



Ride Dingle

ROTHAÍOCHT AN DAINGIN

4 Week Beginner Training Plan

55km Route



Welcome

Hello and welcome,

Have you signed up for Ride Dingle recently and want some training guidance over the next four weeks. This is it.

This plan picks the absolute essential sessions in order to get you ready for Ride Dingle 2024. It's not too late at all at all!

I draw on my experience in physio-led bike fitting to offer advice on bike set up and posture on the bike. I also prescribe one-to-one training plans for my personal coaching clients and will share some of these exciting training sessions with you. We will include tips on bike posture, going uphill and bike fit too.

I hope you enjoy following it. It follows that old adage however, you will get as much out of it as you put in! Oh and feel free to contact me with any questions or queries surrounding the training plan.

Safe cycling,

John Phelan

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Timetable

	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
WEEK 01	Read notes on bike set up and training plan structure	Let's Roll See Week 1, First Session (Indoors or Outdoors)				Bike Ride. Week 1	
WEEK 02	Read notes on Training Plan Goals	Interval Session 2 (Outdoors)				Saturday Bike Ride. Week 2	Sunday Bike Ride. Week 2
WEEK 03		Interval Session 3 (Outdoors)				Bike Ride. Week 3	
WEEK 04		Interval Session 4 (Outdoors)				Ride Dingle	

Notes:

Bike Set-Up



Do this to get your saddle height relatively right!

This is appropriate for both flat pedals and clip-in pedals. However, this is a basic ball park approach and does not replace the accuracy of a bike fit.

Follow the following:

- Park bike up against a wall or have someone hold it for you
- Hop onto the bike
- Place your right HEEL onto the pedal and get the right pedal into the 6pm position (bottom of the pedal stroke)
- In this position, your right knee should almost be fully straight but your pelvis should be level on the saddle (not reaching over to the right side any bit)
- If your right knee is straight and you are having to lean over to the right side of the saddle, this means your saddle is too high
- Adjust saddle height to hit the sweet spot.

Notes:

Bike Set-Up



Do this to place your saddle in the right place!

Again, this advice does not replace a professional bike fit. If after following the below guidelines, you continue to get saddle discomfort and pain, then my advice is to get yourself a professional bike fit.

When sitting on the bike with the appropriate saddle height (see last post), follow the following:

First of all, ensure the saddle is level. Place a hard copy book on the saddle and a spirit level on the book.

Then:

- Sit towards the back of the saddle
- If, when placing your hands onto the rubber hoods on the handlebars, you notice that you are unable to remain sitting towards the back of the saddle and that your pelvis is having to roll forward into the middle or front of the saddle in order to keep your hands on the rubber hoods, then only move the saddle forward towards the handlebars if this position is uncomfortable in the perineum area of the pelvis (it will be uncomfortable with certain types of saddles and equally with other types of saddles it won't be uncomfortable)
- If it is uncomfortable, then move the saddle 1cm forward and test again, making sure that the saddle is level after you move it forwards.
- There should be a slight bend in your elbows and your hands should be light on the hoods. i.e, there should not be a lot of body weight going through your arms and hands. (no white knuckles!)

No. 1 Goal: You should be able to keep your hands positioned fully into the rubber hoods on the handlebars (and not back from them) so that you have access to the brakes and the gears immediately.

Notes:

Training Plan Structure



How the Training Plan is structured and measured?

The weekend ride is down for Saturday, but pick Saturday or Sunday whichever suits better. But, there will be one weekend out of the three where you should ride your bike on Saturday and Sunday!

We will be using RPE (Rate of Perceived Exertion) as a guide for prescribing the level of intensity throughout this training plan. Become familiar with this 0-10 scale. See image below.

1/10 or Recovery Zone is very very very easy. It is what you expect to be at when going for a stroll in the park. It is used as a guide for intensity when recovering between harder bouts of exercise and also used after big exercise days.

2-3/10 or Zone 2 is what you expect to be at when riding your bike with friends or solo and can hold a conversation with them/yourself without the need to stop mid sentence to take breaths. Nose breathing is possible because you are not needing big breaths. However, conversation although possible, is not as easy as it is at rest.

4-6/10 or Zone 3 happens when you increase intensity up from Zone 2 and now flowing conversation becomes difficult as you need to stop talking in order to take breaths. Your breath is deeper and maybe nose breathing is no longer possible. Things are starting to get uncomfortable, but you can still hold this intensity without too much stress.

7-8/10 or Zone 4 happens when you lift up the intensity from Zone 3 and your breathing becomes noticeably deeper and faster. You can only speak in sentences and things are definitely now uncomfortable.

9/10 or Zone 5 is a level of intensity that you could potentially hold for 60secs. It is very very difficult to maintain and you could probably manage a few words before needing a breath.

