

## 2026 Assumption Cross Country



All prospective Cross Country girls must have a current physical on file with the Athletic Department before participating with the team on July 15. After one calendar year, physicals expire, and so returning girls must get a new physical each year.

### Important dates:

- First official day of practice: Wednesday, July 15
- Last day to join: Sunday, August 2

Our team divides into 2 groups that we call Group A and Group B.

- **Group B:** this is a developmental training group for interested freshmen and sophomores that practices 4 days per week (Mon-Thurs) after school and competes in 3 meets. Note that Juniors and Seniors interested in Cross Country must participate in Group A if they want to be on the team.
- **Group A:** this is a training group for girls who are interested in and capable of practicing up to 6 days per week (Mon-Thurs, Sat, Sun). Girls in this group will also compete in at least one of our out-of-town invitational meets. Group A is open to all grade levels (Freshmen-Senior). Note that we are willing to work with girls who are not yet able to meet the Group A practice requirements of 6 days of running/week. The goal is to adapt training to each girl, not kill anyone and over-train them.

### How girls join the Cross Country team

Girls join the Cross Country team by following these 4 steps:

1. Attend your first Summer practice
  - We prefer that the girls start on July 15, but for girls who tried out for another sport and got cut, we ask that they start as soon as possible (e.g. by July 20-21)
  - We do allow girls to join up until Sunday, August 3, but note that by joining late, a girl's participation may be restricted (see the next page)
2. Have your name added to the roster
3. Identify with a group attendance schedule (i.e. Group A or Group B)
4. Regularly attend practice thereafter (practice conflicts need to be communicated)

### Summer attendance expectations

**Girls who seek to participate with Group A:** you should attend practice 6 days per week during the Summer. If you have conflicts which prevent this from happening, then please speak with Head Coach Barry Haworth so that we can create a plan for you.

**Girls who seek to participate with Group B:** you should attend practice 4 days per week during the Summer. If you have conflicts which prevent this from happening, then please speak with Head Coach Barry Haworth.

*Please read the next page for further clarification on our Summer attendance expectations.*

Summer practice can often involve conflicts with other activities. Here are some typical conflicts that we encounter during the Summer and how we address each type of conflict.

- (1) **Vacation:** girls going on vacation should inform us in advance so that we can discuss a training plan for you while you're away. These training plans may obviously vary across each girl, based on their training history, grade level, experience, etc.
- (2) **Summer jobs and/or other Summer sports/practices:** if you have a Summer job or a Summer sport conflict, then you must communicate those conflicts with us in advance. We will discuss what you should be running on the days that you cannot attend practice. Note that we do try to work with girls who have lifeguarding jobs at Lakeside.
- (3) **GSP** or one of the other Summer academic programs: we treat these situations in the same manner that we treat vacations.
- (4) **Miscellaneous absences:** we realize that things can come up during the Summer that may lead to a girl missing practice. We expect that these absences should always be communicated, and we expect that each girl will tell us what she did for practice that day on her own.
- (5) **Illness or injury:** we ask that girls who are sick or hurt communicate with us about their situation. We do not expect injured or sick girls to run on their own.

If you disappear during the Summer, join late, or more generally fall short of our attendance expectations and most importantly – if you do not communicate these things with us, then although we treat each situation individually, here are some examples of how we typically address those situations.

- (a) **Freshman and Sophomore girls interested in Group A:** missing too much practice and failing to communicate those absences can lead to you being dropped to Group B.
- (b) **Junior and Senior girls interested in Group A:** missing too much practice and failing to communicate those absences can lead to you being asked to demonstrate a certain minimum level of fitness in order to remain on the team (e.g. 2 mile time trial).
- (c) **Freshman and Sophomore girls interested in Group B:** missing too much practice and failing to communicate those absences will lead to you being placed in our Seneca Park group (i.e. you will not be allowed to leave the park with your teammates on distance runs, and can only run loops around the park).

