

EVOLVE

COACHING

TRAINING PLAN

USER GUIDE

Thank you for choosing Evolve Coaching. This guide helps you get the most from your structured training programme.

CONTENTS

01 Welcome from Bryn

02 Before You Start

03 Foundations First

04 Understanding FTP

05 Training Zones Explained

06 Anatomy of a Workout

07 Using Your Plan

08 Reading Your Numbers

09 Adapting Your Training

10 Tapering and Peaking

11 Nutrition and Recovery

12 Warm-Up and Cool-Down

13 Frequently Asked Questions

14 Glossary of Terms

15 Terms of Use

16 Support and Resources

SECTION 01

WELCOME FROM BRYN

Thanks for choosing Evolve Coaching for your training.

I created this plan to give you structure, direction, and proven training methods that will help you achieve your cycling goals, whether that is getting faster on Zwift, completing your first century, or just building fitness you can rely on.

This is not a generic one-size-fits-all programme. The structure is based on the same proven principles I use with all my coached athletes, adapted into a format you can follow independently.

What makes this plan different

- Built by a qualified coach (BSc Hons Sport, Fitness and Coaching)
- Used successfully by Team Evolve riders (300+ members)
- Flexible enough to fit around your life
- Clear guidance on when to push hard and when to back off

Take your time reading this guide. Understanding why you are doing each session will help you train smarter and get better results. Let us get to work.

BRYN GRIFFITH

Founder, Evolve Coaching
BSc (Hons) Sport, Fitness and Coaching

How to get the most from this guide

Read it once, all the way through, before your first session. Ten minutes now saves confusion later. Keep it handy. Sections 4, 5 and 7 are worth returning to as you progress. Trust the structure. The easy days are as deliberate as the hard ones.

SECTION 02

BEFORE YOU START

Before diving into training, make sure you are set up for success. This checklist helps you avoid common mistakes and get the most from your plan.

| | |
|------------------------------|--|
| Medical clearance | Consult a physician if you have health concerns or have been inactive for 6+ months. |
| Equipment check | Ensure your bike is properly fitted and mechanically sound. |
| FTP test scheduled | Book time in your calendar for the initial FTP test in Week 1. |
| TrainingPeaks setup | Create a free account at trainingpeaks.com and upload your plan. |
| Training time blocked | Review the weekly schedule and block the time in your calendar. |

Equipment you will need

Essential

- Bike (road, gravel, or indoor smart trainer)
- Power meter or heart rate monitor (power preferred)
- Device to track workouts (Garmin, Wahoo, or a phone with Zwift)

Recommended

- Indoor trainer for controlled interval sessions
- TrainingPeaks app (the free version works fine)
- Bike fit or position check (prevents injury)

Nice to have

- Cadence sensor
- Multiple water bottles
- Fan for indoor training

Setting expectations

This plan will be challenging. Hard sessions are meant to push you outside your comfort zone. The discomfort is where adaptation happens.

You will not complete every session perfectly. Some days you will be tired, stressed, or just off. That is fine. One bad session does not ruin the plan.

Progress is not linear. You might feel stronger in week 2, then flat in week 3. Trust the process.

Recovery is part of training. The easy days and recovery weeks are not optional. They are when your body adapts.

When not to start this plan

- If you have not trained consistently for 8+ weeks (build a base first)
- If you do not have an established FTP (complete base training first)
- If you are currently injured or recovering from illness
- If you are in a high-stress life period (moving house, job change)
- If you have less than 4 hours per week available (choose a different plan)

You are ready to start when

You have trained consistently for at least 8 weeks, you have a current tested FTP, you are healthy and free of injury, and you can commit at least 4 hours per week.

If a few of these are not in place yet, a Base or Endurance plan is the right place to begin. Build the foundation first and this plan will deliver far more when you come to it.

SECTION 03

FOUNDATIONS FIRST

Before we get into FTP, zones and intervals, one principle sits above all of them. Get this right and everything else in this guide works. Get it wrong and the cleverest intervals in the world will not save you.

The one rule that matters most

Consistency and volume come first. Your biggest, most dependable gains come from riding regularly, week after week, with a solid base of steady aerobic miles underneath. The intervals are the polish. They are not the foundation. A perfectly executed set of intervals will not take you far unless it is supported by consistent training volume built up over time.

