



TRAINING PLAN

Marathon Training Plan - Improver



running
us

COACHING &
CONSULTANCY
runningwithus.com

THE MARATHON

IMPROVER

THIS TRAINING PLAN, PUT TOGETHER BY OUR COACHING PARTNERS RUNNINGWITHUS, IS DESIGNED TO GET YOU TO THE START LINE OF THE MARATHON FEELING PREPARED AND CONFIDENT THAT YOU CAN ACHIEVE YOUR GOAL.

THE RIGHT PLAN FOR ME?

This 16 week improver runner's plan is designed for regular runners who have perhaps completed a 10km, half or even full marathon before. This plan will see you training 5 times a week and we would encourage you to complement the running outline with core conditioning and cross training as outlined in our Running Guide.

WHY TRAIN IN THIS WAY?

If you keep doing the same things over and over again you can't expect different results. This plan is designed to add variety, structure and progression to your training. It will challenge you across a range of different heart rate zones and gradually build up your ability to run at your desired goal half marathon pace.

WHAT IF I AM NOT THERE YET?

This training plan assumes you are able to run for 45-60 minutes continuously at an easy pace. Really focus on holding back your effort on your easy runs - many beginner runners try to run them a little too hard. You can always mix the sessions in the plan with cross training. Our 'beginners' plan might be for you if you feel this is too much of a step up.

IS THIS EVERYTHING I NEED TO KNOW?

No - this plan is supported by our *Running Guides*, which gives more detail on the structure of the running sessions and top tips on nutrition and recovery to leave you fitter, stronger and more energised as you progress through your training journey.

THE MARATHON

IMPROVER

WHAT DO ALL THE TERMS MEAN?

All of the training schedules involve a broad variety of training sessions and intensities. We have a full glossary of the different terms you will see in this guide, such as 'threshold running' and 'progression runs', in our guide called 'The Training'

WHAT IF I MISS A SESSION, PICK UP A NIGGLE OR GET SICK?

No training plan is designed to be a tablet of stone; it's a guide and only one approach to get you in great shape. Training for a half marathon is a journey, though, and doesn't always go smoothly. Feel free to chop and change the plan and shift runs to different days that may work better for you. Take care not to run back-to-back 'hard' days – so try to avoid running a threshold session followed the next day by a hill session, for example.

If you miss days through work, holiday, sickness or injury, don't try to play catch-up. Step back into the plan where you left off, and be patient. If you feel you need to catch up, check out our cross-training tips in the Running Guide ... don't just add more running unless you are ready.

NOTES

Always include a 10 minute easy warm up and cool down either side of 'threshold', 'hill' or 'interval' efforts.

Check out our *Running Guide* for our top core exercises and stretches. Remember to stretch well after every run.

THE MARATHON

IMPROVER

Wk	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
1.	Rest	Progression run, 30 mins. 10 mins easy, 10 mins steady, 10 mins threshold	Recovery run, 30 mins or 30 mins aerobic cross training + core	Easy / Steady run, 30 mins	Rest	Continuous hills, 4 sets of 5 mins effort + with 2 min jog recovery + core	Long run, 75-90 mins conversational pace
2.	Rest	Progression run, 30 mins. 10 mins easy, 10 mins steady, 10 mins threshold	Recovery run, 30 mins or 30 mins aerobic cross training + Core	Easy / Steady run, 30-40 mins	Rest	Continuous hills, 45 mins total. 3 x (7 mins effort / 2 mins jog) + core	Long run, 90 mins conversational pace
3.	Rest	Progression run, 45 mins. 15 mins easy, 15 mins steady, 15 mins threshold	Recovery run, 30 mins or 30 mins aerobic cross training + Core	Easy / Steady run, 40 mins)	Rest	Continuous hills, 45 mins total. 2 x (10 mins effort / 2 mins jog) + core	Long run, 90-100 mins easy pace on undulating route
4.	Rest	Easy run, 30-40 mins	Recovery run, 30 mins or 30 mins aerobic cross training + Core	Easy run, 30 mins	Rest	Parkrun or self timed 5km TT	Long run, 75-90 mins easy Long run.

