

# MARATHON TRAINING PLAN

*/About the plan...*

## **Congratulations on signing up and committing to run a marathon!**

### **Before you start**

A Marathon is a long way. If you are new to exercise, have been away from exercise for a while, or you have any physical impairment that could be aggravated by running, **CHECK WITH YOUR GP BEFORE YOU START TRAINING.** This is particularly important if you are over 50.

### **Equipment**

You will be spending a lot of time on your feet during the next 16-weeks so a correctly fitting pair of run specific training shoes, and running socks will pay dividends in helping to look after your feet. If you can, buy shoes from a shop that offers a fitting service. The only other essential piece of equipment is something to use for timing your runs; but this can be an ordinary watch or a phone. It doesn't need to be fancy if you are just starting out. As the plan progresses your long runs will be distance based.

### **Food**

You will be burning hundreds of extra calories a week following this plan, so do make sure you are eating a balanced and sufficient diet that includes enough Carbohydrate, Protein and Vitamins. You will also want to consider what to eat during your longer runs; this is a consideration for runs that last more than approximately 70mins. Ideally, consume which ever brand of products you will use on race day, during your training runs.

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**This programme assumes you can run minimum 5k comfortably, but ideally 10k.**

## **Using this plan**

This plan has been specifically written to be easy to follow and suitable for less experienced runners. It is divided up into four week “blocks”. Each block has an easier week at the end of it. I suggest that you print off one block at a time and pin it up somewhere very visible. Each time you finish a run tick it off- surprisingly motivating! Just focus on the block you are in and don’t worry about anything else.

## **Life!!**

Sometimes life will get in the way and you just won’t be able to run on a particular day. The plan is designed to work with three runs a week, but you can move them to better days. But try to avoid running on consecutive days. The key run of the week is the Long Slow Run and that is the one you really should not drop. If you can only run two days on a particular week then don’t carry over the missed run to the following week.

## **Rest**

Your body becomes fitter when you are resting not when you are actually running. Therefore getting enough rest is very important. Hence the fourth week is easier and runs are not scheduled on consecutive days. If your normal week contains other exercise (such as gym classes) think about how much total exercise you are doing in a week and are you getting enough recovery?

## Listen to your body

You are not a machine and we are all made differently! As you are training on your own (and using this plan at your own risk), it is very important you listen to your body and train safely. You will have already checked with your GP before you start, but issues might arise later. Here are some top tips for staying safe whilst you train:

- Always warm up and cool down. Each run sessions starts with a 5 minute warm up and 5 minute cool down.
- If you are feeling unwell do not run. If you start to feel unwell during a session STOP immediately and end the session.
- Running causes impact on our muscles and joints, unfortunately it can lead to various niggles. If you have a mild problem do not run. It is always better to let it recover and miss a week rather than cause a bigger problem and miss a month.
- If you develop a niggle during a run, or any sort of sharp pain, STOP immediately and end the session. If you are following the suggested pace and times this should be HIGHLY unlikely. But accidents happen, and it just takes a little uneven ground to twist an ankle.

Listen to your body and enjoy your running. It is a great way to keep fit and the overall health benefits far outweigh the small risks associated with the sport.

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*/Types of Run*

This is a 16-week programme to prepare you for your Marathon and is suitable for novice runners. This plan is based on running time / level of perceived effort. However, Long Slow Runs become distance based towards the middle of the plan to prepare you for the final distance.

## **EASY PACE**

The foundation of your running week and will build your cardiovascular aerobic fitness. It develops the systems you need for Marathon Running. These runs should not tire you. Running Easy Pace, you should be able to hold a conversation. This feels comfortable. Use the first five minutes to slow warm up. **RPE: 5 to 6**

## **STEADY PACE**

Slightly more challenging and developing the upper part of your aerobic fitness and make you more efficient. Improves your Marathon pace. You should still be able to hold a conversation but more broken. **RPE 6 to 7.**

## **TEMPO PACE**

Constant Speed Running. Working in the sub Lactate Threshold range, you are starting to use more of your Anaerobic Energy system. These runs will make you faster. Longer Tempo runs have variation in pace, please see notes at the of the plan. You should always warm up for 5mins minimum and hold Tempo pace for MAX 20mins (vary hard). **RPE 7 to 8.**

## **INTERVAL SETS**

Interval Training builds your strength, fitness and your efforts will be above your Lactate Threshold. You improve your ability to process and remove Lactic Acid. Sets comprise of repetitions of short hard (RPE 9) efforts followed by recovery of a set time. Example sets are provided for you in the notes at the end of the plan. **RPE 9.**

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	MON	TUE	WED	THR	FRI	SAT	SUN
WEEK 01		30mins @ Easy Pace		30mins @ Easy Pace			LSR 45mins Easy Pace
WEEK 02		25mins @ Easy Pace	20mins @ Easy Pace		20mins @ Easy Pace		LSR 50mins Easy Pace
WEEK 03		30mins @ Easy Pace	25mins @ Easy Pace		25mins @ Easy Pace		LSR 55mins Easy Pace
WEEK 04		30mins @ Easy Pace	30mins @ Easy Pace		50mins XTRAIN (Bike / Swim)		LSR 40mins Easy Pace



