

MARATHON TRAINING PLAN

LET'S DO THIS

YOUR PLAN

We've curated the best training plans for a wide range of distances, to help you achieve your goals. This plan is 16 weeks long and assumes a good level of fitness on starting.

This plan is a weekly breakdown to help you get race ready. However, if your schedule is tight, just adjust to your needs. This plan is only a guide, not a requirement. Above all, listen to your body, don't push yourself unnecessarily and enjoy it.



1ST TIME MARATHON PLAN

	MON	TUES	WEDS	THURS	FRI	SAT	SUN
1	Run	Workout	Rest day	Workout	Rest day	Run	Rest day
	4 mile run or 45 mins CV exercise (cycle, swim etc)	Walk, cross training, weights or an activity of your choice	Active recovery, walking & stretching	40 mins steady pace	Active recovery, walking & stretching	7 mile run, don't worry, it gets easier!	Active recovery, walking & stretching
2	Run	Workout	Rest day	Workout	Run	Run	Rest day
	5 mile run or 1 hour CV exercise (cycle, swim etc)	Cross training, weights or an activity of your choice	Active recovery, walking & stretching	30 minute weights session. 30 minute circuits	40 mins steady running	7 mile run	Active recovery, walking & stretching
3	Run	Workout	Rest day	Workout	Run	Run	Rest day
	5 mile run	Cardio session, HIIT, spinning or activity of your choice	Active recovery, walking & stretching	30 minute weights session. 30 minute circuits	40 mins steady running	8 mile run	Active recovery, walking & stretching
4	Run	Workout	Rest day	Workout	Run	Run	Rest day
	5 mile run	Cardio session, HIIT, spinning or activity of your choice	Active recovery, walking & stretching	30 minute weights session. 30 minute circuits	40 mins steady running	10 mile run	Active recovery, walking & stretching
5	Run	Workout	Rest day	Workout	Run	Rest day	Run
	5 mile run	Cardio session, HIIT, spinning or activity of your choice	Active recovery, walking & stretching	30 minute weights session. 30 minute circuits	40 mins steady running	Active recovery, walking & stretching	Run a 10k this weekend. Take it easy. Get used to race vibe
6	Rest day	Run	Rest day	Workout	Run	Run	Rest day
	Active recovery, walking & stretching	4 miles easy pace	Active recovery, walking & stretching	30 minute weights session. 30 minute circuits	4 miles easy	1.30 min run. Take drinks and gels. 1st gel at about 45 mins.	Active recovery, walking & stretching
7	Run	Workout	Rest day	Workout	Run	Run	Rest day
	4 miles easy pace	Cardio session, HIIT, spinning or activity of your choice	Active recovery, walking & stretching	30 minute weights session. 30 minute circuits	6 mile steady pace	2 hour run. Take drinks and gels. 1st gel at 1 hour	Active recovery, walking & stretching
8	Run	Workout	Rest day	Workout	Run	Rest day	Run
	6 mile run	Cardio session, HIIT, spinning or activity of your choice	Active recovery, walking & stretching	30 minute weights session. 30 minute circuits	40 mins steady pace	Active recovery, walking & stretching	Run a half marathon race. Get used to the atmosphere and pace


Glossary:

MP - Max pace. As fast as you can go.

Active Recovery - Being active in a way that promotes recovery rather than intensity.

So yoga, walking, stretching and movement to get blood flowing to your muscles.