*Note that the key variable with Summer attendance is communication. We can work with girls who have conflicts, but we draw the line with girls who struggle with communication.*

Note also that after school begins, we do not allow girls to miss Fall practice for job conflicts or other sport practices/games. Missing practice for these reasons can lead to a girl being dropped from the team. Note again that if you anticipate having some potential Fall conflicts like participating in the Fall play or something else that could conflict with practice, you **must speak with us** about that in advance, as some conflicts could prevent you from being on our team.

## Assumption HS Cross Country: Summer Running



Here's some general information about Summer training prior to our first official practice on July 15. We've provided 2 sample training plans for new girls that follow the discussion below.

**Guidelines:** *When running this summer, here are some important guidelines to bear in mind*

- Prior to July 15, we follow a “just run” approach which involves simply getting out the door and *running at a pace that's based on how you feel*. Unless we've spoken to you about pace, there is no prescribed pace for anyone prior to July 15. On good days, then it's ok to run a little faster. On bad days, it's ok to run a little slower.
- We can provide training plans for any girl who asks. We have training plans for girls who are total beginners, plans for returning JV-level girls, and Varsity level plans for girls in each grade level. Everyone follows a training plan whether it's an explicit plan or an implicit one, so why not get a training plan that's appropriate for you, and which can help you remain injury-free.
- You can arrange most running to fit your schedule, but understand that there is no such thing as a “make-up run”. E.g., if you miss 2 days in a row, then don't combine those days with other days when you start back (e.g. if you miss a 30 min run, don't add that 30 min onto another 30 min running day and do 60 min), as this can lead to injury.
- Run as much as possible on grass or dirt (i.e. stay off cement whenever possible).
- Running is much more enjoyable when shared. E.g., consider running with someone else (note that both parents and friends qualify for this role). Running with others also helps keep you safe, which is important too.
- Consistency matters. Whatever you do, do it on as regular a basis as possible. It's easy to get busy during the summer, so make running part of your routine. Running with someone else is also a great way to be held accountable to get in your running.
- Injury. It is not uncommon for newer girls to get hurt when they start running over the summer. Injury prevention (e.g. doing a strength routine) can help, but if you get to a point where you get hurt, then check with a coach and consider doing some alternative exercise. E.g., using the elliptical, cycling and swimming also provides aerobic benefit.
- Crosstraining. The best preparation for running is running, but there may be occasions during the Summer when you cannot run or it's wise not to run (e.g. if you're hurt). In those situations, crosstraining is a positive option. E.g., using an elliptical machine, stationary bike or even walking at a faster cadence up and down hills. For more information on crosstraining, feel free to contact Coach Haworth.
- Stronger is better. Summer running should be accompanied by some form of strength training, where you are strengthening your foundation and helping yourself avoid injury later on. Several of our strength training routines are available at our team website, but feel free to contact head coach Haworth for a copy of a strength routine, along with a warmup and warmdown routine as well.

**SAMPLE PLAN: 2026 Cross Country Summer Training: New Girls** (4 days running + 1 optional extra day of crosstraining)

	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<b>Weeks 1-3</b> Run: 9-11 mi	20 min run	25 min run	rest	20-25 min run	25-30 min run	rest	rest
<b>Week 4</b> Run: 11-12 mi Eff: 14-15 mi	25 min run	30 min run	rest	25 min run	30 min run	rest	<b>Optional:</b> 30 min crosstraining (Heart rate @ 140-160 bpm)
<b>Week 5</b> Run: 11-13 mi Eff: 14-16 mi	25 min run	30 min run + 4 x 60m strides	rest	25 min run (recovery day)	30 min run + 4 x 60m strides	rest	<b>Optional:</b> 30 min crosstraining (Heart rate @ 140-160 bpm)
<b>Week 6</b> (down week) Run: 7-9 mi Eff: 16-18 mi	30 min crosstraining (Heart rate @ 140-160 bpm)	35 min run + 6 x 60m strides <b>* Strength lite *</b>	rest	30 min crosstraining (Heart rate @ 140-160 bpm)	35 min run + 6 x 60m strides <b>* Strength lite *</b>	rest	<b>Optional:</b> 30 min crosstraining (Heart rate @ 140-160 bpm)
<b>Week 7</b> Run: 7-9 mi Eff: 16-18 mi	30 min run	35 min run + 6 x 60m strides <b>* Strength lite *</b>	rest	30 min run (recovery day)	35 min run + 6 x 60m strides <b>* Strength lite *</b>	rest	<b>Optional:</b> 30 min crosstraining (Heart rate @ 140-160 bpm)
<b>Week 8</b> Run: 13-15 mi Eff: 16-18 mi	30 min run	35 min run + 6 x 60m strides <b>* Strength lite *</b>	rest	30 min run (recovery day)	35 min run + 6 x 60m strides <b>* Strength lite *</b>	rest	<b>Optional:</b> 30 min crosstraining (Heart rate @ 140-160 bpm)