Why the base comes first

Most of what actually makes you faster is built at low intensity. A bigger aerobic engine, more mitochondria and capillaries, better fat use, and the durability to still feel strong three hours in, all come from time in Zone 2, not from hard efforts. Intervals raise your ceiling, but they only pay off when there is a big room underneath them. Sharp VO2 work on a thin base is a roof with no walls. Build the walls first.

The priority hierarchy

When you have to make choices with limited time, protect them in this order.

1. Consistency. Show up every week. Four solid weeks in a row beats one perfect week followed by a blow-up. Momentum is the real asset.
2. Aerobic volume. The easy Zone 2 riding that builds the engine. Most of your week should be easy, and that is by design, not a lack of ambition.
3. Intensity. The two or three key sessions that sharpen what the base has built. Powerful, but a small slice of the whole.

Consistency beats perfection

A plan you complete eighty percent of, every single week, will transform you. A plan you nail for ten days and then abandon will not. Miss a session, shrug it off, and ride the next one. The riders who improve are not the ones who train perfectly. They are the ones who keep turning up.

Easy days easy, hard days hard

Most of your riding should be genuinely easy, easy enough to hold a conversation. Save the deep efforts for your key sessions. Riding your easy days too hard is the single most common way riders stall. It piles on fatigue without adding fitness, and it steals quality from the sessions that were meant to be hard. Let the easy be easy so the hard can be truly hard.

Not there yet? Start with the base.

If you cannot yet tick the readiness boxes from the previous section, eight weeks of consistent riding, a current tested FTP, and four hours a week you can protect, begin with a Base or Endurance plan first. That is not a downgrade. It is the foundation that makes every plan after it deliver far more.

The short version

Ride consistently, keep most of it easy, and let the hard days be genuinely hard. Do that for months, not days, and the numbers take care of themselves.

SECTION 04

UNDERSTANDING FTP

What is FTP?

Functional Threshold Power (FTP) is the maximum power you can sustain for roughly 60 minutes. It is the cornerstone metric for structuring your training, because most sessions in this plan are prescribed as a percentage of your FTP.

Why we test FTP

- Ensures training zones are accurate for YOUR fitness level
- Provides a baseline to measure progress against
- Prevents training too hard (burnout) or too easy (no adaptation)

How to test FTP

Your plan includes a 20-minute FTP test in Week 1. Here is how to execute it:

| | |
|-----------------|---|
| Warm-up | 15 to 20 minutes easy spinning with 3 to 4 x 1-min efforts building toward threshold. |
| Recovery | 5 minutes very easy. |
| Test | 20 minutes all out. Pace as evenly as you can from start to finish. |

Cool-down

10 to 15 minutes easy.

Calculating your FTP

FTP = 20-minute average power x 0.95

Use 0.93 if you are new to testing, 0.95 if experienced.

Important: update your FTP in TrainingPeaks, Zwift and any other platforms immediately after testing so every training zone stays accurate.

SECTION 05

TRAINING ZONES EXPLAINED

Each training zone targets specific physiological adaptations. Understanding what each zone should feel like helps you train more effectively.