HIIT - High intensity interval training

	MON	TUES	WEDS	THURS	FRI	SAT	SUN
9	Rest day	Workout	Run	Workout	Run	Run	Rest day
	Active recovery, walking & stretching	Strength session, yoga, pilates, gym, or activity of your choice	6 mile run	30 minute weights session. 30 minute circuits	10mins easy jog, 12mins steady, 12mins@MP, 10mins easy.	1.30 min run. Take drinks and gels. 1st gel at about 45 mins.	Active recovery, walking & stretching
10	Run	Workout	Rest day	Run	Run	Run	Rest day
	5km run, try running a 5k race near you to gage your time	Cardio session, HIIT, spinning or activity of your choice	Active recovery, walking & stretching	10mins easy jog, 12mins steady, 12mins@MP, 10mins easy.	40 mins steady pace	2 hour run. Take drinks and gels.	Active recovery, walking & stretching
11	Run	Workout	Rest day	Run	Run	Rest day	Run
	5 mile run steady pace	Cardio session, HIIT, spinning or activity of your choice	Active recovery, walking & stretching	6 mile run	1.5 hour run	Active recovery, walking & stretching	Run a half marathon race, see letsdothis.com for options
12	Rest day	Workout	Run	Workout	Run	Run	Rest day
	Active recovery, walking & stretching	Cardio session, HIIT, spinning or activity of your choice	10mins easy jog, 12mins steady, 12mins@MP, 10mins easy.	30 minute weights session. 30 minute circuits	40 mins steady pace	3.15 hour run. Take drinks and gels.	Active recovery, walking & stretching
13	Run	Workout	Run	Workout	Run	Run	Rest day
	5 mile run steady pace	Strength session, yoga, pilates, gym, or activity of your choice	10mins easy jog, 12mins steady, 12mins@MP, 10mins easy.	30 minute weights session. 30 minute circuits	30 mins steady pace	2 hour run	Active recovery, walking & stretching
14	Run	Workout	Run	Workout	Run	Run	Rest day
	8 mile run	Cardio session, HIIT, spinning or activity of your choice	10mins easy jog, 12mins steady, 12mins@MP, 10mins easy.	30 minute weights session. 30 minute circuits	40 mins steady pace	1.30 min run	Active recovery, walking & stretching
15	Run	Workout	Run	Workout	Run	Run	Rest day
	5 mile run steady pace	Cardio session, HIIT, spinning or activity of your choice	20 mins easy running	30 minute weights session. 30 minute circuits	40 mins steady pace	1 hour run	Active recovery, walking & stretching
16	Run	Run	Rest day	Run	Run	Rest day	 Race Day
	30 mins easy running	20 mins easy running	Active recovery, walking & stretching	20 mins easy running	10 mins easy running	Best of luck! Fuel your body - you'll smash it.	

OR, TRAIN BASED ON YOUR CHOSEN PACE

Target Marathon finish time:	EP: Easy Pace		SP: Steady Pace	
	min/km	min/mi	min/km	min/mi
6:00:00	0:08:00	0:12:48	0:07:30	0:12:00
5:00:00	0:06:40	0:10:40	0:06:00	0:09:36
4:00:00	0:05:27	0:08:43	0:04:37	0:07:23
3:00:00	0:04:08	0:06:36	0:03:32	0:05:39

TP: Threshold Pace	The maximum pace you can hold for the designated time / distance
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Target Marathon finish time:	MP: Marathon Pace		HMP: Half Marathon Pace	
	min/km	min/mi	min/km	min/mi
6:00:00	08:34	13:43	07:53	0:12:38
5:00:00	07:08	11:26	06:27	0:10:19
4:00:00	05:43	09:08	05:00	0:08:00
3:00:00	04:17	06:51	03:45	0:06:00

PACED MARATHON PLAN

	MON	TUES	WEDS	THURS	FRI	SAT	SUN
1	Rest day	Run	Workout	Run	Rest day	Run	Run
		5k EP	Cross training	5k EP with 3k paced		8k HMP	10k EP
2	Rest day	Run	Workout	Run	Rest day	Run	Run
		5k EP with 3k HMP	Cross training	7k HMP		10 min warm up, 2x (1k TP, 1k EP)	12k EP
3	Rest day	Run	Workout	Run	Rest day	Run	Run
		10 min EP, 3x (1k TP, 500m recovery jog)	Cross training	9k HMP	Yoga	8k hill run	15k EP
4	Rest day	Run	Workout	Run	Rest day	Run	Run
		8k fartlek	Cross training	12k HMP		10 min EP 2 x (2k TP, 1k recovery)	10k EP
5	Rest day	Run	Workout	Run	Rest day	Run	Run
		9k fartlek	Cross training	10 min EP 3 x (2k TP, 1k recovery)		10 min EP 3 x (2k TP, 1k recovery)	17k EP
6	Rest day	Run	Workout	Run	Rest day	Run	Run
		10 min EP 10 x (500m TP, 500m EP)	Cross training	10k SP		8k hill run	17k EP with 8 kilometers at MP
7	Rest day	Run	Workout	Run	Rest day	Run	Run
		5k EP	Cross training	2k EP 3k SP 2k EP		6k with hill sprints	10k EP
8	Rest day	Run	Workout	Run	Rest day	Run	Run
		9k EP	Cross training	10 min EP 2 x (3k TP, 500m EP)		10k fartlek	21k EP

