

# Beginner's Guide to Half or Full Marathon Training

## No experience required.

- 1) You don't need to be an athlete to do this. All are welcome! You can walk, run or do a combination of both.
- 2) Check with your doctor if you have any health concerns.
- 3) Trust me, I know... you are already too busy. However, to be successful, you must make the time commitment for this. Ask your family to support you. This is the best gift you could possibly give them.
- 4) Stick with the plan and it will get you there.
- 5) This is not a fad; it will positively change your life forever.

## What do I need to do?

- 1) Make the commitment and sign up for a race. There are races of all distances, times of the year, and locations.
- 2) Sign up for a training class if one is available. While not required, it is a proven recipe for success and you will get so much more detail than this guide can provide.
- 3) Get a buddy to do this with you. Like the training class, this greatly increases your chances of success. Your buddy does not need to be the same "speed" as you.
- 4) Make it visible. Put your training chart on the refrigerator and honestly track your progress.
- 5) Start slow and build steadily. Your goal is to finish strong. You can win your second race!

## Just the Facts...

### What distance do I choose?

So how do you know what distance to pick?

#### 5K

Unless there are special circumstances, everyone should be capable of completing a 5K (3.1 miles) walk or run. This is a good distance to start at as you become more active and begin your training for longer distances. It is also a great race for youth runners (13 and younger).

#### Half-Marathon

The half-marathon (13.1 miles) is an excellent choice even for a novice walker or runner. While the distance is a considerable challenge, consistent and effective training produces amazing results. The half-marathon distance is not recommended for family members younger than 13 years old.

#### Full Marathon

If you are setting your sights on the full-marathon (26.2 miles) you should have completed at least one half-marathon six months ahead of time. This option will take considerable dedication and should only be considered by individuals who are currently active and

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healthy. The full-marathon distance is not recommended for family members younger than 17 years old.

### Training Schedule

Typically, a half marathon training schedule is 13 weeks, while a full marathon is 17 weeks. Attached are suggested training schedules for both. Feel free to modify it to fit your personal needs. The key is to get in your weekly miles and be consistent. Don't go blasting off and putting in extra miles at the beginning because it seems "easy". This is a recipe for disaster. Stick with the plan. It is better to lose a day or two than try to make it all up at once.

### Get good RUNNING shoes

Whether you run or walk, you need to be properly fitted for high quality running shoes. Do not go to the local mall to get the cheapest or latest fad. Go to a professional running shoe store and be properly fitted by a professional. They should watch you walk/run to observe your lower body mechanics. This will help determine the type of shoe you should start to try out. Don't be surprised if you try on three or more pairs before you find a good candidate. You should not have to pay more than about \$100. A good fitting pair of shoes is worth its weight in gold. Shoes typically last about 500-600 miles.

### More than just putting in the miles

Injury-free running/walking is as much about core strength and flexibility as it is putting in the miles. Compliment your walking/running with cross-training activities like: Yoga, strength training, swimming, bicycling, etc. This is a fun way to try other activities and meet new friends. Again, make the time, it's worth the investment.

### Nutrition

Food is your fuel. Good fuel = Good power. This program is completely compatible with both vegetarian and non-vegetarian balanced diets, although high protein, low carbohydrate diets (e.g. Atkins) are not recommended. Don't deprive yourself at the beginning or make drastic changes to your diet; there is time to make improvements here. Carbohydrates are your fast fuel; just make sure you get them the right way and not from refined sugars. Protein is necessary too, but you don't need a huge amount. If your diet is like most of us, take a multi-vitamin every day to supplement it.

You can run a little low on food, but you can't run without water. Hydration is essential before, during and after your walk/run.

### Clothing

This is going to depend on the time of year you train and race and your geographic location. A fall-season race will have most of the training during the summer. This makes clothing simple, but staying cool can be a problem for some (see Injury Prevention). Good running/walking clothes are lightweight, synthetic materials. The synthetic materials dry quickly and look great. You don't have to spend a lot of money here. Unlike shoes, you can

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find clothing bargains at the mall. Just remember, no cotton. Make sure your socks are synthetic as well. Spring races usually involve winter-time training. For cold weather running lightweight layering is the key. There are excellent fabrics available. Check out a professional running store for ideas.

A lesson learned is to be sure to train with the clothing item you plan to race in next to your skin, especially on your long runs. This is sometimes odd given you might be planning to wear shorts during a Spring race, but you are training in frigid conditions. You can layer over the item to adjust to the conditions.

When running in the sun, be sure you protect your skin and eyes too. Wear a hat, sunglasses (100% UVA/B blocking) and sunblock.