| | |
|---|---|
| <p>ZONE 1: Active Recovery 0 to 55% FTP < 68% Max HR</p> | <p>Feel: Very easy. Can hold a full conversation. Should feel genuinely restorative.</p> <p>Purpose: Active recovery between hard sessions. Maintain fitness without fatigue.</p> |
| <p>ZONE 2: Endurance 56 to 75% FTP 69 to 83% Max HR</p> | <p>Feel: Comfortable. Can talk in full sentences. Should feel sustainable for hours.</p> <p>Purpose: Build aerobic base, fat oxidation, mitochondrial density. Foundation of fitness.</p> |
| <p>ZONE 3: Tempo 76 to 90% FTP 84 to 94% Max HR</p> | <p>Feel: Moderately hard. Breathing elevated, can speak in short sentences only.</p> <p>Purpose: Muscular endurance. Comfortable discomfort you could hold for 60 to 90 minutes.</p> |
| <p>ZONE 4: Lactate Threshold 91 to 105% FTP 95 to 105% Max HR</p> | <p>Feel: Hard. Legs burning, breathing makes talking difficult. Sustainable for 30 to 60 min.</p> <p>Purpose: Raise FTP. This is where threshold adaptations happen.</p> |
| <p>ZONE 5: VO2 Max 106 to 120% FTP HR lags, pace off power</p> | <p>Feel: Very hard. Burning sensation, gasping for air. Can only hold 3 to 8 minutes.</p> <p>Purpose: Raise the ceiling. Improve max oxygen uptake, the engine behind race-winning power.</p> |
| <p>ZONE 6: Anaerobic Capacity 121 to 150% FTP too short for HR</p> | <p>Feel: Severe, deep leg burn. Repeatable 30 second to 2 minute efforts.</p> <p>Purpose: Lactate tolerance and the punch to make and cover repeated attacks.</p> |
| <p>ZONE 7: Neuromuscular Power > 151% FTP too short for HR</p> | <p>Feel: Flat-out. All-out sprints lasting only a few seconds.</p> <p>Purpose: Raw sprint and standing-start power, driven by nervous-system recruitment.</p> |

Important

These zones are guidelines. Pay attention to how you feel. If Zone 2 feels too easy or Zone 4 feels impossible, your FTP may need adjusting. Small tweaks of 5 to 10 W are normal.

SECTION 06

ANATOMY OF A WORKOUT

Every session in your plan is built the same way. Learn to read it once and you will execute each one with confidence.

| | |
|-------------------------|--|
| Warm-up | 10 to 20 minutes easing from Zone 1 to Zone 2, often with short primers before the hard work begins. |
| Main set | The purpose of the session: intervals at a target zone, repeated with recovery between them. |
| Recovery valleys | Easy spinning between efforts. Do not skip or shorten these. They let you hit the next effort at full quality. |
| Cool-down | 5 to 15 minutes easy spinning to start the recovery process. |

Reading the targets

- Power targets show as a percentage of FTP or a watt range. Aim to sit in the middle of the range.
- If you train on heart rate, expect it to lag power by 30 to 60 seconds at the start of each effort.
- When a cadence target is given, it matters. Practice holding it.

On a smart trainer

In ERG mode the trainer holds the target power for you, so you simply keep pedalling. In slope or level mode you are in control, so watch your numbers and hold the target yourself.

When to stop an interval

If your power drops more than about 5 percent below target and will not come back, end the effort, spin easy, and treat it as a sign you need more recovery. Quality beats grinding out a broken interval.

SECTION 07

USING YOUR PLAN

A typical week

The table below shows a typical week. It is an example of how a plan balances hard days and recovery, not a fixed template. Rest days vary from plan to plan, and some plans include more than one full rest day, so always follow the days as they are scheduled in your own plan.

| | |
|------------|---|
| MON | Recovery or rest. Let your body adapt from weekend training. |
| TUE | Intervals or tempo. Key session one, bring focus and energy. |
| WED | Endurance. Aerobic development at controlled intensity. |
| THU | Intervals or threshold. Key session two, quality over quantity. |
| FRI | Recovery or rest. Prepare for weekend volume. |
| SAT | Long endurance. Build aerobic capacity and time in the saddle. |
| SUN | Endurance or group ride. Flexible, enjoy the riding. |

Priority hierarchy

If you need to skip or shorten sessions, protect them in this order:

- Interval sessions (Tuesday and Thursday). These drive adaptation.
- Long endurance ride (Saturday). This builds your aerobic base.
- Mid-week endurance (Wednesday). This maintains consistency.
- Recovery and easy rides (Monday, Friday, Sunday). Skip these first if needed.

SECTION 08

READING YOUR NUMBERS

Four numbers tell you most of what you need to know about a session and where your fitness is heading. You do not need to chase them, just understand them.

| | |
|------------|--|
| TSS | Training Stress Score. One number for how much a session cost you. An hour right at threshold is about 100. Use it to compare days and weeks. |
| IF | Intensity Factor. How hard a session was relative to your FTP. 0.75 is steady endurance, 0.85 to 0.95 is a hard threshold day, above 1.0 is very hard. |
| NP | Normalised Power. What your power really felt like once surges are accounted for. Read NP, not average power, for variable sessions. |

The bigger picture: fitness, fatigue and form

TrainingPeaks tracks three rolling numbers that together show whether your training is working:

- Fitness (CTL): your long-term training load. It should climb slowly. Big jumps mean too much too soon.
- Fatigue (ATL): your recent load. It rises fast during hard blocks and falls during recovery weeks.
- Form (TSB = Fitness minus Fatigue): negative during hard training (normal), positive and rising as you taper for an event.