**SAMPLE PLAN: 2026 Cross Country Summer Training: New Girls** (5 days of running - building to 6 days of running)

	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<b>Week 1</b> Run: 15-17 mi	25 min run	35 min run	rest	25 min run (recovery day)	35 min run	rest	30 min run
<b>Week 2</b> Run: 16-18 mi	25 min run	35 min run + 4 x 60m strides	rest	30 min run (recovery day)	35 min run + 4 x 60m strides	rest	30 min run
<b>Week 3</b> Run: 17-19 mi	30 min run	40 min run	rest	30 min run (recovery day) + 6 x 60m strides	10 min run to a hill, then do 3 uphill good pace <b>** full recovery **</b> (hills about 120- 160m long) + 20 min run	rest	35 min run
<b>Week 4</b> (start 6 days) Run: 20-22 mi	30 min run	40 min run + 6 x 60m strides	25 min run (recovery day)	30 min run	10 min run to a hill, then do 3 uphill good pace <b>** full recovery **</b> (hills about 120- 160m long) + 20 min run	rest	35 min run
<b>Week 5</b> Run: 22-25 mi	35 min run	40 min run* + 6 x 60m strides <b>Strength lite *</b>	30 min run (recovery day)	35 min run	10 min run to a hill, then do 4 uphill good pace <b>** full recovery **</b> (hills about 120- 160m long) + 25 min run <b>* Strength lite *</b>	rest	40 min run + 6 x 60m strides

## Cross Country Items Checklist

- Physical:** in order to practice with the team, each girl must have a current physical on file with the Athletic Dept (physicals remain current for one calendar year after they are given).

## Additional tests we recommend for Group A girls as part of the current physical:

- Serum Ferritin test:** Group A girls should have this test of iron stores done in June or early July to help us determine if a girl is at risk of becoming iron deficient. Although optimal levels depend on several variables, a consensus is that female athletes should have a “ferritin score” of 30-35 or higher.
- 25-hydroxy Vitamin D blood test:** Group A girls should have their Vitamin D levels tested, as this helps us determine if a girl is at risk for stress fractures. Studies suggest that female athletes taking this test should have a score of 50 or higher.

## Cross Country Recommended Items Checklist

Here are some items we recommend that every girl on the team bring to practice.

- Moisture-wicking shirt/tank:** we suggest getting moisture-wicking shirts/tanks for practice. Moisture-wicking shirts can be found at a variety of locations.
- New pair of running shoes:** we strongly recommend starting each season with new shoes and replacing those shoes every 400-500 miles (when older shoes can transform into walking-around shoes). Although we don't recommend one specific store, we strongly suggest buying shoes at a running specialty store like Swag's, Ken Combs, Blue Mile, Footworks, Fleet Feet, etc. Please mention that you run for Assumption when you visit.
- Watch:** a wristwatch with stopwatch feature is used at every practice, our runs are all performed on the basis of minutes, not miles. A GPS watch is helpful, but not required.
- Water bottle:** every girl on the team should bring a water bottle to each practice
- Post-workout snack:** we recommend that Group A girls bring a snack with a 3:1 carb-protein ratio to eat at the end of practice on harder days, but more generally after any practice. This is important for both recovery and proper caloric input reasons.



