

Important: Warm-up jog and stretch before all sessions + stretch gently after (before you get cold).

Week 1	Get You Round	Sub 2 hr	Sub 1 hr40 mins	Sub 1 hr 25 mins
Sunday	75 mins run/walk	75 min run	2 hrs steady	2 hr steady
Monday	Rest	Rest	30 mins easy	Morning – 30 mins easy Afternoon – 30 mins easy
Tuesday	45 mins steady	10 mins warm up – 20 mins at half marathon pace – 10 min warm down.	10 mins warm up – 20 mins at half marathon pace – 10 min warm down.	3 sets of 4 x 300m at 3 km pace with 100 m jog recovery between efforts/ 3 mins standing recovery between sets.
Wednesday	Rest	Rest	60 mins steady	60 mins steady
Thursday	60 mins steady	60 mins steady	Morning – 30 mins easy Afternoon – 30 mins easy	Morning – 30 mins easy Afternoon – 30 mins easy
Friday	Rest	Rest	Rest	Rest
Saturday	10 x 1 min running up shallow hill – walk back down recovery	12 x 1 min running up shallow hill – walk back down recovery	15 x 1 min running up shallow hill – walk back down recovery	20 x 1 min running up shallow hill – walk back down recovery
Training Objectives	The long runs are going to start to get you tired – refuelling after the long Sunday run & mid week hour run is essential – it's tough but it will start to build the endurance you'll need for the race.	Race pace running is important so that your body gets the 'feel' of the speed you want to race at	Race pace running is important so that your body gets the 'feel' of the speed you want to race at. Twice a day training on some days gives a boost to your endurance, and the afternoon run can sometimes be better because you have 'warmed-up' in the morning.	Big 'interval sessions' develop the heart & lungs, build strength and develop the speed necessary to run inside race pace comfortably.
Week 2	Get You Round	Sub 2 hr	Sub 1 hr40 mins	Sub 1 hr 25 mins
Sunday	45 mins run/walk	45 mins run	1 hr run	1 hr run
Monday	Rest	Rest	30 mins easy	45 mins Run
Tuesday	45 mins Run	10 mins warm up – 10 x 200m with 200m walk/jog recovery– 10 min warm down.	10 mins warm up – 10 x 200m with 200m walk/jog recovery– 10 min warm down.	10 mins warm up – 10 x 200m with 200m walk/jog recovery– 10 min warm down.
Wednesday	Rest	Rest	30 min easy	30 mins easy
Thursday	20 mins easy	30 mins steady	30 mins steady	30 mins easy
Friday	20 min easy	30 mins easy	30 mins easy	30 mins easy
Saturday	Rest	Rest	Rest	Rest
Training Objectives	Recovery week!	Recovery week!	Recovery week!	Recovery week!

Week 3	Get You Round	Sub 2 hr	Sub 1 hr40 mins	Sub 1 hr 25 mins
Sunday	90 min steady run	5km/10km Race	5km/10km Race	5km/10km Race
Monday	Rest	Rest	30 mins easy	Morning – 30 mins easy Afternoon – 45 mins Run
Tuesday	50 mins easy	Up the clock – run 1 min fast/1 min slow, 2 mins fast/ 2mins slow, 3 mins fast/3 mins slow/4 mins fast/4 mins slow, 5 mins fast.	Up the clock – run 1 min fast/1 min slow, 2 mins fast/ 2mins slow, 3 mins fast/3 mins slow/4 mins fast/4 mins slow, 5 mins fast.	16 x 400m at 5km pace – 2 mins recovery between each
Wednesday	Rest	Rest	75 mins easy	90 mins steady
Thursday	60 mins easy	60 mins steady	On fairly straight uninterrupted route 10 mins at Half Marathon pace – 5 mins recovery – run 10 min back trying to get to pass your start point	Morning – 30 mins easy Afternoon - On fairly straight uninterrupted route 10 mins at Half Marathon pace – 5 mins recovery – run 10 min back trying to get to
Friday	Rest	Rest	Rest	Rest
Saturday	Rest	30 min Tempo Run – half marathon speed	30 min Tempo Run	45 min Tempo Run
Training Objectives	An increase in both the long run and total running time in the week. Emphasis is still on building up the distance. Tapering at the end of the week so you are fresh to tackle your first 2 hr run at the start of the next week.	With 3 weeks to go developing speed will help you peak for the big event. The tempo run is the most important as it teaches you to concentrate and hold your pace over a long period of time.	With the 5/10 km race, two interval type sessions and the tempo run this is a very intense week that represents a shift from steady miles to faster pace running. The rest days and easy runs are going to be vital.	With the 5/10 km race, two interval type sessions and the tempo run this is a very intense week that represents a shift from steady miles to faster pace running. The rest days and easy runs are going to be vital.
Week 4	Get You Round	Sub 2 hr	Sub 1 hr40 mins	Sub 1 hr 25 mins
Sunday	2 hrs easy	2 hrs steady	2 hrs steady	2 hrs with 30 mins at half marathon Race Pace towards the end
Monday	Rest	Rest	30 mins easy	Morning – 30 mins easy Afternoon – 45 mins Run
Tuesday	30 min run	45 min run	45 min run	60 min run
Wednesday	30 min run	45 min run	45 mins run	45 mins run
Thursday	Rest	Rest	Rest	30 mins steady
Friday	20 mins easy	30 mins easy	30 mins easy	30 mins easy
Saturday	Rest	Rest	Rest	Rest
Training Objectives	You've done a big run – the rest of the week is recovery time as you plan your next landmark – a half marathon race. Chose one that has a lot of runners so that you get the full atmosphere of a big event.	Consolidation week.	Consolidation week.	Consolidation week.

