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PERFORMANCE LAB

**WARRIOR LAB • PRO INSIDER**

# HYROX FUELING QUICK START

## Beginner + Recreational Race Guide

A simple, testable plan for race morning, carbs, hydration, caffeine, gut comfort, and recovery — built for athletes who want calm execution without an overcomplicated supplement stack.

OPEN GUIDE | RESOURCE HUB

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START HERE

# Your race plan should be simple enough to execute while breathing hard.

**The WPL beginner rule:** choose one carbohydrate lane, one hydration lane, and one caffeine decision. Practice the exact plan. Repeat it on race day.

DECISION 1

### How long will you race?

Your expected finish time determines whether you need only a pre-start top-up or a planned mid-race dose.

DECISION 2

### What can your gut tolerate?

The best product is the one you can open, swallow, and absorb under high heart rate.

DECISION 3

### Will you use caffeine?

For a first race, “none” or “small and known” is safer than a high-dose stack.

## Clickable guide


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01 • FUEL TARGET

# Match the plan to your expected finish time.

General sports-nutrition guidance supports carbohydrate during high-intensity exercise lasting beyond roughly 60–70 minutes. HYROX adds a practical constraint: you must be able to take fuel without losing rhythm, choking, or triggering GI urgency.

| Expected finish | Practical race target | Simple structure | Best beginner decision |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Under 60 min** | 0–30 g during/near start | Normal pre-race meal; optional 20–30 g carb 10–15 min pre-start. | Do not force a mid-race gel if it disrupts pacing. |
| **60–75 min** | 30–45 g total | 20–30 g pre-start; optional half-dose around 35–45 min. | One familiar gel may be enough. |
| **75–95 min** | 45–75 g total | 20–30 g pre-start + 20–30 g around 35–50 min; optional micro-dose later. | This is the most common beginner/ recreational lane. |
| **95–120+ min** | 60–90 g total | 20–30 g pre-start + 20–30 g at 35–50 min + 20–30 g at 70–85 min if practiced. | Micro-dose; do not wait until legs feel empty. |

### Use total grams, not marketing claims

Read the label. Count total carbohydrate from gels, drink mix, chews, and pre-race products together.

### More is not automatically better

If the plan causes nausea, reflux, urgency, or distraction, the effective dose is lower than the theoretical dose.

**Coach cue:** “Fuel before the fade, but only with a product you can take calmly.”

These are practical starting ranges, not medical prescriptions. Athletes with diabetes, GI disease, pregnancy, medication concerns, or a history of fainting should coordinate with a qualified clinician.

02 • PRE-RACE

# Build a familiar meal — not a “perfect” breakfast.

### 2–4 hours before

**Carbohydrate base + familiar protein.**

- Keep fat and fiber lower than your normal high-fiber meal.
- Choose foods you have already used before hard training.
- Finish feeling fueled, not stuffed.

### 10–20 minutes before

**Optional 20–30 g carbohydrate top-up.**

- Use one gel, isotonic gel, chews, or a small amount of carb drink.
- Gut-sensitive athlete: begin with half-dose plus water.
- Skip caffeine unless it is already tested.

## Meal-builder examples

| Base | Add protein | Keep modest | Example |
|---|---|---|---|
| Bagel, toast, rice, oats, cereal, banana, applesauce | Yogurt, eggs, whey, milk, lean turkey | Butter, nut butter, fried foods, large salads, very spicy foods | Bagel + banana + yogurt |
| White rice, potatoes, pancakes, low-fiber cereal | Egg whites, chicken, milk, protein shake | High-fat meats, heavy cheese, large avocado portions | Rice + eggs + fruit |

**Early start?** Use a smaller meal 90–150 minutes pre-start and rely on a practiced carb top-up. Do not force a large breakfast at an unfamiliar hour.

**Do not “carb-load” by overeating junk food the night before.** A calm gut and normal bowel routine are part of performance.

A widely used general guideline is 1–4 g carbohydrate/kg in the 1–4 hours before exercise. The best amount depends on meal timing, body size, normal intake, and GI tolerance.

03 • PRODUCT CHOICE

# Choose by function and texture — not hype.

| Fuel format | Best for | Watch-out | Examples to research |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Standard gel** | Compact 20–30 g carb dose; easy to count | May need water; thick textures can be hard at high HR | Maurten, GU, BPN |
| **Isotonic / liquid gel** | Easier swallow, micro-dosing, sensitive mouth | Lower carb per package for some products | SiS, Enervit |
| **Carb + sodium gel** | One-step plan when sweat data supports sodium | Do not add extra sodium automatically | Neversecond, Precision Fuel & Hydration |
| **Carbohydrate drink** | Athletes who prefer sipping before or during training | Carrying and drinking during HYROX can be awkward | Skratch, Tailwind |
| **HYROX-branded option** | A simple familiar product for athletes already using it | Brand partnership does not guarantee individual tolerance | Myprotein |

## Label check

- ✓ Carbohydrate per serving
- ✓ Caffeine per serving
- ✓ Sodium per serving
- ✓ Serving size and package size
- ✓ Third-party certification, if applicable

## First-race “no” list

- × New stimulant pre-workout
- × Multiple caffeinated products
- × Sodium bicarbonate
- × Unknown proprietary blends
- × A complex elite stack copied from social media

Product examples are not endorsements. Formulas vary by country, flavor, and reformulation. Verify the exact label and batch before use.