Glossary:

Fartlek: Swedish for 'speedplay' is simply defined as periods of fast running intermixed with periods of slower running. Go for a run and set yourself random intervals as you're running. Sprint to the lamppost, speed up to the traffic lights...

	MON	TUES	WEDS	THURS	FRI	SAT	SUN
9	Rest day	Run	Workout	Run	Rest day	Run	Run
		2k EP 3k SP 2k EP	Cross training	12k SP		7k fartlek	26k EP
10	Rest day	Run	Workout	Run	Rest day	Run	Run
		2k EP 4 x (1k TP, 1k EP) 2k EP	Cross training	10k SP		5k hill run	29k EP
11	Rest day	Run	Workout	Run	Rest day	Run	Run
		2k EP 12 x (500m TP, 200m EP) 2k EP	Cross training	7k SP		2k EP 2k with 200m paced sections 1k EP	Run in a half marathon race
12	Rest day	Run	Workout	Run	Rest day	Run	Run
		7k EP	Cross training	Pyramid: 1k EP, 2k SP, 2k TP, 2k SP, 1k EP		3k EP 2x (2k TP, 500m EP) 1k EP	32k EP
13	Rest day	Run	Workout	Run	Rest day	Rest day	Run
		7k EP	Cross training	2k EP, 8 x (800m TP, 200m EP), 2k EP	Yoga		35k EP (longest training run!)
14	Rest day	Run	Workout	Run	Rest day	Run	Run
		8k EP	Cross training	1k EP 4 x (2k TP, 1k recovery) 1k EP		2k EP 3k TP 2k EP	21k EP
15	Rest day	Run	Workout	Run	Rest day	Run	Run
		7k EP	Cross training	2k EP, 4k MP, 5 x (500m TP, 200m EP), 2k EP	Yoga	6k SP	13k EP
16	Rest day	Run	Workout	Rest day	Rest day	Rest day	 Race Day
		7k EP	Cross training			Rest, hydrate, stretch	

CIRCUITS EXPLAINED

Circuits are a great way to increase your strength in advance of a big run. Build up your muscles and endurance and you'll feel much stronger and ready to face those miles.

We've collated a few of our team's favourite pre-race exercises and explained how they work. You can then use them in the pattern on the next page to really take your training to the next level.

Lunges

Good for strengthening glutes & legs

1. Stand with feet staggered far apart, left in front of right with right heel raised, and hands on hips; balance body weight mainly on left foot.
2. Bend left knee 90 degrees as you lower into a lunge, right knee bent.
3. Return to start position.

Do 10 to 15 reps; switch sides and repeat.
For the second round, hold dumbbells in each hand, arms by your side as you dip down. For the third, add in a bicep curl with the dumbbells as you lower down.

Dead lift + Row

It's so important to look after your back, so position is key here. A great workout for biceps, glutes & hamstrings too.

1. Stand with feet hip-width apart, holding a dumbbell in each hand in front of thighs, palms facing each other.
2. Hinge forward from hips until back is parallel to floor, arms hanging down. Drive elbows behind you, bringing hands by ribs.
3. Lower dumbbells, then return to start position to complete 1 rep.

Do 10 to 15 reps.

Rower Sit Up

Excellent for shoulders, abs & lengthening tight back muscles

1. Lie faceup on floor with arms stretched behind head
2. Engage abs and sit up, bending knees in toward chest as you sweep arms out and around legs.
3. Lower back to start position without fully touching arms and legs to floor.

Do 10 to 15 reps.