THE MARATHON

IMPROVER

Wk	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
5.	Rest	Threshold run, 45 mins total. 4 x (5 mins threshold / 2 min jog)	Recovery run, 30-40 mins or 30-40 mins aerobic cross training + Core.	40 min out and back run – run out steady pace for 20 mins, turn back 2-3 mins faster	Rest	Continuous hills, 45 mins total. 4 x (6 mins effort / 90s jog) + core	1 hour 45 mins easy pace on undulating route.
6.	Rest	Threshold run, 45 mins including 5 x (5 mins threshold / 90s jog rec)	Easy run, 40 mins or 40 mins aerobic cross training + core.	40 min out and back run – run out steady pace for 20 mins, turn back 2-3 mins faster	Rest	Continuous hills, 3 x (8 mins effort / 90s jog) within a 50 min run	Long run, 1hr 50 mins - 2 hours easy over an undulating route
7.	Rest	Threshold session, 5 x (5 mins threshold / 75s jog rec)	Easy run, 40-50 mins or 40-50 mins aerobic cross training + core	45 minutes with the final 25 at threshold effort	Rest	Continuous hills, 45-60 mins total. 3 x (10 mins effort / 90s jog) + core	Long run, 2 hours – 2 hours 15 mins easy
8.	Rest	Threshold session 5 x (6 mins threshold/90s jog) within a 60 min run	Easy run, 40-50 mins or 40-50 mins aerobic cross training + core.	Progression run of 20/20/20	Rest	Parkrun or 5km TT + core	Long run – 2 hours 15-30 mins all easy

THE MARATHON

IMPROVER

Wk	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
9	Rest	45 minutes with 3 x 6 minutes @ half marathon pace from 2-3 minutes easy jog recovery	30 minute recovery jog + core	Progression run of 10 minute easy / 10 minute steady / 10 minutes half marathon pace + strides	Rest	20-30 minute easy run	HALF MARATHON @ pb pace + 15-20 min easy jog (warm down) OR 2 hour long run with the last 60 minutes @ marathon pace.
10.	Rest	Recovery run, 45 mins	Easy run, 40-50 mins or 40-50 mins aerobic cross training + core.	Threshold session, 75 min run final 30 mins to include 4 x 6 mins threshold, 3 mins easy recovery	Rest	40-50 mins easy run + core	2 hours 45 minutes with 3 x 20 minutes at marathon pace from 5 minutes easy recovery
11.	Rest	6 x 3 minutes alternating odd numbers @ threshold effort, even @ 5km effort with 90s jogged recovery	Easy run, 45-60 mins or 45-60 mins aerobic cross training + core.	75 minutes with the final 30 at threshold effort.	Rest	40-50 mins easy run + core	Long run, 2hrs 30 -45 mins total. Last 45 mins @ marathon pace
12.	Rest	8 x 3 minutes alternating odd numbers @ threshold effort, even @ 5km effort with 90s jogged recovery	Easy run, 45-60 mins or 45-60 mins aerobic cross training + core.	80 mins total inc. 3x (15 mins MP / 2-3 min jog).	Rest	40-50 mins easy run + core	Long run – 3hrs – 3hrs 15 mins with final 60 mins @ MP

THE MARATHON

IMPROVER

Wk	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
13	Rest	10 x 3 minutes alternating odd numbers @ threshold effort, even @ 5km effort with 90s jogged recovery	Easy run, 45-60 mins or 45-60 mins aerobic cross training + core	80-90 mins total inc. 3 x (15 mins MP / 2-3 min jog).	Rest	Threshold run, 45mins total. 15mins easy, 15mins steady, 15mins threshold + core	Long run, 2hrs 45 mins – 3hrs total. Last 45mins @ marathon pace
14.	Rest	5 mins @ threshold + 2 x (5 x 90 seconds @ 5km effort) (60s between efforts, 120s between sets)	Easy run, 45-60 mins or 45-60 mins aerobic cross training + core	90 mins with final 30-40 mins @ MP	Rest	Threshold run, 45mins total. 6 x (3 mins threshold / 3 mins steady) + core	Long run, 1hr 45 mins - 2hrs with with the final 30 mins @ MP
15.	Rest	5 mins @ threshold + 10 x 90 seconds @ 5km effort) (60s between efforts.	Easy run, 30-45 mins or 30-45mins aerobic cross training + core..	Progression run of 15/15/15 with middle 15 @ MP	Rest	Parkrun or 30 minute steady run + core.	Easy run, 75 mins total
16.	Rest	Easy run, 30 mins total including 3 x (5 mins @ threshold effort / 3 mins jog recovery)	Recovery run, 30 minutes	Easy run, 25-30 mins	Rest	25 minute super easy	Marathon Race Day - Good Luck!

THE MARATHON

IMPROVER

- Important note: please do a 15-minute warm-up and cool-down before threshold, continuous hills or interval sessions.
- If you're feeling OK, you may wish to consider a 20–30 minute recovery run in the morning before any of the quality sessions above.
- Always substitute cross-training for running if you are injured, very sore or it's not safe to run.
- Please add core conditioning, Pilates or yoga classes once or twice a week if you have time.
- Try to stretch every day for at least 10 minutes.
- Always eat within 20–30 minutes of finishing a run.
- Always train at the specified paces; don't compromise or run too hard. Tiredness always catches up, so take extra rest if required.