MARATHON

Improver Plan

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COACHING &
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This plan.

This improver marathon plan is designed to get you ready to run run a marathon and improve on a recent marathon performance or step up from 10km and half marathon races to your first full marathon. It can be used to cover a race of paces from 3 hours right thorugh to 4.5 hours and assumes you are ready to run for 75-90 minutes continously before you start.

Keeping it all in balance.

Performance training, and developing your fitness can seem complicated at times with lots of information and conflicting advice. In truth it can be kept pretty simple. The key is the training triangle you see to the right. Most of us think about the training sessions we need to do to become stronger, fitter or faster. In reality you won't really make gains until the other two sides of the triangle - the nutrition, and the rest and recovery are also considered as much focus and attention. As you increase your training keep the triangle in balance by improving your nutrition by ensuring you listen to you body and respect its need to rest in order to improve.

Training. Your running, cross training and conditioning sessions comtained within this plan need to progress over the weeks and get more specific to the distance for whcih you are trianing. .

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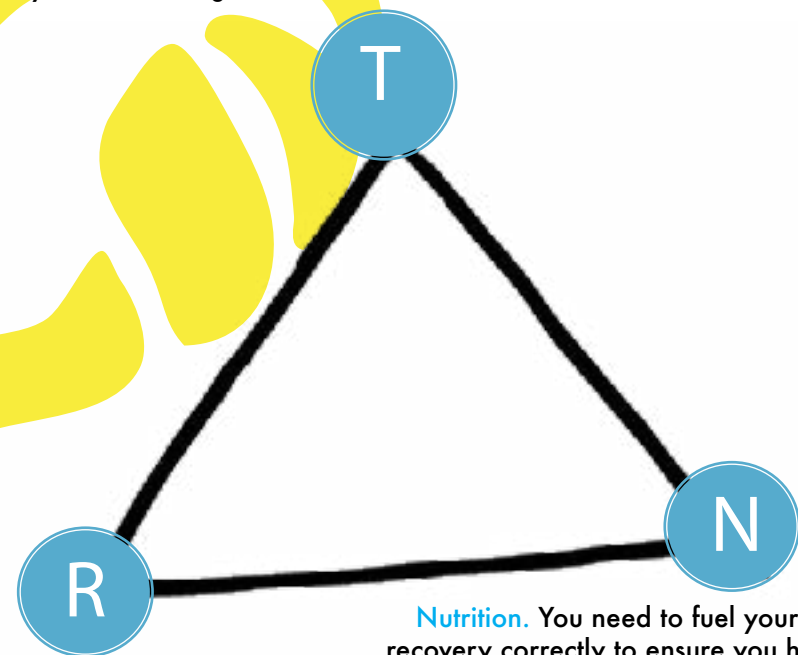
Rest. Recovery between sessions is as critical to success as the training itself. Your body improves and progresses during these rest phases, rest days and as you sleep.

Nutrition. You need to fuel your training and recovery correctly to ensure you have the right macro and micro nutrients in the body to both have the energy to train hard, but also heal muscles and cells between sessions and keep you immune system, blood and bones strong.

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.

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

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 marahton pace from 5 minutes easy recvoery
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

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!

Rest (R)

To help your body cope with the workload, rest is going to be as important a part of your training schedule as the running itself. Listen to your body and take heed of any warning signs. If you feel fatigued even before you've run a step, find yourself thinking up excuses not to run or start suffering a series of minor injuries; you probably need more time off. Taking enough rest allows physical and mental recovery and gives your body the time to adapt to your workload.

Threshold Runs (THR)

After the long run threshold runs are probably your most valuable workouts. They are run at a controlled brisk pace, about 80–85% of your MHR, you'll only be capable of uttering a couple of words to your training partners. Tempo/threshold runs improve your lactate threshold (the speed above which your body struggles to cope with the lactic acid created by burning energy without oxygen), your running economy and aerobic capacity .

Long Runs (LR)

Long runs are vital in your plan and key to racing well in long distance races
from 5km – marathon. At first, concentrate on increasing the time on your feet rather than worrying about distance. Start off by heading out for at least an hour and run at a conversational pace or 6/10 effort. Gradually this will build to 75% of WHR as you start to practice periods of marathon or race pace running. These runs improve your muscular endurance and condition your body to burn fat as its primary fuel source.

Continuous Hills (CH)

Hill running develops strength in your muscles and tendons without putting them under the type of stress they are exposed to during faster running. Run up a 5-10% gradient for 45-90 seconds at a 'threshold effort'. Turn immediately at the top and run down the hill at the same effort, then turn at the bottom and repeat without any recovery until the rep time ends. Like a tempo/threshold run, a hill session is time to concentrate, as you should be working at about 80–85% of MHR and be able to utter just a few words.

Interval Training (IT)

Intervals help to boost specific race pace speed and involve running timed efforts with a controlled recovery. The effort level is around 85–100% of MHR, depending on the duration of the event you are training for and the length and volume of intervals used. A typical example might be 6 x 3 minutes @ 5km race pace with a 90 second jog recovery.

Marathon Pace (MP)

Understanding the pace and effort you intend on running your marathon at is very important. Pace judgment and patience on the big day will be crucial to running your best marathon. Marathon pace practice allows your body and mind to get used to what will be required on race day, and it builds endurance quickly.

Warming Up/Warm down (WU)

When you are going to do any faster running such as Hills, Threshold Runs, Intervals or a race, it is important to warm up gradually. A 10-15 minute jog lets your muscles warm up and improve their range of movement.

Cross-Training & core conditioning (XT)

It is important that your training is balanced with some non-impact activities such as swimming, cycling, rowing, the cross trainer etc, otherwise you are more likely to pick up an annoying injury that will set back your training. More experienced runners should also add cross training to their regime. Endurance running, especially the marathon, requires whole body-conditioning. To achieve this you should aim to work a variety of muscle groups and not just your legs. Be careful not to make the cross-training, whether it is core conditioning, lifting weights, using an elliptical trainer or practicing Pilates, so intense that you are left too tired for your running.

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