

Elf Training Academy

 12-Week Elf Academy Schedule

Week	Monday (Cocoa & Recovery)	Tuesday (Sleigh Bell Jog)	Wednesday (Toy Shop Strength)	Thursday (Sleigh Bell Jog)	Friday (Cocoa & Recovery)	Saturday (North Pole Expedition)	Sunday (Reindeer Games)
1	Rest	3 miles	Strength	3 miles	Rest	4 miles	30 min XT
2	Rest	3 miles	Strength	3 miles	Rest	5 miles	30 min XT
3	Rest	3 miles	Strength	3 miles	Rest	6 miles	30 min XT
4	Rest	3 miles	Strength	3 miles	Rest	7 miles	30 min XT
5	Rest	3 miles	Strength	3 miles	Rest	8 miles	40 min XT
6	Rest	3 miles	Strength	3 miles	Rest	5 miles	40 min XT
7	Rest	4 miles	Strength	4 miles	Rest	9 miles	40 min XT
8	Rest	4 miles	Strength	4 miles	Rest	10 miles	40 min XT
9	Rest	4 miles	Strength	4 miles	Rest	7 miles	40 min XT
10	Rest	4 miles	Strength	4 miles	Rest	11 miles	40 min XT
11	Rest	4 miles	Strength	2 miles	Rest	6 miles	30 min XT
12	Rest	3 miles	Light Core	Rest	Rest	HOLLY JOLLY HALF! (13.1)	Rest

Key Takeaways: Toy Shop Strength Days

To haul presents safely, focus on functional, single-leg, and core movements. Aim for 30-40 minutes of these exercises:

- Chimney Climbers (Lower Body Power): Forward/reverse lunges, Bulgarian split squats, and glute bridges. Single-leg work is critical for running balance.
- Sleigh Stability (Core): Planks, deadbugs, and bird-dogs. A strong core prevents your form from breaking down late in the race.
- Elf Durability (Injury Prevention): Calf raises and lateral band walks (monster walks) to bulletproof your lower legs and hips against the snow and pavement.

A quick tip for race day: If you plan on running in an elf costume, do at least two of your "North Pole Expedition" long runs wearing your full outfit to check for chafing or overheating!

Here is your official Toy Shop Strength routine. This workout is specifically designed for runners to build durability, prevent injuries, and improve power without adding unnecessary bulk.

If you are new to strength training, start with just your body weight. Once you can complete the sets easily, add a dumbbell or kettlebell to keep challenging your muscles.

Warm-Up: Elf Activation (5 Minutes)

Do not skip this! A proper warm-up lubricates your joints and gets your muscles ready for the load.

- Leg Swings: 10 swings forward/backward and 10 side-to-side per leg.
- Glute Bridges: 15 reps (squeeze at the top).
- Inchworms: 5 reps, walking your hands out to a plank and back.
- Single Leg Hops: 15-20 seconds on each side
- Side to Side Hops: 10-12 to each side

 The Main Circuit: Toy Shop Strength (25-30 Minutes)

Complete this circuit 3 times total, resting 60 seconds between each full round. Move from one exercise to the next with minimal rest.

Exercise (Elf Theme)	The Movement	Target Area	Sets & Reps
Sleigh Squats	Goblet Squat (or bodyweight)	Quads & Glutes	12 - 15 reps
Chimney Drops	Reverse Lunges	Single-Leg Stability	10 reps per leg
Top Shelf Reaches	Single-Leg Calf Raises	Calves & Achilles	15 reps per leg
Snowshoe Shuffles	Lateral Band Walks (Monster Walks)	Outer Hips/Glute Medius	15 steps each way
Candy Cane Holds	Forearm Plank	Core Stability	45 - 60 seconds
Toy Pack Lifts	Deadbugs	Deep Core	10 reps per side

 Cool-Down & Recovery (5 Minutes)

- Couch Stretch or Lunge Stretch: Hold 60 seconds per leg to open up tight hip flexors.
- Downward Dog: Hold for 30-60 seconds, pedaling your feet to stretch your calves and hamstrings.

 Key Takeaway for Progression:

For the first two weeks, focus purely on perfecting your form. By Week 3, if the last 2-3 reps of an exercise do not feel challenging, it is time to increase the weight or add a resistance band.