



# Taking on a Century

■ IN THE PAST DECADE, the number of century rides held across the United States has exploded—by some estimates as much as 30 percent—making the 100-mile road race the populist endurance event: a boast-worthy challenge you don't need a yellow jersey to accomplish. And with this plan, which combines road work with an ab-pumping core routine, you'll be able to crank out the ride of your life—and enjoy it. —Chris Kostman

## CENTURY TRAINING 100 HOURS IN TEN WEEKS

**Timing is everything.** Pick your century ([www.bikeride.com](http://www.bikeride.com) lists U.S. races), then count back ten weeks. That's your start date. If you train at the typical 12 mph, in this plan, you'll have about 1,200 miles under your belt when you get to the big day. That's plenty.

**Consistency is paramount.** Get on that bike and ride—regularly. Plan on cycling three to six times a week, even if for only 30 to 45 minutes. Tack on another two hours a week for core strengthening work.

**Your training should peak in week eight.** Start with 100 miles at first, then add 30 miles each week until you reach 250 in week eight. Taper to 50 miles the week before your century. That's six hours a week at first, topping out at 15 hours.

**Boredom will steer you off course.** Train with a friend or club, ride trails, and avoid repeating the same cycling workout in any given week ([www.adv-cycling.org](http://www.adv-cycling.org) has self-guided routes).

**Spinning is a good sub.** Indoor classes can be a solid training component. Focus on hill-climbing, with heavy resistance. An intense 45-minute class equals an hour of cycling.

**Speed-work elevates your race pace.** Do one short, high-intensity ride each week as fast as possible, with 20 minutes each of warm-up and cooldown. Start with ten-mile rides and work up to a 25-miler.

**Long rides build race-day confidence.** Do one extended ride each week at a comfortable speed. Start with 35 miles and build to a 75-miler the week before your century.

### RACE-DAY CHECKLIST

**Tune your ride.** Tires should be inflated to full pressure, cables snug, and chain lubed. If you aren't used to working on your bike, take it to a shop.

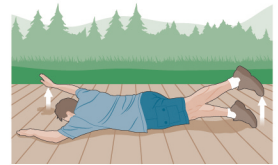
**Relax.** Keep your upper body loose. Tension is wasted energy.

**Go slow and steady.** First-timers should stick to a seven-to-nine-hour pace.

**Don't pig out.** If you stay at the checkpoints too long you may get complacent. Do most of your fueling while you pedal. Shoot to eat 200 to 400 calories an hour (a Clif Bar has 250).

**Drink up.** Have at least eight ounces of water an hour.

■ Off the saddle, focus on your core—not your quads. These moves strengthen your abs and back, which will make your upper body more comfortable (and efficient) on the bike.



**1 THE SUPERMAN (back):** Lie facedown with your nose just off the ground. Lift the right arm and left leg at the same time; hold for five seconds. Then alternate and lift the left arm and right leg; hold five seconds. Build to three sets of ten on each side.



**2 BASIC CRUNCH (abs):** Resting flat on your back, with legs raised at a 90-degree angle and knees bent, tighten your abs and raise your chest toward the ceiling. Gently support your head, but don't pull on your neck. Build to three sets of 25.



**3 DOWNWARD-FACING DOG (strengthens arms and abs; stretches legs and back):** Start on hands and knees, then move into an inverted V shape. Keep your weight evenly distributed and your neck loose. Stretch your heels toward the ground, but don't lock your knees. Hold one minute; repeat three times.