Plank Matrix

Good for strengthening abdominals, back & shoulders

1. Lie face down with forearms on the floor shoulder width apart. Keeping your core tight, your back straight, and your bum down, rest on your forearms and hold your plank position for 30 seconds.
2. Move onto your right side, putting one arm in the air. Your hips should be high off the ground, rest sideways on your right forearm. Hold for 30 seconds.
3. Move onto the left side, hold for 30 seconds. Repeat 3 times

Single Leg Squat

Great for strengthening leg muscles, particularly glutes and quads

1. Stand with feet hip-width apart, arms extended forward in front of chest; lift right foot a few inches off floor, foot flexed.
2. Lower into a single-leg squat, bending left knee 90 degrees. Return to start position.
3. Do 10 to 15 reps; switch legs and repeat. Try and lift your right leg higher as you squat.

Box jumps

This is a great high energy workout for the lower legs, the glutes and quads

1. Find a sturdy box or step 2 feet in height. Stand 1.5 feet away. Bend your knees slightly, squat down and explode upward onto the platform, swinging your arms upward and landing lightly on the balls of your feet. Hold this position for 2—3 seconds; then jump back down to the floor, landing on both feet. The squat is the important part here – so take it low!

Repeat 3 times

CIRCUIT PATTERN IDEAS

We've detailed below a line up of circuits where you can use the exercises from the previous page, along with some newer ones. We've found that these workouts are best when you mix it up, so this is a great starting point but feel free to go off piste.

You can do these absolutely anywhere, don't worry about speed, all you need is your own body weight and a basic set of dumbbells.

1 Circuit

1. Box Jumps — 40 seconds
2. Plank Matrix — 40 seconds
3. Deadlift & Row — 40 seconds

Do this circuit two times before taking a 1-minute break.

2 Circuit

1. Single-Leg Deadlifts — 40 seconds
2. Hand Release Push-Ups — 40 seconds
3. Rower Sit Up — 40 seconds

Do this circuit two times before taking a 1-minute break.

3 Circuit

1. Hip thrusters — 40 seconds
2. Lunges — 40 seconds
3. Single Leg Squats — 40 seconds

Do this circuit two times before taking a 1-minute break.

4 Circuit

1. Hip thrusters — 40 seconds
2. Lunges — 40 seconds
3. Single Leg Squats — 40 seconds

Do this circuit two times before taking a 1-minute break.

5 Circuit

1. Hand Release Push-Ups — 40 seconds
2. Burpees — 40 seconds
3. Press Ups — 40 seconds

Do this circuit two times before taking a 1-minute break.

6 Circuit

1. Step Up Bicep Curl — 40 seconds
2. Lunges — 40 seconds
3. Box Jumps — 40 seconds

Do this circuit two times before taking a 1-minute break.

7 Circuit

1. Hip thrusters — 40 seconds
2. Single Leg Squats — 40 seconds
3. Cossack Squats — 40 seconds

Do this circuit two times before taking a 1-minute break.

8 Circuit

1. Burpees — 40 seconds
2. Step Up Bicep Curl — 40 seconds
3. Jumping Jacks with Dumbbells — 40 seconds

Do this circuit two times before taking a 1-minute break.

NUTRITION

We've created a brief list of what of our best nutritional tips for the lead up to race day. However, these are a guide so don't suddenly change your whole diet for whey protein. Keep it healthy, and if you're unsure, consult a sports nutritionist.

The Run Up

In the lead up to a big race, it's important to start as you mean to finish. The worst thing you can do is change your diet suddenly on race day. So, if you plan on running with gels or protein bars, start running with them now.

We love Tribe, Clif or Prime Bars for slow release energy on the go. Otherwise, gels are available to buy at pretty much any running shop, or you could go old fashioned and stash some almonds in your pocket. However you do it, start getting your stomach used to it as soon as possible. Gels in particular can have an 'interesting' effect on your tum if you haven't used one before.

Don't be afraid to fuel up on the fly

The average runner will burn approximately 100 calories per mile of running, so if you're going a long way before breakfast, it's advisable to consider how much fuel your body will have.

