

The purpose of this training program is to gradually increase your mileage over 8 weeks to achieve completing a Century ride. By increasing the distance gradually, you will build the fitness needed, avoid injury, and prevent over-training.

To start, count back from the date of your Century 8 weeks and use the following program as a guideline for managing your mileage and efforts. This program assumes that you are starting with the ability and fitness to complete a 25 mile ride. If you are not beginning at this level, consider reducing your goal to a half century.

Week 1: The total amount of miles to complete this week is 60 miles with the furthest ride being 25 miles long. This week, you should complete 4 total rides, giving you 3 days of recovery. The first two rides should be 12 miles long, the third 25 miles, and the fourth 11 miles. You can use the recovery days for this week and any other week moving forward to spread out the rides appropriately given your schedule. The intensity this week should be very low (at the level that you can still carry out a conversation while riding) and you should avoid big climbs.

Week 2: The total amount of miles to complete in week 2 is 75 while doing a maximum distance ride of 35 miles in one day. The mileage for each of the 4 days of riding is: 10, 20, 35, and 10 miles respectively. Again, use your rest days wisely to make sure you don't push yourself too hard during the second week of this program. The intensity should be similar to week 1 but allowing you to increase your intensity above week 1's on any hills that you encounter.

Week 3: The total mileage for week 3 is 95 miles with a big ride of 40 miles. Rides for this week are: 20, 25, 40, and 10 miles. Intensity should not increase from week 3 and you should pace yourself on this week's long ride. It is important to make sure you are eating food regularly now that your distance is increasing.

Week 4: This week's mileage increases to 105 miles with the biggest ride at 50 miles. Again, this week you will ride for 4 days including 15, 20, 50, and 20 mile rides. Once again, keep the intensity low and especially manage your pace on the longest day of the week.

Week 5: Now the distance is starting to increase beyond a half century, you should be considering the weather and time of day that you are leaving for your rides. Make sure to carry the right clothing with you if it looks like it is going to get cooler as the ride goes on or if rain is likely. Also, if the sun is setting early, make sure you are wearing the appropriate reflective clothing. The maximum one-day distance ride for this week is 60 miles, making a total of 125 miles for the week. These rides should be 20, 30, 60 and 15 miles long. Intensity this week can increase as you feel comfortable, but remember that the main goal is to complete the distances, not to do them fast.

Week 6: This is both the longest total distance week and the furthest single day ride that you will do to prepare for a Century. The longest ride is 70 miles long, and the total distance for the week is 135 miles. These rides are 20, 30, 70, and 15 miles long. Remember to use your rest days to help recover from each workout. Once this week is completed, you should feel confident that after a week of tapering you can complete a Century.

Week 7: This week has less miles than last week for a reason – you are giving your body some rest before you complete your Century. The longest ride should not exceed 55 miles, and you should not complete any more than 70 miles for the week.

Week 8: Century!

If at any time during this program you have an injury or feel over fatigued, you should back the mileage off to your needs. Never push through a training program just to complete it and make sure that your general health is the main priority.