Rule of thumb

Keep fitness climbing gently, keep fatigue managed with your recovery weeks, and time your form to peak on event day. That is the whole game.

SECTION 09

ADAPTING YOUR TRAINING

Life happens. Here is how to modify your plan intelligently when you need to.

Adding volume

- Extend endurance rides (add 30 to 60 min at Zone 2)
- Lengthen warm-ups and cool-downs on interval days
- Never increase volume during recovery weeks
- Do not add volume to recovery rides, it defeats their purpose

Reducing volume

- Skip or shorten recovery rides first
- Shorten endurance rides to 90 min minimum where possible
- Shorten warm-ups and cool-downs but keep the interval quality intact
- Maintain interval intensity. Short and sharp beats long and slow

Training breaks

| | |
|------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 2 to 3 days off | Resume where you left off. |
| 1 week off | Do an easy week first, then resume. |
| 2+ weeks off | Go back 1 to 2 weeks in the plan. |
| 1+ months off | Restart the plan from the beginning. |

Illness or injury: stop training immediately if

You have a fever, chills, or body aches, chest tightness or breathing difficulty, or unusual fatigue and an elevated resting heart rate.

Do not try to make up lost training. That often leads to overtraining or prolonged illness. Wait until you are 80 to 90 percent recovered before returning to easy riding.

TAPERING AND PEAKING

When you have a target event, the last one to two weeks are about arriving fresh, not getting fitter. The fitness is already banked. The taper lets it show up.

How to taper

- Keep the intensity, cut the volume. Reduce total hours by 40 to 60 percent but keep some short, sharp efforts so your legs stay sharp.
- Do not add anything new. The taper is not the time to cram missed training.
- Sleep and food come first in taper week.
- Expect to feel slightly flat or twitchy mid taper. This is normal and it passes.

A two-week taper at a glance

| | |
|----------------------|---|
| Two weeks out | Train as normal with a first small cut in volume. Keep every key session. |
| One week out | Cut total volume by 40 to 60 percent. Keep two or three short, sharp efforts so your legs stay sharp. |
| Event week | Rest and light spins with a few brief primers. Sleep and food come first. |

The final days

| | |
|------------------------|---|
| Two days before | A short ride with a few brief efforts to prime the system, then rest. |
| Day before | Easy spin or full rest. Prepare your kit and nutrition. |
| Event day | Eat a familiar meal 2 to 3 hours before. Warm up properly for short events. Start conservatively. |

If you have no event

You do not need to taper for its own sake. Just follow the recovery weeks built into your plan. They serve the same purpose on a smaller scale.

SECTION 11

NUTRITION AND RECOVERY

Training is the stimulus. Nutrition and recovery are where adaptation happens. Get these wrong and you will underperform, overtrain, or both.

Fueling your training

| Session Type | Before | During | After |
|--|---|---|-----------------------------------|
| Recovery ride (< 60 min) | No special fueling | Water only | Normal meal within 2 to 3 hours |
| Easy endurance (60 to 90 min) | Can train fasted if desired | Water, optional 20 to 30g carbs/hr | Mixed meal with protein and carbs |
| Long endurance (90+ min) | Normal meal 2 to 3 hrs before | 60 to 90g carbs/hr after first 90 min | Protein and carbs within 60 min |
| Interval sessions (threshold / VO2) | Carb-rich meal 2 to 3 hrs, or snack 30 to 60 min before | 30 to 60g carbs/hr for sessions over 60 min | Protein and carbs within 30 min |

Carbohydrate sources

- On the bike: energy gels, chews, sports drink, bananas, rice cakes, dates, honey.
- Before riding: oats, toast, pasta, rice, potatoes, fruit.
- Avoid during rides: high-fat or high-fibre foods (slow digestion, GI issues).

