

# Top Ten Tennessee 5k (3.1 miles)

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It's difficult to name a definitive "top ten" because race popularity varies by region and changes yearly. However, by cross-referencing participation numbers and event status, here are the most prominent and well-attended 5K runs in Tennessee:

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## 1. Knoxville Turkey Trot (Knoxville)

**Status:** The largest 5K in Knoxville's history **Details:** This annual Thanksgiving Day race is a major event. In 2023, it drew **over 3,700 participants** from 36 different states, setting records for both a Turkey Trot and a 5K in the city . It's organized by the Knoxville Track Club and runs through downtown Knoxville.

## 2. Johnson City Turkey Trot (Johnson City)

**Status:** The largest 5K in the Tri-Cities area **Details:** Held on Thanksgiving Day at Memorial Park Community Center, this event has been running for 20 years and attracts **over 5,000 participants** . The

race is known as a community "homecoming" and family tradition, making it a staple of East Tennessee running.

### 3. Covenant Health Knoxville Marathon 5K (Knoxville)

**Status:** Major annual 5K event **Details:** This 5K is part of Knoxville's premier marathon weekend, with **over 1,000 runners** participating . The unique finish line is on the 50-yard line inside Neyland Stadium, with finishers displayed on the stadium's JumboTron.

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### 4. Nashville's 5K Scene

Nashville is the undisputed 5K capital of Tennessee, hosting **61 annual 5K races** across all months of the year . While specific events vary, the city offers more 5K options than any other in the state—with peak season in October seeing 11 separate races.

**Notable recurring Nashville-area 5Ks include:**

- Events in **Brentwood** (multiple trail races)
  - Races in **Mount Juliet** (6 annual events)
  - Races in **Murfreesboro** (5 annual events)
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### 5. Memphis 5K Trail Scene

Memphis hosts **6 annual 5K trail runs**, making it a top destination for off-road runners . The Memphis area is particularly strong in trail-specific 5K events compared to other Tennessee cities.

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### 6. Chattanooga Area Trail 5Ks

Chattanooga and surrounding areas host several notable 5K trail runs, including the **Wauhatchie Spring Fest 5K**—a beginner-friendly trail race at Reflection Riding Arboretum and Nature Center that supports local school scholarship funds .

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### 7. Knoxville Trail 5Ks

Knoxville leads the state in trail-specific 5K events with **5 annual trail races** . Combined with its strong road 5K calendar (including the Turkey Trot and Covenant Health events), Knoxville is a major hub for runners of all preferences.

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### 8. Jonesborough (Tri-Cities Area)

Jonesborough hosts **6 annual 5K races** . In addition to the massive Johnson City Turkey Trot, the broader Tri-Cities region maintains a steady calendar of smaller, community-focused 5K events throughout the year.

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## 9. Morristown

Morristown hosts **7 annual 5K races**, one of the highest totals outside Tennessee's major metropolitan areas . This makes it a strong regional running hub in East Tennessee.

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## 10. Pigeon Forge

The Smoky Mountain tourist destination hosts **5 annual 5K races** , offering runners the chance to compete with scenic mountain backdrops.

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## Participation Summary Table

| Race                     | Location     | Participation | Special Note                    |
|--------------------------|--------------|---------------|---------------------------------|
| Johnson City Turkey Trot | Johnson City | 5,000+        | Largest in Tri-Cities           |
| Knoxville Turkey Trot    | Knoxville    | 3,700+        | Largest 5K in Knoxville history |
| Covenant Health 5K       | Knoxville    | 1,000+        | Finishes inside Neyland Stadium |
| Nashville 5Ks            | Nashville    | Varies        | 61 annual races statewide       |

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## Tips for Finding Tennessee 5Ks

- **Peak Season:** October has the most 5K events statewide, followed by April and November
- **Thanksgiving Day:** The most popular single day for 5Ks in Tennessee, with large Turkey Trot events in multiple cities
- **Trail vs. Road:** Knoxville and Memphis have the strongest trail 5K scenes, while Nashville dominates road 5Ks
- **Check Local Running Clubs:** The Knoxville Track Club and similar organizations in Nashville and Memphis host most major events

Are you looking for a specific type of 5K—like trail runs, charity races, or something in a particular Tennessee city?