Don't leave it to the last minute, fuel up, even if you don't currently want to. Fatigue can set in very quickly so it's advisable to preempt it by eating at regular intervals. You might wake up before a run, have a great complex-carbohydrate-fueled breakfast but then start to wane an hour or so later. Take some bars/almonds with you and keep up the momentum.

Complex carbohydrates

Complex carbs are your greatest friend. Wholewheat pasta, brown bread, potatoes, fruit, porridge and healthy grains with lots of slow release energy will keep you going through the 'wall'. They're packed full of nutrients such as fibre, vitamin C and calcium.

Foods like white bread, white pastas and processed foods are full of sugar, and while they'll give you an instant hunger fix and a quick boost, it's not sustainable. Switch up your diet for the good hearty grains and you'll see your endurance increase.

Our favourite pre-race foods: Sweet potatoes, avocados, almonds, eggs, whole grain bread, oranges, beans, lentils, salmon, chicken, yoghurt, bananas and the all important fresh veg. Obviously not all at once.

Pre Race

Carb loading is definitely one of our favourite parts of racing, but it's important not to overdo it. Go bananas on the pasta the night before and you might end up feeling sluggish on race day.

Have a your last big meal at about lunchtime the day before the race, then just have a normal size dinner. This will stop you going overboard, stick to the wholegrains and you'll be right as rain the next day.

Race Day

If you're used to having a cup of coffee before a race, do it. Keep your routine. We recommend a good hearty breakfast, avoid high fat foods like dairy and meats, keep it relatively plain with porridge/toast/fruit.

Take some supplies with you to the race, it's best to get there early to get your number and get the lay of the land, so you might need to fuel up again. Above all, drink water, stay hydrated.

Hell yes! You've done it

Time to celebrate. But first, eat something sugary, replenish with fruit (or haribo, it seems to be readily available at most finish lines!) Try Gatorade or coconut water which are full of electrolytes. Your body is great at absorbing complex carbohydrates after a run, mix with protein to aid recovery.

Avoid eating a huge meal, go for something restorative and try not to go too crazy with the celebrating. Although, having said that, a few post-race beers are unlikely to have a detrimental effect. Alcohol does dehydrate you so be sure to drink plenty of water.

Best of luck from the whole team at Letdothis.com, you'll smash it.

RACE DAY TIPS

From experts and amateurs alike. Survive the pressure.

"Don't change too much on race day - that goes for nutrition, kit, warm up etc. Otherwise you'll be asking for trouble..."

— Olly Freeman

"Zone out - switch off your mobile phone/music and enjoy the surroundings. That's what you are there for after all."

— Bradley Wiggins

"I always go off too hot so keep telling myself for the first half don't be an idiot, for the second half don't be a wimp.

And never, ever forget the Vaseline."

— Sam Browne

"I always get pretty nervous on race day itself, so make sure I'm over-prepped the night before. Kit laid out and target splits written on my arm. And don't forget to stay hydrated!"

— Stephanie Ede

"I like to find a quiet spot, shut my eyes and visualise each stage of the race - how I'm feeling physically and mentally - so when I'm out there I'm ready for whatever comes my way"

— Constantine Louloudis

"My first tip would be to eat. After a hard race you need to refuel. Your body needs protein to repair the muscles and carbohydrates/sugar to replenish the muscles' glycogen stores"

— Matt Rees aka The Welsh Runner

"Join together with a group — be it a running club or a group of friends, just so you have that social side of things to help motivate each other. When you're all working towards a target, you pick each other up."

— Paula Radcliffe

"Whatever the discipline, pace yourself. But always finish empty."

— Marc Hibbins

"Just have fun, that's the biggest thing. As long as you're smiling and having fun that's all that matters."

— Michael Phelps

THE MISSION

Letsdothis.com is built by athletes, so whether it's your first 5k or your tenth ironman we want to make it as easy as possible for people to find their next challenge.

From Olympic gold medal winners to people psyched by pushing their kids around a Disney marathon, these races have changed all of our lives. We're here to make sure they change yours too.

If you have any questions or queries, or if you'd like to see our other available plans, please get in touch below.

[Talk to the team](#)



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