04 • HYDRATION + SODIUM

# Arrive hydrated. Sip with purpose. Do not chase a perfect number.

### Before

Drink normally through the day before. On race morning, sip enough to feel comfortable — not sloshy.

### During

Use aid-station water to thirst. Small sips are easier than large catches while breathing hard.

### After

Rehydrate gradually with fluid, food, and sodium based on losses and next-session demands.

## When sodium deserves more attention

- ✓ You consistently finish with salt crust on clothing/skin.
- ✓ You have measured a high sweat rate or high sweat sodium.
- ✓ The venue is hot/humid, travel has disrupted hydration, or you are racing after prolonged warm-up.
- ✓ Your clinician or sports dietitian has recommended a specific plan.

**Do not overdrink.** More fluid is not always safer. Forced drinking can worsen nausea and, in extreme cases, contribute to dangerous low blood sodium.

## Simple practice check

| Before session | During | After | Decision |
|---|---|---|---|
| Normal thirst; urine not very dark | Small sips only | No headache, bloating, or excessive thirst | Keep plan |
| Very thirsty, dry mouth, dark urine | Performance drops, HR drifts unusually | Large body-mass loss | Review pre-hydration and sweat plan |
| Sloshing, bloating, repeated clear urine | Forced drinking | Nausea or puffiness | Reduce fluid; seek clinical guidance if severe |

Kidney, heart, blood-pressure, pregnancy, and medication considerations can change fluid/sodium recommendations.

05 • CAFFEINE DECISION

# For a first HYROX, caffeine is optional — not mandatory.

### No caffeine

Best default for athletes with anxiety, urgency, high resting HR, poor sleep, pregnancy, stimulant medication, or no prior caffeine testing.

## Small + known

### One source only

A familiar coffee or low-dose product can work. Count the total from coffee, energy drinks, gels, gum, and pre-workout together.

> **Beginner ceiling:** do not use the elite 3–6 mg/kg evidence range as a starting target. Many athletes perform well with no caffeine or a lower dose.

## Stop and reconsider if caffeine causes:

### Gut

Urgency, nausea, reflux, cramps

### Nervous system

Jitters, panic, tremor, poor focus

### Race execution

Over-pacing, HR anxiety, inability to settle

## Caffeine total worksheet

| Source | Amount | Caffeine (mg) | Time |
|---|---|---|---|
| Coffee / tea | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| Gel / gum / drink | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| Other | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| **Total** | | _____ mg | |

Caffeine can interact with medications and affect pregnancy, blood pressure, anxiety, pelvic urgency, sleep, and heart rhythm. Seek medical guidance when relevant.

06 • RACE EXECUTION

# Fuel when you can breathe — not when you are panicking.

| Timing | What to do | Execution cue |
|---|---|---|
| **2–4 h pre-start** | Familiar carb-based meal + protein; lower fat/fiber than usual. | “Comfortably fueled.” |
| **60–90 min** | Sip water; optional electrolyte only if practiced and needed. | “No chugging.” |
| **10–20 min** | 20–30 g carb or half-dose for sensitive gut. | “Small, calm, familiar.” |
| **35–50 min** | Second carb hit if expected finish is >75 min. | “Take it after a station or during a controlled transition.” |
| **70–85 min** | Optional third/micro-dose for longer races. | “Before the fade, only if practiced.” |
| **Finish** | Carbs + 20–40 g protein; fluids and sodium based on losses. | “Start recovery, do not punish the gut.” |

## Carry strategy

- Pre-tear packaging only if safe and spill-proof.
- Store where it will not bounce or leak.
- Know whether the product needs water.
- Do not carry more than the plan requires.

## Breathing strategy

- Take fuel after breathing begins to settle.
- Use smaller sips/bites at high HR.
- Walk 5–10 seconds if needed — better than choking or vomiting.
- Resume controlled pace, not a panic surge.