10/10 or Zone 6 is your absolute max. This level of intensity can only be held for 10secs and leaves you breathless!



RPE Scale	Rate of Percieved Exertion
10	Max Effort Activity Feels almost impossible to keep going. Completely out of breath, unable to talk. Cannot maintain for more than a very short time.
9	Very Hard Activity Very difficult to maintain exercise intensity. Can barely breath and speak only a few words.
7-8	Vigorous Activity Borderline uncomfortable. Short of breath, can speak a sentence.
4-6	Moderate Activity Breathing heavily, can hold short conversations. Still somewhat comfortable, but becoming noticeably more challenging.
2-3	Light Activity Feels like you can maintain for hours. Easy to breathe and carry a conversation.
1	Very Light Activity Hardly any activity, but more than sleeping, watching TV, etc.

Notes:

The Training Plan Goals



This training plan ensures that you will have experienced what is needed to be able to complete and enjoy the 55km route on the Dingle Peninsula.

In order to ensure that this is the case, we will need you to follow the following:

- Find your local route that is convenient for you to cycle and ideally it would include a couple of rolling hills as will be the case in Dingle.

Nutrition:

- We do not go in-depth into nutrition on this plan. The advice is to try to consume 50-60g of carbs every hour when out on the longer bike rides. There is no need to eat during the mid-week interval sessions.

Notes:

Final Week Prep



Top tips for this week

- Do your best to get good sleep.
- Stay well hydrated.
- Have a consistent breakfast this week and keep it the same on Saturday.
- Prepare your gear for Ride Dingle on the night before.
- Don't forget to pack your helmet!

Good Luck

You got this!



Training:

WEEK 01



First Session:

If you have a turbo trainer at home use it for this session. If not, that is absolutely fine too. Just head out on a cycle on relatively flat terrain.

Ride for 10mins, easy bringing effort level up toward a 3 out of 10.

Ride for 45mins - steady - @ 3 out of 10

Conversation should be possible at all times (you shouldn't need to stop mid sentence for deep breaths), although conversation should not be as easy as it is at rest, and you should be able to breath through your nose for the entre session too.

Cool down - easy - 5mins

Training:

WEEK 01



Weekend Bike Ride:

A 90min cycle on rolling hills. This is all about staying down in Zone 2 or RPE 2-3 where you can carry out a conversation without needing to stop mid-sentence for breaths. Try to breathe through your nose for the majority of the 70mins Zone 2 section. When you hit any up hills during the first 70mins, just change into an easier gear and keep your cycling down in the low intensity side of things. Then the fun begins!! For the last 20mins, we want you to lift your intensity by changing the gears and pedalling faster for 60secs at 7/10 RPE followed by a recovery of 60secs before the next one. Complete five of these in total.

Then cycle back home at 2/10 RPE for the 10 mins to finish.

We also want to use this cycle to practice on how you should be interacting with the bike.

Let's just focus on two things for this cycle:

1. Starting with your hands, they should be relaxed and not squeezing the handlebar hoods (rubber parts).
2. Try to face your bicep muscles straight ahead so that they are looking up the road. This will ensure that your elbows down stick out which puts your shoulder into a compromised position.

Training:

WEEK 02



Interval Session (Outdoors):

This is a zone 3 or RPE 4-5 interval session.

Total time for this session: 60mins

Warm Up: 15 min @ 1-3 RPE

Repeat x4
6 min @ 4-5 RPE
2 min @ 2-3 RPE

Cool Down: 10 min @ 1-2 RPE

Training:

WEEK 02



Saturday Bike Ride:

This will be a 2 hour bike ride. Start taking on carbs after 60mins. It's all about staying down in Zone 2 or RPE 2-3 where you can carry out a conversation without needing to stop mid-sentence for breaths. Try to breathe through your nose for the majority of this 90min section. Then the fun begins, again!! We want you to lift your intensity by changing the gears and pedalling faster for 90secs at 7/10 RPE followed by a recovery of 60secs before the next one. Complete five of these in total.

Cool down and pedal at 2/10 RPE for the remaining 15 mins to finish.

Let's now focus on the next two things for this cycle:

1. Try to position your torso so that you can look up the road without cranking your neck. i.e Your neck should not be in a fully extended position like it would be if you were looking up at the sky. To help the neck posture on a bike, we can try to slightly flatten our upper back so that it is not banana shaped.
2. With regards to your pelvis sitting on the saddle, if you allow it to fully rotate backwards (turning your lower back into a banana shape) and then rotate your pelvis forward (straightening your lower back). Now that you have tried both extremes, try to position your pelvis somewhere in the middle.

