

June	July	August	September	October	November	December	January	February
Phase 1 - General Preparation			Phase 2 - Coast to Coast General Preparation		Phase 3 - Coast to Coast Specific Preparation		Phase 4 - Specific Preparation & Race	

What do the phases mean?

Phase 1 - General Preparation

There are two key objectives to this phase

1. **To develop your skills to be able to complete the race** – The Coast to Coast is a very technical race that requires specific skills so the better that you are at off road running, kayaking and cycling the better. For you this might be learning to run over rocky terrain, learning to roll your kayak, or learning to use your gears and ride your bike confidently. This is something that you will continue to work on right up to race day but it is important to start on this early. This should not be confused with big miles – the focus is skills so short quality sessions are the way to go.

If you have done the race before this is a time to work on your weaknesses and having that as a sole focus rather than trying to fit in all of the disciplines in your week. For example if your running is letting you down compared to your cycling and kayaking this would be a time to do a running technique session or two and then doing a good amount of running with a ½ marathon event as something to work towards.

2. **Preparing your body to train** – If you put in a good foundation now you will increase the chances of having an injury free build up and race. Which joints are tight and which are weak? Which muscles are strong and which are weak? For example - If you have a desk job and sit down for a significant portion of your day you will probably have tight hips and weak butt muscles and this will really affect your ability to run efficiently and jump/stride over the rocky terrain. Get a muscle balance/movement analysis done by a seeing good physio or PT and spend this time stretching and strengthening your body. Balance work should be part of your preparation to decrease the chances of rolled ankles and to help you stay in your boat. When it is time to ramp the training up you will be ready cope with it and remain injury free.

Phase 2 – Coast to Coast
General Preparation

1. **Slowly increase the duration of your training and keep it steady** – there is still plenty of time until race day so you don't want to be peaking yet but you do need get out about. This phase is about getting fitter, stronger and continuing to develop your technique and skills. Getting out doing some tramping is a great option or even a sea kayaking adventure. Now that the days are getting longer (in the southern hemisphere) you could start riding your bike to and from work a couple of days per week as this is an easy way to increase the miles on your bike.
2. **Do one speed session a week** – the best way to do this is to get involved in a group session that you can challenge yourself and be pushed by others. A good coach or instructor will also focus on a technique aspects of your performance in each session. Just one per week and don't get drawn into doing a speed session in kayaking, running and cycling just choose one a week and have fun doing it.
3. **Start training all of the disciplines required for the Coast to coast** - Preparing for the coast to coast is like doing a jigsaw puzzle as you juggle running, cycling and kayaking along with work and family commitments. Make sure that you keep everything that you need to do in perspective and have fun getting out to do some adventures. By getting your family or your partner involved will help keep that balance and thank them for their support.

Phase 3 – Coast to Coast
Specific Preparation

1. **Build up to the duration you will be on course and start putting disciplines together** – Put sessions together with a solid bike ride followed by a run, paddling tired and getting used to transitioning from kayaking to cycling. Aim to build up to the duration that you will be on the course. Our main aim of training and preparation is that come race day our body and mind has seen it already so we can enjoy the race (or focus on going fast).
2. **Specific strength focus** – This means riding with 1-2 gears harder than normal for 2-10mins at a time, paddling with a bungy cord wrapped around the front of your boat, and running up hills with your bag and compulsory gear. You should still be maintaining the flexibility and strength work that you did in phase 1 to ensure that you remain balanced.
3. **Simulate** - Time to get specific by either getting over the course or simulating the course as best as possible in your local area.
4. **Do some practice races** – These are really important to test your race day systems including your gear, nutrition, pacing strategies, dealing with pre-race nerves and the intensity of a race. Comparing yourself to others is also great way to check if your training and preparation is on track.

5. **Life Balance - keep it real** – There is a certain amount of preparation time that you need to complete the coast to coast. But no matter how much that you do you will always feel that you need to do more, it is the nature of the event. You can complete this event by doing 10hours of training on your hard weeks and as little as 5 on your easy week (the pros don't do as many training hours as you may think – but they do make each one count). A well organised training plan can mean that you prepare well, achieve your goals and remain married at the end of it (with the option of doing it again...). Can you enjoy a glass of wine while training for this? Of course you can, once you have the skills mastered this event is achievable for anyone, so keep it real and make sure that you make time for yourself and others to chill out and relax.

Phase 4 – Specific Preparation and Race

1. **Get over the course** - During this phase it is really important that you get over the course or at the least simulate it as best as possible. There is no better way to simulate what you will be in for on race day than to do it in practice. Depending on your goals for the event (finishing or going fast) you may decide to do at race pace or at least some if it fast. The main cause of muscle cramps is that you are not used to the duration and the intensity of the race. Often participants have done the distance and been over the terrain but race day is the first time that they try to go fast and therefore are slowed down by cramping muscles.
2. **Get ready for the intensity and excitement** – Completing practice events are a great way to prepare your mind and body for the intensity and excitement of race day. The coast to coast shouldn't be the first time that you stand on the start line. Local club bike races, the 5km running races around the park and if there is a kayak/bike/run race then that is even better. Get used to going hard while practicing your nutrition, testing your gear and pacing strategies etc. Learn and move on – if the practice race doesn't go exactly to plan take the learning from it and know you will be better prepare for race day.
3. **Planning** – based on your experiences of previous races write down a race plan. This should include notes for your support crew, time checks for each stage of the course, your nutrition plan, and goals for each stage. If you write it down it gives you time to think through it and also helps relax the nerves on race day.
4. **Taper – less is more** – in the last couple of weeks you are not going to get any fitter so focus on sharpening up and feeling great. It is better to feel under done rather than over cooked in the last week prior to the race.
5. **Race** – you have prepared well now it is time to race to your plan and have a blast!!