Week 5	Get You Round	Sub 2 hr	Sub 1 hr40 mins	Sub 1 hr 25 mins
Sunday	90 mins	90 mins	90 mins – quicker pace	90 mins – quicker pace
Monday	Rest	Rest	Rest	30 mins easy
Tuesday	10 min warm up – Alternate 1 min fast/1 min slow x 10	10 min warm up – Alternate 1 min fast/1 min slow x 10	Morning - 30 mins steady Afternoon – 12 x 400m at 5km pace / 2 mins recovery between each	Morning – 30 mins easy Afternoon – 12 x 400m at 5km pace / 2 mins recovery between each
Wednesday	60 mins	60 mins	Morning – 30 mins easy Afternoon – 60 mins easy	Morning – 30 mins easy Afternoon – 75 mins Run
Thursday	Rest	Rest	Morning – 30 mins easy Afternoon - 20 mins easy – 20 mins at half marathon pace	Morning – 30 mins easy Afternoon - 40 mins Tempo Run at half marathon pace.
Friday	30 mins Run	30 mins Run	Rest	Rest
Saturday	Rest	Rest	30 mins steady	30 mins Run
Training Objectives	Speed session gets you used to running a little quicker than the predicted half marathon pace.	Speed session gets you used to running a little quicker than the predicted half marathon pace.	Last big week. 5km pace session is the most important.	Last big week. 5km pace session is the most important.
Week 6	Get You Round	Sub 2 hr	Sub 1 hr40 mins	Sub 1 hr 25 mins
Sunday	45 mins easy	1 hr easy	1 hr steady	1 hr steady
Monday	Rest	Rest	30 mins easy	Morning – 30 mins easy Afternoon – 30 mins Run
Tuesday	30 mins easy	10 min warm up – Alternate 1 min fast/1 min slow x 10	10 x 400m at 10 km pace – 2 mins recovery between each	10 x 400m at 5 km pace – 2 mins recovery between each
Wednesday	Rest	30 mins easy	Morning – 30 mins easy Afternoon – 40 mins easy	Morning – 30 mins easy Afternoon – 40 mins easy
Thursday	30 mins steady	30 mins steady	20 mins easy – 20 mins at marathon pace	20 mins easy – 20 mins at marathon pace
Friday	Rest	Rest	30 mins steady	30 mins steady
Saturday	Rest	Rest	Rest	Rest
Training Objectives	Sundays run is a confidence booster. Plan a route with friends who can support you – take water out and generally pander to your needs. Make sure you eat plenty the night before and immediately after the long run.	Sundays run is a confidence booster. Plan a route with friends who can support you – take water out and generally pander to your needs. Make sure you eat plenty the night before and immediately after the long run.	A combination of a very long run and some much quicker interval work. The first will give you confidence – the second bring you to a peak.	A combination of a very long run and some much quicker interval work. The first will give you confidence – the second bring you to a peak.

TRAINING NOTES

All people have different levels of 'trainability' and natural potential. It is possible for complete beginners to make very rapid progress and move up the targets, while others find initially that they can't achieve the early training levels. There are two golden rules whichever level of improver you find yourself: a) Build-up very gradually, and b) You must rest and recover before training becomes beneficial.

Building-up: Even if you come from a good level of fitness, trying to build-up too quickly will certainly get you injured. Running is a repetitive activity that involves your foot hitting the floor repeatedly with considerable force being transmitted up through the legs and into the lower back. The reason that experienced runners can handle such high levels of training is because they have taken years to get there. Your body adapts slowly to new stresses and a product of regular running is that your bones will harden and become more resilient to the new forces. So fit people beware: your engine (heart & lungs) may find it easy – but after a while your legs won't.

Rest & Recover: The natural thought is that you get better when you train hard. While that is not altogether untrue, the reality is that your body actually gets fitter while you are resting. Here's how it works: during hard exercise your body gets tired, waste products build up and energy levels fall as you have used up fuel - you are technically less able than before you started training! If you continued the same level of activity over several days you would become progressively more tired and eventually you will breakdown – either with injury or illness. However, when you stop and rest your body starts to repair the damage, which it will do to a higher level than before as the body recognises a need to adapt to the new stresses that you're subjecting it to.

Frequency: A regular training pattern is more important than any one session. There is a cumulative effect from training regularly which is not achieved by doing all your training on one or two days each week.

