio Leccardi's four week training program

The Kangaroo Hoppet at Falls Creek is coming up soon. It offers beginners and frequent competitors alike, a welcome change to their usual everyday ski and training. With the 42km Kangaroo Hoppet, 21km Australian Birkebeiner and 7km Joey Hoppet (42km, 21km, 7km) you can enter a fun event that suits your level of fitness, and work towards your set goal. And this is what is good for the many recreational skiers who have been trying to improve their best times for years or simply want to start in their first Kangaroo Hoppet competition.

Last minute entry/preparation for the Hoppet?

Have you entered for the 2018 Kangaroo Hoppet or are you not yet certain if you are fit enough to make it over the finish line? It's not too late to enter and get fit.

The following shows you how to prepare for a ski marathon in 3-4 weeks. The training content is aimed at skiers who regularly ski (exercise) either 2 or 3 times a week or 4 to 6 times a week. The training sessions for the individual weeks (a countdown from 4 -1) are listed according to their priority. If you have fewer training opportunities than specified each week, then the training session with the lowest priority should be omitted if possible. All exercises are planned as either ski/rollerski or running sessions. Nevertheless if you don't have access to snow as frequently, you can choose to do them with other endurance sports like cycling/biking, swimming, rowing etc. At least the main sessions like intervals and medium intensity sessions should be executed on snow. So if you are based in Melbourne, it might be worth the short trip to Lake Mountain with its beautiful cross country ski trails. Or, if you can, spend the weekend or a few days at Falls Creek and train on the actual race course.

Week 4: 2-3 training sessions a week

- Session 1: Long ski for 70-90 min
Building up a foundation is central to this phase. The long, calm ski enables you to improve your stamina.
- Session 2: Continuous ski for 50-60 min + 3-5 pick-ups (i.e. 5-10 sec sprints) with 1 min break.
It is a continuous ski, which should improve your economy of movement. The pick ups optimise your muscular interaction.
- Session 3: Continuous ski for 50 min + 5 hill sprints for 10 seconds each (Break: 2 min)
Ski loose and relaxed and try to ski each kilometre in the last 5-10 minutes 10 to 15 seconds faster (e.g. 5:45 instead of 6:00).). Incorporate 5 sprints of 10 seconds each on a steep hill with a 2-minute break in between each sprint.

The perfect training week example

Tuesday: Session 2
Thursday: Session 3
Saturday: Session 1

Week 4: 4-6 training sessions a week

- Session 1: Long ski for 90 min
Building up a foundation is central to this phase. The long easy ski enables you to improve your stamina
- Session 2: Continuous ski or run for 60 min + 5 hill sprints for 10 seconds each (Break: 2 min)
Ski/run loose and relaxed and try to ski/run each kilometre in the last 5-10 minutes 10-15 seconds faster (e.g. 5:00 instead of 5:15).). Incorporate 5 sprints of 10 seconds each on a steep hill with a 2-minute break in between each sprint.
- Session 3: 6 x 3-min intervals (Break: 2 min) + 3 x 1 min intervals (Break: 1 min)
Your pace during the 3 minutes should be below the anaerobic threshold. The 1min repetitions can be more intensive. Ideally the training should be done on skis or rollerskis and on a flat course. Break between the 3min intervals are 2min, and for the 1min intervals 1min between each interval
- Session 4: Continuous ski/run for 60 min + 3-5 pick-ups
It is a swift continuous ski/run, which should improve your movement economy. The concluding coordination runs optimise your muscular interaction.

- Session 5: Ski 2 x 20 min at a medium pace (break: 3 min)
This medium exertion is a crucial piece in the mosaic. This exercise optimises your aerobic support in the competition. You need to choose a pace that you can maintain for 90-120 minutes in an extreme emergency. In between the two 20min the break is 3min.*
- Session 6: 50-min regeneration + 3 sprints
This regenerative continuous ski/run is to be done on the day after the interval training. Ski/Run very easy and relaxed.*

The perfect training week example*

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| Monday: | Session 2 |
| Tuesday: | Session 3 |
| Wednesday: | Session 6 |
| Thursday: | Session 4 |
| Saturday: | Session 5 |
| Sunday: | Session 1 |