Daily nutrition principles

- Protein: 1.6 to 2.2g per kg bodyweight daily. Aim for 20 to 40g per meal. Sources: chicken, fish, eggs, Greek yogurt, tofu, legumes.
- Carbohydrates: your primary fuel. Hard days 5 to 7g per kg, easy days 3 to 5g per kg. Do not fear carbs, they power your intervals.
- Fats: essential for hormones and recovery. Olive oil, nuts, avocado, fatty fish. Avoid excess close to training.
- Hydration: drink to thirst. Urine pale yellow is good. On the bike, 500 to 750ml per hour depending on sweat rate and temperature.

Recovery priorities

Recovery is when your body adapts to training stress. Shortchange it and you waste the training.

| | |
|------------------|---|
| Sleep | 7 to 9 hours per night. Dark room, cool temperature, consistent schedule. Your most powerful recovery tool. |
| Nutrition | Eat enough to support training. Undereating while training hard means poor adaptation, illness and injury. |

| | |
|----------------------------|---|
| Active recovery | Easy rides, walking, yoga. Low-intensity movement aids recovery by increasing blood flow without adding stress. |
| Stress management | Training is stress. Too much life stress plus training stress equals overtraining. Manage both. |
| Listen to your body | Elevated resting HR, poor sleep, low mood, constant fatigue. These mean take 2 to 3 days off. |

Supplements worth considering

- Caffeine: 3 to 6mg per kg bodyweight, 30 to 60 min before hard sessions. A proven performance booster.
- Creatine: 5g daily. Supports high-intensity efforts and recovery.
- Beta-alanine: 3 to 6g daily. Buffers lactate in VO2 max efforts (after 4+ weeks loading).
- Vitamin D: if deficient (common in UK winters). Get a blood test first.
- Skip: BCAAs (unnecessary if you eat enough protein), fat burners, testosterone boosters, and anything promising magical results.

SECTION 12

WARM-UP AND COOL-DOWN

The warm-up decides how good your intervals feel. The cool-down decides how well you recover. Neither takes long, and both are worth doing properly.

Standard warm-up before hard sessions

- 10 to 15 min easy, building from Zone 1 to Zone 2
- 3 to 4 short efforts of about 1 min building toward threshold, with easy spinning between
- 3 to 5 min easy before the first real effort

Endurance ride warm-up

The first 10 to 15 minutes at an easy pace is all you need. Let the effort build naturally.

Cool-down

- 5 to 15 min easy spinning in Zone 1
- Lower cadence, relaxed breathing, let your heart rate come down
- Refuel within the first hour after hard sessions

Skipping a cool-down will not ruin a single session. But a consistent cool-down habit noticeably speeds your day-to-day recovery across a training block.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q. My zones do not match how I feel. What should I do?

Small adjustments of 5 to 10 W are normal. If you consistently need to adjust across all sessions, retest your FTP.

Q. Can I do intervals outside instead of on the trainer?

Yes, but choose routes that allow consistent power. Climbs work well for tempo and threshold, flat roads for VO2 max.

Q. What cadence should I use?

Unless specified, use what feels comfortable (typically 80 to 95 rpm). Higher cadence for VO2 max, lower for threshold is fine.

Q. I work weekends. Can I move the long ride?

Yes. Shift the whole week so your long ride falls on a day off. The pattern matters more than the specific days.

Q. Can I add my club ride on Sunday?

Yes, but treat it as an endurance ride. Do not go into the red repeatedly or it compromises Tuesday's interval session.

Q. Zone 2 feels too easy. Should I go harder?

No. Zone 2 builds specific aerobic adaptations that only occur at lower intensities. Ride longer if it feels too easy, not harder.

Q. My heart rate does not match my power zones. Is that normal?

Yes. Power responds faster than heart rate. If HR is consistently high or low for a given power, though, you may be overtraining or fighting illness.

Q. I missed a week of training. What should I do?

Do not panic. Resume with an easy week, then continue where you left off. Do not try to make up lost sessions.

Q. Can I do strength training alongside this plan?

Yes. Keep it to 2 sessions per week maximum, avoid leg-heavy sessions the day before key bike workouts, and prioritise cycling if time is short.