Going the Distance: For 10 mile and half marathon races it is feasible to train up to and over the race distance. Your training is done to encourage physiological changes in your body – one of these is the ability to use different forms of energy. The most efficient energy source is glycogen – basically a sugar stored in the muscles. This will last for about 1 ½ hrs of fairly rigorous exercise – like running. After that has gone the body learns to use fat for energy – which we all have a big supply of. The problem is that the body does not convert fat to energy very efficiently, although it can be improved by doing runs over 1 ½ hrs. 2-hour runs have been found to be ideal (regardless of the distance covered in that time). It is sufficient time on your feet to help train the energy systems, it encourages local endurance in the leg muscles and joints and it teaches you how to run efficiently. The occasional run over 2 hours is good for confidence – but in general longer will not mean fitter as you will not recover adequately to do your other training.

The amount of rest: Some leading athletes appear not to rest at all – to run at World class you have to achieve high quantities of training. These are the fittest and most economical movers in the World who can run for 30-40 mins without breathing, sweating or touching the ground. They are not like us, we expend enormous amounts of energy with each stride as the shock wave from each step knocks the wind out of your lungs. Speed and ability are not necessarily good indicators of how efficient a runner you may be – slower runner's may simply not have the cardio-vascular system (heart & lungs) to run fast, but can run forever without getting injured. Conversely, plenty of fast runners's regularly get injured because the bodywork is not as strong as the engine. Unfortunately, it is a suck-it-and-see situation, and you'll find out soon enough, however – it is still essential to build in rest days to allow for the training effect to take place.

IMPORTANT:
Warm-up jog and stretch before all sessions + stretch gently after (before you get cold).

Your Health: Everyone should be aware that there is a risk involved with active sport – heart defects leading to death being the most serious. That scare out of the way – for the vast majority of people active sport will improve your health and wellbeing. Before setting out on an exercise regime you are well advised to visit your doctor for a check-up. A good doctor will be pleased to see you and should give you some advice on setting out – particularly if you have had a health problem like asthma or suffer from carrying excess weight. The down side of training for a half marathon is that the daunting nature of the event requires you to take on more exercise than is normally advised. While sensible levels of exercise will improve your health, the levels needed to train for a marathon can lead to your immune system being suppressed. You will notice that sleep can become more difficult, your legs don't recover from runs as quickly, your resting pulse rate may be slightly higher than normal (it should get slower as you get fitter) - all of which may result in sore throats, colds that won't go away or flu. If you've gone this far – you must stop and recuperate. When you start up again start at a lower level and feel your way back gradually to where you were – but beware – where you were before is what got you ill in the first place!

Food & Drink: A healthy diet and high fluid intake are essential. Your body burns carbohydrate for the energy you need to make the muscles move, it also needs protein to help it recover from the damage done by hard exercise and it needs vitamins and minerals to maintain its health. So what you need is a good balanced diet. Make sure you are taking in plenty of carbohydrate but make sure you are not surviving just on carbohydrate – a plate of just pasta isn't a balanced diet. If you are taking in a lot of fruit and veg, yet still get colds you may need to look at vitamin supplements – but they are not essential if your general health is good. Liquid is essential. Even on a cold day you will lose a lot of liquid through sweating and breathing – if this does not get replaced your body cannot function properly. So make sure you drink regularly, before, during and after exercise – either water or an isotonic sport drink, the choice is down to taste although research does show that liquid is absorbed more quickly when taken as an isotonic drink (but don't treat them like soft drinks – during & immediately after exercise only is advisable).

Race Practice: For the beginner, taking part in a couple of big 'pre-Half Marathon' events is an important part of the learning process. It is very different than running on your own: your perception of pace will alter and you will almost certainly run quicker in the first few miles than you thought you were, running uninhibited with several thousand people trying to step on your heels or stopping dead in front of you is frustrating, plus the whole thing about getting there, queuing for the loo (several times) and finding the start. It's best to experience that before the big day. A 5 mile or 10km race will give you some confidence about doing the distance and will teach you something about 'racing' and sustaining your pace.

Tapering Down: Training takes about 2 weeks to become effective – so there is little point in doing too much training in the last two weeks before the event. It is far better to be letting the body recuperate and build up its energy reserves. There is a balance to be found: ease back too much and you will start to lose training effect and start to feel a little bit sluggish. Start to reduce the quantity of training 2 weeks before the marathon, but maintain some faster running to keep you feeling 'sharp'. Keep some light training going even in the last week – it's good for confidence – but don't burn up valuable energy with unnecessary 'nervous' training at the last minute. In the last 4 days concentrate on getting lots of carbohydrate inside you and keep fully hydrated by sipping water regularly. Make your last big meal at least 12 hrs before the race and have a light breakfast 3 hrs before the start on the big day. Drink small amounts right up to start time and take 500ml of water on to the startline and drink it just before the gun is going to go off – it's the most valuable water you'll take on board all day. Then try to get a small amount of liquid at each drink station on the race course.

Thanks to
the Griffiths Harriers
who helped us put together
this plan, you can match the
time you hope to finish the
race in with the necessary
training requirements.

Good Luck!

Registered Charity no. 285776

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