Week 3: 2-3 training sessions a week

- Session 1: Long ski for 60-80 min
An optimal stimulus for improving your base fitness. Ski easy and relaxed.*
- Session 2: 7 x 3-min intervals (with 2 min break between each) + 3 x 1 min intervals (break: 1 min)
The pace chosen during the 3 minutes should be such that it can be sustained for at least 30 to a maximum of 45 minutes in an extreme emergency. Ideally the training should be done on skis or rollerskis and a slightly hilly course. The 1 min repetitions should be somewhat faster than your racing pace and slightly uphill if possible. Ski back to the starting point during the 1min break.*
- Session 3: Continuous ski/run for 60 min + 5 hill sprints for 10 seconds each (break: 2 min)
Ski/run loose and relaxed and try to ski/run each kilometre in the last 5-10 minutes 10 to 15 seconds faster (e.g. 5:45 instead of 6:00).). Incorporate 5 sprints of 10 seconds each on a steep hill with a 2-minute break in between each sprint.*

The perfect training week example

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| Tuesday: | Session 3 |
| Thursday (or Saturday if only possibility to be on snow): | Session 2 |
| Saturday: | Session 1 |

Week 3: 4-6 training sessions a week

- Session 1: Long ski/jog for 100 min
This exercise is an optimal stimulus for building your foundation.*
- Session 2: Continuous ski/run for 70 min + 5 hill sprints for 10 seconds each (Break: 2 min)
Ski/run loose and relaxed and try to ski/run each kilometre in the last 5-10 minutes 10 to 15 seconds faster (e.g. 5:00 instead of 5:15). Incorporate 5 sprints of 10 seconds each on a steep hill with a 2-minute break in between each sprint.*
- Session 3: 3 x 6-min intervals (Break: 2 min) + 3 x 30 seconds intervals (Break: 1 min)
Your pace during the 6 minutes should be below the anaerobic threshold and approximately correspond to a Ski Marathon racing pace. The 30-sec repetitions need to be more intensive. The training should ideally be done on the hoppet race course or similar (for example at Lake Mountain)*
- Session 4: Continuous ski or rollerski for 70 min + 3-5 pick ups
It is a swift continuous ski or rollerski, which should improve your movement economy, in particular. The pick ups optimise your muscular interaction.*
- Session 5: Ski 1 x 30 min at a medium pace
This medium exertion ensures aerobic support during the competition. You need to choose a pace that you can maintain for 90-120 minutes in an extreme emergency.*
- Session 6: 45-min regeneration + 3 sprints
This regenerative continuous ski/run is to be done on the day after the interval training. Ski/run very easy and relaxed.*

The perfect training week example

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| Monday: | Session 2 |
| Tuesday: | Session 3 |
| Wednesday: | Session 6 |
| Thursday: | Session 4 |
| Saturday: | Session 5 |
| Sunday: | Session 1 |

Week 2: 2-3 training sessions a week

- Session 1: Long ski/run for 60-90 min
A long ski/run, which is an optimal stimulus for the foundation.
- Session 2: 4 x 4-min intervals (Break: 2 min) + 3 x 1 min intervals (Break: 1 min)
Your pace during the 4 minutes should be that of your potential racing pace. The training should ideally be done on skis. The 1st and 3rd repetitions are done on a flat or slightly downhill course. The 2nd and 4th exertions are done on slightly uphill course. The 1-min repetitions should be slightly faster than your racing pace.
- Session 3: Continuous ski/run for 50 min + 5 hill sprints for 10 seconds each (BREAK: 2 min)
Ski loose and relaxed and try to ski/run each kilometre in the last 5-10 minutes 10 to 15 seconds faster (e.g. 5:45 instead of 6:00). Incorporate 5 sprints of 10 seconds each on a steep hill with a 2-minute break in between each sprint.