**WPL rule:** A five-second controlled fuel moment can protect the next 30 minutes. A rushed dose can ruin them.

07 • GUT + EXECUTION TRAINING

# Practice the whole behavior — not only the product.

| Test | Session | Fuel challenge | Pass criteria |
|---|---|---|---|
| **1 • Tolerance** | Moderate 45–60 min workout | 20–30 g carb 10–15 min pre-start | No nausea, urgency, reflux, or texture problem |
| **2 • High HR** | Compromised run or intervals | Take half/full dose while breathing hard | Can open, swallow, and resume pace calmly |
| **3 • Simulation** | 60–100 min HYROX-style session | Use exact race timing, product, water, and carry method | Energy stable; gut calm; plan easy to remember |

## Fuel practice log

| Date | Product + flavor | Amount + timing | Water | GI / urgency | Energy | Decision |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| ___ | _____ | _____ | ___ | ___ /10 | ___ /10 | Keep / change |
| ___ | _____ | _____ | ___ | ___ /10 | ___ /10 | Keep / change |
| ___ | _____ | _____ | ___ | ___ /10 | ___ /10 | Keep / change |

> **Race-week rule:** no new product, no new caffeine dose, no new breakfast, and no new “carb load.” Race week is for confidence and execution.

## Pass / fail decision

### PASS

Plan is easy to remember, easy to carry, and causes no meaningful GI, urgency, or anxiety problems.

### CHANGE

Reduce dose, switch texture, move timing earlier/later, add water, or remove caffeine. Retest before race day.

08 • QUICK FIXES

# Common HYROX fueling mistakes — and the next test.

| Problem | Likely contributors | Next practice change |
|---|---|---|
| **Nausea / sloshing** | Large fluid bolus, concentrated drink, fuel taken at peak breathing | Smaller sips; lower concentration; take dose at a controlled transition |
| **Urgency / bathroom fear** | High caffeine, high fiber/fat, sugar alcohols, nerves | Reduce caffeine; simplify meal; test low-residue breakfast |
| **Heavy legs early** | Under-eating day before, long gap from meal, over-pacing | Improve daily carb availability; use pre-start top-up; pace first runs |
| **Late fade** | Waiting too long to fuel; race longer than expected | Add planned mid-race dose before symptoms |
| **Gel feels impossible** | Texture, dry mouth, no water, breathing too high | Try isotonic/liquid gel or drink-based plan; micro-dose |
| **Jitters / panic HR** | Caffeine + adrenaline + aggressive start | Remove or lower caffeine; count all sources; slow first 10 min |

**Medical red flags:** fainting, chest pain, severe shortness of breath, confusion, repeated vomiting, signs of severe dehydration, or neurological symptoms require medical evaluation — not a fueling hack.

**Underfueling is not discipline.** Persistent fatigue, recurrent injuries, menstrual disruption, low libido, poor recovery, mood changes, or declining performance can be signs that total energy/carbohydrate availability is inadequate. Seek qualified support.

09 • PRINT / SCREENSHOT

# My HYROX fueling race card

**Expected finish:** _____ **Division:** _____

| Moment | My plan |
|---|---|
| Night-before meal | _____ |
| 2–4 h pre-start | _____ |
| 10–20 min pre-start | _____ |
| Mid-race dose + timing | _____ |
| Optional late dose | _____ |
| Water / electrolyte | _____ |
| Total caffeine | _____ mg Source(s): _____ |

## My one execution cue

_____

## Recovery in the first 1–2 hours

### Protein

Aim for a familiar 20–40 g high-quality protein serving.

### Carbohydrate

Increase based on race duration and how soon you train again.

### Fluid + sodium

Replace gradually based on thirst, sweat, and body-mass change.

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10 • EVIDENCE + SAFETY

# Evidence base and responsible-use notes

| # | Source | Link |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | Nutrition and Athletic Performance — ACSM / Academy / Dietitians of Canada | Open source |
| 2 | Personalized carbohydrate intake during exercise — Jeukendrup | Open source |
| 3 | ISSN Position Stand: Caffeine and Exercise Performance | Open source |
| 4 | IOC 2023 Consensus Statement on REDs | Open source |
| 5 | IOC Consensus: Dietary Supplements and the High-Performance Athlete | Open source |
| 6 | AIS Sports Supplement Framework | Open source |
| 7 | USADA: Reduce Supplement Risk | Open source |
| 8 | NSF Certified for Sport | Open source |
| 9 | WADA 2026 Prohibited List | Open source |

**Educational resource — not medical advice.** This guide does not diagnose, treat, or replace individualized medical or sports-dietetic care. Check allergies, GI conditions, pregnancy status, medications, kidney/heart/blood-pressure conditions, eating-disorder history, and caffeine tolerance.

**Supplement risk:** third-party certification reduces — but does not eliminate — contamination and anti-doping risk. Athletes remain responsible for what enters their body. Verify exact product and batch.

## About this guide

Created for Warrior Lab App subscribers, WPL PRO Insiders, and coaching clients. The content was rebuilt from the original WPL beginner guide and expanded into a question-first, app-friendly format.

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