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ed@EdStivala.com

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	MON	TUE	WED	THR	FRI	SAT	SUN
WEEK 05		40mins @ Easy Pace	40mins @ Interval Set		40mins @ Steady Pace		LSR 65mins Easy Pace
WEEK 06		40mins @ Easy Pace	40mins @ Hill Rep Set (6 x 3"/3") Steady Pace		40mins @ Steady Pace		LSR 75mins Easy Pace
WEEK 07		45mins @ Easy Pace	35mins @ Interval Set		50mins @ Steady Pace		LSR 12 MILES Easy Pace
WEEK 08		40mins @ Easy Pace	35mins @ Steady Pace		50mins XTRAIN (Bike / Swim)		LSR 80mins Easy Pace



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WEEK  
**09**

**MON**

**TUE**

**WED**

**THR**

**FRI**

**SAT**

**SUN**

50mins @  
Easy Pace

35mins @  
Interval Set

50mins @  
Steady Pace

LSR 13 MILES  
Easy Pace

WEEK  
**10**

50mins @  
Easy Pace

50mins @ Hill  
Rep Set  
(7 x 3"/3")  
Steady Pace

35mins @  
Interval Set

LSR 15 MILES  
Easy Pace

WEEK  
**11**

55mins @  
Easy Pace

50mins @  
Steady Pace

60mins @  
Steady Pace

LSR 18 MILES  
Easy Pace

WEEK  
**12**

30mins @  
Easy Pace

40mins @  
XCOUNTRY  
Easy Pace

30mins @  
Steady Pace

LSR 13 MILES  
Easy Pace



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WEEK  
**13**

**MON**

**TUE**

**WED**

**THR**

**FRI**

**SAT**

**SUN**

50mins @  
Easy Pace

40mins @  
Steady Pace

40mins  
XTrain (Bike  
or Swim)

LSR 21 MILES  
Easy Pace

WEEK  
**14**

30mins @  
Easy Pace

50min @  
Steady Pace

50mins @  
Steady Pace

LSR 15 MILES

WEEK  
**15**

30mins @  
Easy Pace

30mins @  
Interval Set

30mins @  
Steady Pace

LSR 8 MILES

WEEK  
**16**

30mins @  
Easy Pace

25mins @  
Easy Pace

**RACE DAY  
GOOD LUCK !! :)**



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## */Interval Sets*

Interval sets are used sparingly in my Longer Distance Plans, as they do not simulate the nature of the race you are training for particularly well. They also involve running at speed and that presents an increased risk of injury. However, they do offer some specific advantages in terms of fitness gains and therefore are not excluded entirely. Always ensure that you have warmed up before you start your first set.

### **FROM WK5**

Warm Up

Main Set

6 repeats of:  
30seconds @ RPE 9  
2mins @ RPE 5

Cool Down

### **FROM WK 8**

Warm Up

Main Set

6 repeats of:  
1min @ RPE 9  
90seconds @ RPE 5

Cool Down

### **FROM WK 13**

Warm Up

Main Set

5 repeats of:  
30seconds @ RPE 9  
90seconds @ RPE 5

2 repeats of:  
3min @ RPE 8  
4mins @ RPE 5

5 repeats of:  
30seconds @ RPE 9  
90seconds @ RPE 5

Cool Down



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[ed@EdStivala.com](mailto:ed@EdStivala.com)

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*/Tempo Pace*

Tempo Pace runs are OPTIONAL in this plan. If you are finding the plan quite easy (different people will have different levels of fitness) you can elect to change two Steady Pace Runs per training block into Tempo Runs.

There is no requirement to do this other than for your own enjoyment! If you follow the plan as written you will run a successful Marathon

## **30min Total**

5min Warm Up RPE: 5

20min Tempo RPE: 8

5min Cool Down RPE: 3 4

## **40min Total**

4min Warm Up RPE: 5

15min Tempo RPE: 8

3min Easy RPE: 5

15min Tempo RPE: 8

3min Cool Down RPE: 3 4

## **50min Total**

5min Warm Up RPE: 5

20min Tempo RPE: 8

5min Easy RPE: 5

15min Tempo RPE: 8

5min Cool Down RPE: 3 4



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/RPE Scale

Some training plans are based on heart rate, some on pace. Alternatively, as is the case with this plan, a qualitative measure is used to express the how hard you feel you are working. This is call the Rate of Perceived Exertion and is a number between 1 and 10, as you will already have seen through out this plan.

RPE	Effort	Approximate Activity	Description
1	None	None	Standing or Sitting Still
2	Minimal	Shuffle	Minimal Movement with stops
3	Relaxed	Slow Walk	Easy Walk, good for cool downs
4	Light	Moderate Walk	Normal walking pace
5	Fairly Light	Fast Walk / Just about jog	Walking with rapid cadence long stride. You notice your breathing and HR increases a little
6	Moderate	Easy Pace Running	Active but not challenging. Can still talk easily
7	Challenging	Steady Pace Running	Sustainable effort, breathing / HR noticeable can talk in broken sentences
8	Slightly Hard	Tempo Pace Running	Brisk and feeling like an effort. Breathing is harder and talking in single words not sentences
9	Hard	Intervals Running	Fast running with arms pumping. Unsustainable for more than three or four minutes approximately
10	Maximal	Flat Out Sprint	Short sprint of less than a minute. May feel / be sick straight afterwards. if repeated three or four times



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