



16 Week Marathon Training Plan

Beginner

An easy to follow training plan with a steady build up to complete your first full marathon with just 4 training sessions per week.



WEEKLY WORKOUTS

This plan includes five types of workout activities each week. These are all important to get the fittest, strongest and fastest version of you to the Finish Line.

When planning your runs and end goal, it will be important to understand that you will need to experience different perceived efforts over different distances. For example, you can't maintain your 1k personal best time over a longer distance run such as a marathon. This is something you need to take into consideration when planning your goals and race pace.

As a guideline for this, you can rank your effort as a percentage from 0-100%. For example 100% is your full-on, max effort, can't breathe for a while after you finish, sprint.

Distance	Perceived effort	Notes
5k	85 – 95%	High intensity pace, you should be breathless. This feels like a sprint.
10k	80 – 85%	More challenging pace, and breath is laboured. You feel good at the start but becomes more difficult as you progress.
Half Marathon	70 – 85%	Tempo effort, and breathing is less laboured. This is a challenging pace but you can sustain it.
Full Marathon	50 – 70%	Smooth pace, and easier to talk throughout. Testing but sustainable and your marathon time is expected to be just over double your half marathon time.

Don't forget to keep a note of your training - you are likely to be eligible for one of the ReesLeisure Virtual Challenges / Distance Builder tees (from 10k to 1000 miles). Take a look at ReesLeisure.co.uk for more information



Marathon - 16 Week Training Plan



EASY

During an easy run you should aim to recover from hard efforts, and keep your legs mobile before the upcoming training that week. Aim for a gentle pace to really relax and enjoy yourself – you should be able to easily hold a conversation throughout.

STEADY/SLOW

Steady runs should feel a little more challenging and aim for around 60-75% effort. These runs help to get the miles under your belt, increase your distance and build your aerobic fitness and endurance. You will be able to talk intermittently in short sentences but can no longer maintain a conversation.

RACE PACE

On a race pace run you should complete this at the same pace you are aiming to finish your race on the day. For example, if you would like to complete your 10k/6mile race in 1 hour (10 minute miles), then you should complete your 4 mile race pace run in 40 minutes. Look out for our handy Race Pace Chart in this pack that will help you with this.

INTERVALS

Interval training is great to include in your training as a way to work harder than you would if it was a continuous effort. Switching between fast and slower efforts can help increase muscle power and endurance and is more performance-boosting than just running the miles. Alternate short high intensity bursts of activity with periods of rest and recovery inbetween. Interval training utilises both the anaerobic and aerobic energy systems of the body, which provides a whole host of benefits.

Benefits of interval training:

- 🌀 Reduce risk of injury or overtraining
- 🌀 Faster and more efficient workouts
- 🌀 Increased endurance
- 🌀 Weight loss

CROSS TRAINING

Cross training can do wonders in a run training plan. This simply means do an alternative type of exercise to running. This will keep up your fitness but also reduce the overall strain on your running muscles. Some examples of cross training that are great for your body include cycling, swimming, pilates, yoga or weights to strengthen and condition and hold your muscles in place when you get tired.

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
1	Rest	20 mins easy	3 miles (5km) steady	Rest	20 mins easy	Rest	4 miles (6km) steady
2	Rest	30 mins easy	3 miles (5km) race pace	Rest	30 mins Intervals	Rest	6 miles (10km) steady
3	Rest	30 mins easy	4 miles (6km) steady	Rest	30 mins Intervals	Rest	6 miles (10km) steady
4	Rest	40 mins easy	4 miles (6km) race pace	Rest	30 mins Intervals	Rest	8 miles (13km) steady
5	Rest	40 mins easy	5 miles (8km) steady	Rest	30 mins Intervals	Rest	10 miles (16km) race pace
6	Rest	30 mins easy	5 miles (8km) race pace	Rest	30 mins Intervals	Rest	10 miles (16km) steady
7	Rest	30 mins easy	6 miles (10km) steady	Rest	40 mins Intervals	Rest	12 miles (19km) steady
8	Rest	40 mins easy	6 miles (10km) race pace	Rest	50 mins Intervals	Rest	6 miles (10km) race pace
9	Rest	30 mins easy	5 miles (8km) steady	Rest	50 mins Intervals	Rest	14 miles (23km) steady
10	Rest	30 mins easy	5 miles (8km) race pace	Rest	40 mins Intervals	Rest	16 miles (26km) steady
11	Rest	40 mins easy	6 miles (10km) race pace	Rest	30 mins Intervals	Rest	3 hours steady long run - distance check
12	Rest	30 mins easy	5 miles (8km) steady	Rest	45 mins Intervals or Cross training	Rest	13 miles (Half Marathon - 21km) - race pace
13	Rest	40 mins easy	5 miles (8km) race pace	Rest	45 mins Intervals or Cross training	Rest	20 miles (32km) steady
14	Rest	40 mins easy	6 miles (10km) steady	Rest	45 mins Intervals or Cross training	Rest	12 miles (19km) steady
15	Rest	30 mins easy	6 miles (10km) race pace	Rest	45 mins Intervals or Cross training	Rest	8 miles (13km) steady
16	Rest	30 mins easy	Rest	Rest	30 mins cross training	Rest	RACE DAY!

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Starting run level	Can run 10k comfortably; likely to have completed half marathon before.
Easy	You should be able to talk throughout
Steady	You can still talk, but only in short sentences at a time. Aim for 60-75% effort
Race pace	You should run this at the pace you would like to complete your race in on the day
Intervals	Fast pace run, jog when you need to (for twice as long as the run - there should be a noticeable distance in speed). For eg. Run 1 min, Jog 2 mins
Cross training	Alternative exercise to keep up fitness but reduce strain on running muscles e.g. cycling, swimming, pilates, weights

Take a look at our Race Pace Chart below to see approximate splits to hit your target time on race day (and for you to use in your race pace runs).

As an example, if you are aiming to complete your Full Marathon in 4 hours, then you will need to run an average of 5.41 mins for every km (or 9:10 for every mile) throughout the race e.g. 1km within 5.41 mins, 2 km within 11.22 mins, 3 km within 17.03 mins etc. On race pace runs, you should also practice at this speed.

FULL MARATHON PACE CHART

Goal finish time	Race pace (km)	Race pace (miles)
3 hours	04:16 / km	06:50 / mile
3 hour 15	04:37 / km	07:25 / mile
3 hours 30	04:59 / km	08:00 / mile
3 hours 45	05:20 / km	08:35 / mile
4 hours	05:41 / km	09:10 / mile
4 hours 15	06:04 / km	09:45 / mile
4 hours 30	06:24 / km	10:20 / mile
4 hours 45	06:45 / km	10:50 / mile
5 hours	07:07 / km	11:25 / mile
5 hours 15	07:28 / km	12:00 / mile
5 hours 30	07:49 / km	12:35 / mile
5 hours 45	08:11 / km	13:10 / mile
6 hours	08:32 / km	13:44 / mile

* Times are approximate and you should sense check your own chosen pace

NEXT STEPS

Move on to your next Training Plan

Once you've completed this pack, why not take a look at the Advanced Training Plan or Easy Plan for the next distance up?

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www.ReesLeisure.co.uk

ReesLeisure Limited, 46 Leigh Road,
Eastleigh, Hampshire, SO50 9DT

02380 273 657

events@reesleisure.co.uk

www.reesleisure.co.uk

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