Don't use the weather as an excuse. Adjust to the conditions. It is often said some of the best runs happen when the weather is not perfect. The exception to this is if there is lightning or ice. Do not go out under these conditions.

### **Injury Prevention**

Start slow and build steadily. This applies to both the start of every run as well the whole program. Know your limits. Don't compete with anyone. Joint aches and muscle pain can and will happen. Dull aches are usually okay; a sharp pain that stops you in your tracks is completely different. You have to know the difference between what you can continue with and when you should stop.

Running and walking in the heat is a real concern. Be smart when running in the summer. Avoid running during the hottest portions of the day. Stay hydrated and also use an electrolyte replacement fluid (e.g. Gatorade). Take a little off your pace on the really hot days. Be okay with walking or stopping a little during the run/walk if you are feeling overheated. Heat stroke can sneak up on you, so be smart.

### **Safety**

Your first preference should be to run/walk on trails if available. Sidewalks can be used too, but often they are in poor shape and have many obstacles. This means a lot of the time we run/walk on the street. Some safety suggestions: 1) run/walk on the left side of the road facing traffic, 2) wear light colored and/or reflective clothing, 3) go single-file and move over as far as you safely can when a car approaches, 4) wave to the driver and give them a big smile – make sure they see you. Run/Walk defensively.

Try not to run alone, especially on your long runs or on unfamiliar paths. Some people will bring a cell phone with.

Invest in a "Road-ID" band so contact information is available if you can't provide it.

Do not run if there is lightning in the area.

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## **Something's going to happen**

It's pretty much inevitable that minor injuries, illness, travel, etc. will happen. When this does you will have to make some adjustments to your schedule, but don't let this be an excuse to quit. Talk to us and we will do everything we can to get you to the finish line.

## **The hardest mile**

The hardest mile is the one from the couch to the front door. Meet me at the front door and we will do this together.

***Let's go have some fun!***

*Patrick Pierz*

*Training Leader*

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## Half Marathon Training Chart

WEEK	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY	Total Miles
1	Rest	2	Cross Train	2	Rest	2	2	8
2	Rest	3	Cross Train	2	Rest	3	2	10
3	Cross Train	3	Cross Train	3	Rest	4	3	13
4	Cross Train	3	Cross Train	3	Rest	5	3	14
5	Cross Train	3	Cross Train	3	Rest	5	4	15
6	Cross Train	3	Cross Train	3	Rest	6	4	16
7	Cross Train	3	Cross Train	3	Rest	7	4	17
8	Cross Train	3	Cross Train	4	Rest	8	4	19
9	Cross Train	3	Cross Train	4	Rest	9	4	20
10	Cross Train	3	Cross Train	3	Rest	10	4	20
11	Cross Train	3	Cross Train	3	Rest	12	4	22
12	Cross Train	3	Cross Train	3	Rest	8	4	18
13	Cross Train	3	Cross Train	3	Rest	6	4	16
14	Cross Train	3	Rest	3	Rest	Race Day 13.1	Celebrate	19.1
								227.1

Cross Train = Swimming, Cycling, Strength/Core Training, Deep Water Running, Yoga etc.

## Full Marathon Training Chart

WEEK	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY	Total Miles
1	Cross Train	3	Cross Train	4	Rest	4	3	14
2	Cross Train	3	Cross Train	4	Rest	6	3	16
3	Cross Train	3	Cross Train	5	Rest	7	4	19
4	Cross Train	3	Cross Train	5	Rest	9	4	21
5	Cross Train	3	Cross Train	6	Rest	10	5	24
6	Cross Train	3	Cross Train	6	Rest	9	5	23
7	Cross Train	3	Cross Train	7	Rest	12	6	28
8	Cross Train	3	Cross Train	7	Rest	13	6	29
9	Cross Train	3	Cross Train	5	Rest	10	7	25
10	Cross Train	4	Cross Train	8	Rest	15	7	34
11	Cross Train	4	Cross Train	8	Rest	16	8	36
12	Cross Train	4	Cross Train	5	Rest	15	8	32
13	Cross Train	4	Cross Train	8	Rest	19	7	38
14	Cross Train	4	Cross Train	6	Rest	17	9	36
15	Cross Train	4	Cross Train	8	Rest	22	6	40
16	Cross Train	4	Cross Train	6	Rest	13	8	31
17	Cross Train	4	Cross Train	4	Rest	Race Day 26.2	Celebrate	34.2
								480.2

Cross Train = Yoga, Swimming, Cycling, Strength/Core Training, Deep Water Running, etc.