## Other important information

### Communication



We utilize a communication and scheduling app called TeamSnap that allows us to communicate with girls and parents, but also provide scheduling information about practice and meets. We also use a team email distribution list for both parents and girls on the team.

(1) **New Girls:** once you have a functional school email address, your email address will be added to our team email distribution list and TeamSnap app. Once you're added to TeamSnap, you'll receive an invitation to create a (free) account, which allows you to access information at through the app. That email address will also be added to our team email distribution list.

(2) **New Parents:** you can be added to TeamSnap and our email distribution list through one of two means. First, you can provide your email information to Coach Barry and get added that way (barry.haworth@ahsrockets.org). Second, you can wait for your daughter to receive a TeamSnap invitation to join, and directly add your information within the app. Email addresses added into TeamSnap will also be included in the team email distribution list.

(3) **Returning Girls:** your AHS email address will automatically be added to TeamSnap and our email distribution list.

(4) **Returning Parents:** if you've been added to TeamSnap and our email distribution list in the past, then we will add you to our current season list. If not, and you would like to be added, then always feel free to contact Head Coach Barry Haworth about that.

### Weather



Summer weather is always a potential concern. Here's how we approach that concern:

(1) On days when the heat index at the location of practice (something we determine at each practice) is 104 or higher, we are not allowed to practice (officially – it's a web globe bulb temperature of 92 or higher). We will typically do our best to anticipate this situation and try to make a decision or adjust practice beforehand (decisions will be announced via email asap).

(2) Storms are another weather-related concern with Summer practice.

- If storms occur before the start of practice and it's clear that we are unlikely to get in a practice that day, then we will announce via email that practice is cancelled.
- If storms occur before the start of practice and we believe that we may be able to safely get in a practice that day after waiting for the weather to clear (i.e., given that it'll be a reasonable amount of "wait time"), then we will attempt to hold practice.
- If storms occur during practice, then we will adjust practice as necessary.
- If only rain is expected at practice, then we **will** meet for practice unless that rain is Biblical in intensity and something that clearly makes running unsafe.
- We also encourage parents to exercise their own discretion when it comes to deciding whether to take their daughter to any given practice on a day when the weather is at least questionable. If a parent believes that practicing on any given day is unsafe for their child, then we respect that decision, but this must be communicated with the coach (i.e. rather than simply no-show that day).

### **Other important information**

**Assumption Cross Country Camp:** incoming freshmen are welcome, but not required, to register for our Cross Country Camp (July 10-13) through the school website ([ahsrockets.org](http://ahsrockets.org)). We will ask the older girls to help out at the Camp.

**Uniforms:** we ask the girls to order their own uniform. We'll provide more information on the uniform purchase once the season begins.

**Team shirt:** we will ask all girls on the team to order our team shirt. Ordering dates will be announced during the Summer.

**Spiritwear:** this is an optional purchase for parents/girls that consists of shirts, sweats and other miscellaneous items. The Spiritwear order will run from August 2 (or earlier), through the Parent meeting on Sunday, August 9 (6pm in the Assumption Cafeteria).

### **Parent Meeting**

The Parent Meeting is currently scheduled for August 9 at 6pm in the school cafeteria. We'll confirm this time and date as we get closer to August 9. The Parent Meeting is a mandatory meeting, where parents are required to attend, but where we also require new girls (i.e. girls who have never participated in Cross Country) to attend. We will discuss team operations, our guidelines, and we will go over the various volunteering opportunities we have for parents. As we get closer to August 9, we will provide information about how the meeting will be conducted, what to do in case of a conflict, etc.

**Team website:** we try to post information, e.g. this handout and our main Cross Country handout, at our team website ([crosscountry.ahsdistance.org](http://crosscountry.ahsdistance.org)).

**Team Social Media:** we have two main team social media accounts

- Instagram: [@assumption\\_distance](https://www.instagram.com/assumption_distance)
- Twitter: [@AHS\\_Distance](https://twitter.com/AHS_Distance)

**Questions:** if you have any questions, then please feel free to reach out to Head Coach Barry Haworth via email ([barry.haworth@ahsrockets.org](mailto:barry.haworth@ahsrockets.org))