
Marathon Training Plan: Beginner

PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

- Basic walking and jogging fitness, 15-minute slow run, 3-4 times a week
- Cross training or strength training, 15-minute at least once a week

PACE YOURSELF

Check out this [training pace calculator](#) (*Runner's World*, 2018) to help you establish your pace.

Gentle Run - slower than your target marathon pace.

Steady 'Tempo' Run - slightly faster than 'gentle', which may cause some discomfort initially. You should then return to your 'gentle' run or walk. This should help you improve your overall stamina and prepare your body for longer runs.

Long Run - week by week you will gradually increase the distance. Longer runs get you used to staying moving for longer. Take it slow, you can always walk parts and try different routes to keep it interesting.

Cross Training – this can be any activity outside running (e.g. yoga, Pilates, weight training, HIIT, cycling and swimming).

Active Rest – try to keep moving little and often throughout the day by going for a walk and stretching.

Fartlek - fartlek translates to “speed play”, where you jog at your 'gentle'-'steady' pace and increase the speed randomly to 70-100% full sprint (e.g. you're running along a road with lampposts and decide that you will sprint the next 2 lampposts, then go back to the normal speed. A minute later you see a bench

100 yards up and you sprint to that, then go back to your normal pace. Continue this for the set number of minutes in the program. This is to work on your endurance.)

Missing a run – when training for 16 weeks you will inevitably miss a few sessions, so don't panic. Sometimes life will get in the way. Try not to miss more than one run per week and try to make 90% of the long runs. Don't try to play catch up too much, as the key is quality over quantity. Don't do five runs in one week, just because you only did two the week before. Stick to the rough plan as closely as possible.

*Please note that days and sessions can be switched e.g. your long run on the Saturday instead of the Sunday.

Nutrition – if you're running over 90 mins, bring water and nutritional with you. Practice the gels, drinks and other forms of nutrition you will be using on marathon day to avoid surprise.

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Week 1	Rest	20 min gentle run (can walk)	5 min gentle run 3 x 2 min steady run with 1 min walk 10 min gentle run	Rest or cross/ strength training and stretch	20-25 min gentle run (can walk) or rest	Rest or strength training	35 min long, gentle run (can walk)
Week 2	Rest	25 min gentle run (try to walk slightly less)	5 min gentle run 3 x 3 min steady run with 1 min walk 10 min gentle run	Rest or cross/ strength training and stretch	25 min gentle run or rest or strength training	Rest or strength training	40-45 min long, gentle run
Week 3	Rest	25 min gentle run (try not to walk)	5 min gentle run 5 x 2 min steady run with 1 min walk 10 min gentle run	Rest or cross/ strength training and stretch	25-30 min gentle run or rest or strength/ cross training	Rest or strength training	50-55 min long, gentle run
Week 4	Rest	30 min gentle run, with 10 min of fartlek	5 min gentle run 5 x 1 min hill runs (rest with walk or jog downhill)	Rest or cross/ strength training and stretch	30 min gentle run with 10 min fartlek or rest or cross/	Rest or strength training	60 min long, gentle run

			10 min gentle run		strength training		
Week 5	Rest	30 min gentle run with 10 min fartlek	5 min gentle run 5 x 1 min hill runs (rest with walk or jog downhill) 10 min gentle run	Rest or cross/strength training and stretch	Easy 30 min run with 10 min fartlek or rest or cross/strength training	Rest or strength training	75 min long run
Week 6	Rest	10 min gentle run 10 min steady run 10 min gentle run	10 min gentle run 4 x 3 min steady run with 1 min gentle run/ walking 10 min gentle run	Rest or cross/strength training and stretch	30-40 min gentle run with 10 min fartlek or rest or cross/strength training	Rest or strength training	90-100 min long gentle run
Week 7 (recovery week – slightly less intense)	Rest	30 min gentle run	10 min gentle run 5 x 2 min steady run with 1 min walk/gentle 10 min gentle run	Rest or cross/strength training and stretch	30 min gentle or rest or strength training	Rest or strength training	60 min long, gentle run

Week 8	Rest	40 min gentle run	10 min gentle run 6 x 2 min steady run with 1 min gentle run 10 min gentle run	Rest or cross/ strength training and stretch	30 min gentle run with 10 min fartlek or rest or strength training	Rest or strength training	110-120 min long, gentle run
Week 9	Rest	40 min gentle run 10 min at marathon pace	10 min gentle run 6 x 1 min hill runs with 1 min jog downhill 10 min gentle run	Rest or cross/ strength training and stretch	40 min gentle run with 10 min fartlek or rest or strength training	Rest or strength training	130-140 long, gentle run
Week 10	Rest	40 min gentle run 10 min fartlek	10 min gentle run 7 x 45 sec steady hill runs with 1 min jog downhill 10 min gentle run	Rest or cross/ strength training and stretch	40 min gentle run with 10 min at marathon pace or rest or strength training	Rest or strength training	150-160 min long, gentle run

Week 11	Rest	45 min gentle run 10 min at marathon pace	10 min gentle run 6 x 1 min hill runs with 1 min jog downhill 10 min gentle run	Rest or cross/ strength training and stretch	40 min gentle run with 10 min fartlek or rest or strength training	Rest or strength training	Do a half marathon (try to find a local race)
Week 12	Rest	40 min gentle run 15 min at marathon pace	10 min gentle run 6 x 4 min steady run with 1 min gentle run 10 min gentle run	Rest or cross/ strength training and stretch	40-45 min gentle run with 15 min fartlek or rest or strength training	Rest or strength training	180-190 long, gentle with 1-3 x 30 min at your marathon pace
Week 13	Rest	45 min gentle run 10 min at marathon pace	10 min gentle run 6 x 4 min steady run with 1 min gentle runs 10 min gentle run	Rest or cross/ strength training and stretch	40 min gentle run with 15 min at marathon pace or rest or strength training	Rest or strength training	200-230 min long, gentle run, take breaks when needed/ walk

Week 14	Rest	45 min gentle run with 10 min fartlek	10 min gentle run 8 x 2 min steady run with 1 min gentle run 10 min gentle run	Rest or cross/ strength training and stretch	40 min gentle run with 10 min fartlek or rest or strength training	Rest or strength training	120 min long, gentle run with a few intervals at marathon pace
Week 15	Rest	40 min gentle run 10 min at marathon pace	10 min gentle run 6 x 2 min steady run with 1 min gentle run 10 min gentle run	Rest or cross/ strength training and stretch	30 min gentle run with 10 min fartlek or rest or strength training	Rest or strength training	80 min long, gentle run
Week 16	Rest	30 min gentle run	Rest and stretch	Rest	Rest	15-20 min gentle run or 30-45 min walk	Race day! You can do it!