Training:

WEEK 02



Sunday Bike Ride:

This will be a 90 mins bike ride. The main focus on this ride is to practice lowering your body on the bike so that you are less exposed to the wind. Spend the first 45mins riding at 2-3/10 effort (maintain nose breathing). Start taking on carbs after 60mins. For the remaining 45 mins of cycling, split it up into 3 x 15 mins.

For the first 15 mins:

Ride at 6/10 RPE for 5mins and then recover for 5mins before another 5 mins at 6/10 effort.

For the 2nd 15 mins:

Ride at 6/10 but in a low position as if you were trying to get out of the wind. You can bend your elbows here, or if confident to use the drop handlebars, do so. The Dingle Peninsula is famous for its South Westerlies!

For the 3rd 15 mins:

Ride at 2-3/10 for 5 mins, then 8/10 for 30 secs followed by 1/10 for 30 secs and repeat this four more times. Then ride at 3/10 for 5 mins

Training:

WEEK 03



Interval Session (Outdoors):

Let's experience threshold! This is the level of intensity that feels like you could probably hold it for 10 mins and you would find having a conversation very difficult! You are looking at 7/10 and even getting close to 7.5/10!

When working at this level of intensity, you should be starting to feel lots of discomfort in the muscles and you are taking deep breaths.

Total time for this session: 70 mins

Warm Up: 20 min @ RPE 1 and move towards an RPE of 3

Repeat x3 60 sec @ 7-7 RPE
60 sec @ 1-1 RPE

Then allow yourself to recover at RPE 3/10 for 10mins

Repeat x5 3 min @ 7-7.5 RPE
2 min @ 1 RPE

P.S You can use a slight uphill for these efforts and just use the same hill for each of the 5 intervals.

Then ride home at RPE 2/10 for the last 10 mins.



Training:

WEEK 03



Weekend Bike Ride:

Are you ready for your first 2.5-3 hour cycle in this plan.

We want you to include two rather large uphill sections to your ride if you can, so that you can practice the below tips when climbing. For the rest of the cycle, stay between 3 and 5 on your RPE scale. And practice getting lower on the bike to stay out of the wind, when you feel it is safe to do so.

Having completed this ride, you now have proof that you can complete the 55km route at Ride Dingle. Bravo!

Top tips when climbing hills:

- We are looking for a faster pedal stroke with lighter feet on the pedals. Being able to do this will stand to you for Ride Dingle.
- Get out of the saddle if your body feels like it wants/needs to get out of the saddle to push. The body knows best here, so just follow its message. But if you do come up out of the saddle, pick a point on the road in the distance and wait until you reach that point before sitting back in the saddle again.
- When sitting in the saddle, place hands on the middle of the handlebars rather than the rubber hoods. This will allow you to sit more upright. A more upright posture is better for climbing as it allows easier movement of the hips and the diaphragm.
- Move forward slightly in the saddle, this can help to better position yourself over the pedals for climbing.

Training:

WEEK 04



Interval Session (Outdoors):

Last cycle before you head off down to one of Ireland's most beautiful destinations. Head out on the bike and use this opportunity to practice all of the skills and postures that you have learned on this plan.

Total time for this session: 70 mins

Warm up over the first 10 mins bringing the intensity up from a 1/10 to a 4/10.

Then for the next 5 mins, at a RPE of 5-6/10, practice getting low on the bike through bending elbows or using handlebar drops.

Try to take in a few corners in this position so that you build on the confidence and ability before Saturday comes. Allow yourself to come back up into your usual posture for the next 5 mins and bring it back to 2-3/10 RPE.

Do the same again for the following 5 mins, back into a low position and work at 5-6/10 effort.

Follow this with 5 mins at 2-3/10 RPE and in your usual comfortable posture.

For the next 5 mins, practice cycling with a higher than normal cadence (spin the pedals fast) at an RPE of 5-6/10.

Follow this with 5 mins of a slower pedal cadence at an RPE of 5-6/10

For the next 5 mins, spend 4 mins 30 secs at 3/10 RPE and 30s ecs at 8/10 RPE (go fast!!!)

For the next 5 mins, spend 4 mins at 3/10 RPE and 60 secs at 8/10 (try to go as fast as you did last time, but for longer!)

For the next 5 mins, spend 3mins at 3/10 RPE and 2mins at 7/10 (not as fast as before, but almost!)

For the next 5 mins, spend 2 mins 30 secs at 3/10 RPE and 2 mins 30 secs at 7/10 RPE.

For the last 10 mins, pedal home what ever way you like. Make sure you sort yourself a nice dessert for after dinner!!

You've worked hard and proved that 4 weeks is more than enough training to get you to the finish line, with loads of energy left over for celebrating!

Enjoy.