Q. How long until I see results?

Most riders notice sessions feeling more manageable within 2 to 3 weeks, with measurable FTP gains at the first retest. Consistency matters more than any single session.

Q. Do I need a smart trainer?

No, but it makes controlled intervals much easier. A power meter or heart rate monitor plus the discipline to pace yourself will do the job outdoors.

Q. How do I know if I am improving?

Track these: FTP increases, lower heart rate at the same power, hard sessions starting to feel manageable, and faster recovery between intervals.

Q. Can I use Zwift or TrainerRoad workouts instead of the plan?

The plan is designed with a specific progression. Substituting random workouts will compromise results. Stick to the plan for the best outcome.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

A quick reference for the terms you will meet in your plan and in TrainingPeaks.

| | |
|----------------------|--|
| FTP | Functional Threshold Power. The highest power you can hold for roughly an hour. |
| Power meter | Measures your output in watts. The most accurate way to pace training. |
| Cadence | Pedal revolutions per minute (rpm). |
| TSS | Training Stress Score. A single figure for the load of a session. |
| IF | Intensity Factor. Session hardness relative to your FTP. |
| NP | Normalised Power. An adjusted average that reflects the real cost of variable efforts. |
| Fitness (CTL) | Your long-term rolling training load. |
| Fatigue (ATL) | Your short-term rolling training load. |
| Form (TSB) | Fitness minus Fatigue. How fresh you are on a given day. |
| Interval | A timed effort at a set intensity, repeated with recovery between. |
| ERG mode | A smart trainer mode that holds a target power for you. |
| Taper | A planned reduction in load before an event so you arrive fresh. |
| Base | The aerobic foundation built with steady Zone 2 riding. |
| Threshold | The effort around your FTP, roughly Zone 4. |
| VO2 max | The ceiling of your aerobic power, roughly Zone 5. |

SECTION 15

TERMS OF USE

Please read carefully before beginning your training plan. By following this training plan, you acknowledge and agree that:

1. Medical responsibility

You understand that participation in physical exercise carries inherent risks including but not limited to illness, injury, or in extreme cases death. You have been advised to consult a qualified physician before beginning this or any training programme. You confirm you have no known medical condition that would prevent safe participation in physical activity.

2. Voluntary participation

You are following this training plan entirely of your own volition, with full knowledge and awareness of the risks involved. You understand the plan may include high-intensity exercise and cycling on public roads.

3. Assumption of risk

You expressly assume all risks associated with following this training plan, including but not limited to muscle soreness, muscle strains, broken bones, heart attack, stroke, or other cardiovascular incidents.

4. Release of liability

You agree that Evolve Coaching, Bryn Griffith, and any associated parties are not responsible or liable for any injury, illness, death, or property damage that may occur during or after training in accordance with this plan, except in cases of recklessness or intentional misconduct.

5. Personal responsibility

You agree to train within your capabilities, listen to your body, and seek professional medical advice when needed. You understand you are solely responsible for monitoring your health and stopping or modifying training if you experience pain, discomfort, or other adverse symptoms.

6. Intellectual property

This training plan and user guide are the intellectual property of Evolve Coaching. You may not reproduce, distribute, or sell this material without written permission.

SECTION 16

SUPPORT AND RESOURCES

Questions or support

If you have questions about your training plan or need support, we are here to help.

| | |
|----------------|--|
| Website | evolvecoaching.cc |
| Email | bryn@teamevolve.cc |

Response time

We typically respond within 24 to 48 hours.

Additional resources

- TrainingPeaks help: help.trainingpeaks.com
- Zwift support: support.zwift.com
- Power training articles: trainingpeaks.com/blog

Recommended reading

- "Training and Racing with a Power Meter" by Hunter Allen and Andrew Coggan
- "The Cyclist's Training Bible" by Joe Friel
- "Fast After 50" by Joe Friel (if you are over 50)

Join the community

Team Evolve is a 300+ member Zwift cycling community. We race together, ride together, and support each other's training goals.

To join the team and connect with other athletes following Evolve plans, visit teamevolve.cc.

Training is better together. Work hard, recover smart, and enjoy the process.

GOOD LUCK WITH YOUR TRAINING.

Bryn Griffith, Founder, Evolve Coaching