The perfect training week example

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|---|-----------|
| Tuesday: | Session 3 |
| Thursday (or Saturday if only possibility to be on snow): | Session 2 |
| Saturday: | Session 1 |

Week 2: 4-6 training sessions a week

- Session 1: *Ski 2 x 20 min at a medium pace (Break: 3 min)*
A ski in the middle range solidifies the foundation you built up previously. The second 20 minutes should be slightly faster than the first. You should be able to maintain the pace for at least 60 to a maximum of 100 minutes.
- Session 2: *Long ski for 90 min*
The long ski is done on Sunday. After yesterday's medium pace, the focus is no longer on tempo. What counts is the duration.
- Session 3: *4 x 4-min intervals (Break: 2 min) + 3 x 1 min intervals (Break: 1 min)*
The interval training is ideally done on Monday or Tuesday at the latest. Your pace during the 4 minutes should be that of a 10-15km ski race. It would be optimal if the first 4min was slightly slower than the 2nd-4th. The 1min intervals can be faster like a 5km race pace. The training is ideally done on a slightly hilly course. Two of the three 1-min exertions are ideally slightly uphill.
- Session 4: *Continuous ski/run for 50 min + 5 hill sprints for 10 seconds each (Break: 2 min)*
Ski/run loose and relaxed and try to ski/run each kilometre in the last 5-10 minutes 10 to 15 seconds faster (e.g. 5:00 instead of 5:15). Incorporate 5 sprints of 10 seconds each on a steep hill with a 2-minute break in between each sprint.
- Session 5: *50-min regeneration + 3 sprints*
Make sure you ski really easily in this training. Do 3 sprints towards the end of the session.
- Session 6: *Continuous ski/run for 60 min + 3-5 pick ups*
This regenerative continuous ski/run is to be done on the day after the interval training. Run very calmly and relaxed.

The perfect training week example

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| Monday | Session 4 |
| Tuesday: | Session 3 |
| Wednesday | Session 6 |
| Friday | Session 5 |

Saturday: Session 1
Sunday: Session 2

Week 1: 2-3 training sessions a week

- Session 1 Kangaroo Hoppet
Ready for race day! In order to ski the best possible, you should choose to ski at a continuous, steady, fast pace rather than start off very fast and having to go slower because of fatigue.
- Session 2 4 x 6-min intervals (Break: 2 min) + 3 x 1 min intervals (Break: 1 min)
Your pace during the 6 minutes should be such that it can be sustained for at least 30 to a maximum of 45 minutes in an extreme emergency. The training is ideally done on a course similar to the Kangaroo Hoppet course with some flat parts and also a few hills. The 1-min repetitions should be somewhat faster than your racing pace and slightly uphill if possible.
- Session 3 Continuous ski for 50 min + 5 hill sprints for 10 seconds each (Break: 2 min)
Ski loose and relaxed and try to ski each kilometre in the last 5-10 minutes 10 to 15 seconds faster (e.g. 5:45 instead of 6:00). Incorporate 5 sprints of 10 seconds each on a steep hill with a 2-minute break in between each sprint.

The perfect training week example

Tuesday: Session 2
Friday: Session 3
Saturday: Session 1

Week 1: 4-6 training sessions a week

- Session 1 *Kangaroo Hoppet*
Ready for the race day! In order to ski the best and fastest possible you should choose to ski at a continuous steady fast pace rather than start off very fast and having to go slower because of fatigue.
- Session 2 *4 x 6min + 4 x 1 min intervals (Break: 2 min)*
Your pace during the 6 minutes should be below the anaerobic threshold. The 1-min repetitions can be more intensive. The training is ideally done on a slightly hilly course.
- Session 3 *Continuous ski/run for 60 min + 5 hill sprints for 10 seconds each (Break: 2 min)*
Ski/run loose and relaxed and try to run each kilometre in the last 5-10 minutes 10 to 15 seconds faster (e.g. 5:00 instead of 5:15). Incorporate 5 sprints of 10 seconds each on a steep hill with a 2-minute break in between each sprint.
- Session 4 *Continuous ski for 50 min + 3-5 pick ups*
It is an easy continuous ski, which should improve your economy of movement and confidence on skis
- Session 5 *50-min regeneration + 3 sprints*
This regenerative continuous run is to be done on the day after the interval training. Ski/run very easy and relaxed.

The perfect training week example

Monday: Session 3
Tuesday: Session 2
Wednesday: Session 5
Friday: Session 4
Saturday: Session 1

** The training sessions for the individual weeks (a countdown from 4-1) are listed according to their priority. If you have fewer training opportunities than specified each week, then the training session with the lowest priority should be omitted if possible. If you don't have the chance to do the training on skis or rollerskis then choose other cardio training like running, cycling/biking or swimming.*