



A Runner's Playground

2024

18-Week Beginner/First-Timer Half Marathon Training Plan

This training plan is designed for beginner runners ready to tackle their first-ever half marathon! If you're aiming to complete this plan, you should begin your training on Monday, January 1. Here are some things you should familiarize yourself with before you begin:

Easy Pace

Your easy pace should be a speed at which you can maintain a conversation with a training partner. Your effort should be a 2-4 out of 10 (with 10 being sprinting as fast as you can). All of your timed or distance runs should be done at this effort, as well as your easy intervals on speed training days.

Moderate Pace

Your moderate pace should be roughly 30-60 seconds per mile faster than your easy pace. Your effort should be a 5-7 out of 10.

Hard Pace

This is a slightly faster than your moderate pace - 15-30 seconds per mile faster. This effort should be a 6-9/10.

Long Run

You should break your long runs into quarters: the first and last quarters should be run at your easy pace. For the middle half of your run, you can either increase to your moderate pace or maintain your easy pace.

Cross Training

Examples of cross training could be swimming, cycling or spin, elliptical, rowing. Your goal on cross training days is to maintain a steady effort of 3-6 out of 10.

Strength Training (optional but encouraged)

Add this in 1-3 times per week: general strength exercises including planks, push-ups, lunges, squats, pull-ups, etc. Begin with simple bodyweight and 1-2 sets of a few reps; slowly add weights and/or reps. Back off the last 2-3 weeks of training. Only add strength training on weekdays to avoid overloading your weekend long runs and recovery.

Your Schedule:

- Mondays: Medium volume run
- Tuesdays: Shorter run or cross train
- Wednesdays: Moderate pace speedwork
 - These runs should include 10-15 minutes of easy pace warm up and cool down running before and after the specified intervals
- Thursdays: Rest or walk
- Fridays: Cross train
- Saturdays: Long run
- Sundays: Rest

Training plans presented by:

GARMIN®



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| Week | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday | Sunday |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|----------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------|---------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------|--------|
| 1 January 1-7 | 20 min. run or walk | Rest or 30 min. walk | 10 times: 1 min run at moderate pace + 1 min run at easy pace | Rest or 30 min. recovery run | 20 min. cross train | Marathon Weekend Training Kickoff Run! 3 mile run or walk | Rest |
| 2 January 8-14 | 20 min. run or walk | Rest or 30 min. walk | 10 times: 1 min run at moderate pace + 1 min run at easy pace | Rest or 30 min. recovery run | 20 min. cross train | 3 mile run or walk | Rest |
| 3 January 15-21 | 25 min. run or walk | Rest or 30 min. walk | 5 times: 2 min run at moderate pace + 1 min run at easy pace | Rest or 30 min. recovery run | 25 min. cross train | 4 mile run or walk | Rest |
| 4 January 22-28 | 25 min. run or walk | Rest or 30 min. walk | 5 times: 2 min run at moderate pace + 1 min run at easy pace | Rest or 30 min. recovery run | 25 min. cross train | 4 mile run or walk | Rest |
| 5 Jan. 29 - Feb. 4 | 30 min. run or walk | 30 min. cross train | 5 times: 3 min run at moderate pace + 1 min run at easy pace | Rest or 30 min. recovery run | 30 min. cross train | 5 mile run or walk | Rest |
| 6 February 5-11 | Three-Month Countdown! 30 min. run or walk | 30 min. cross train | 5 times: 3 min run at moderate pace + 1 min run at easy pace | Rest or 30 min. recovery run | 30 min. cross train | 6 mile run or walk | Rest |



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| 7 February 12-18 | 35 min. run or walk | 35 min. cross train | 5 times: 4 min run at moderate pace + 1 min run at easy pace | Rest or 30 min. recovery run | 35 min. cross train | 7 mile run or walk | Rest |
| 8 February 19-25 | 35 min. run or walk | 35 min. cross train | 5 times: 4 min run at moderate pace + 1 min run at easy pace | Rest or 30 min. recovery run | 35 min. cross train | 6 mile run or walk | Rest |
| 9 Feb. 26 - March 3 | 40 min. run or walk | 40 min. cross train | 5 times: 5 min run at moderate pace + 1 min run at easy pace | Rest or 30 min. recovery run | 40 min. cross train | 8 mile run or walk | Rest Halfway there! |
| 10 March 4-10 | 40 min. run or walk | Two Months To Go! 40 min. cross train | 5 times: 5 min run at moderate pace + 1 min run at easy pace | Rest or 30 min. recovery run | 40 min. cross train | 6 mile run or walk | Rest |
| 11 March 11-17 | 45 min. run or walk | 45 min. cross train | 5 times: 3 min run at hard pace + 3 min run at easy pace | Rest or 30 min. recovery run | 45 min. cross train | 9 mile run or walk | Rest |
| 12 March 18-24 | 45 min. run or walk | 45 min. cross train | 6 times: 3 min run at hard pace + 3 min run at easy pace | Rest or 30 min. recovery run | 45 min. cross train | 6 mile run or walk | Rest |



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| 13 Mar. 25-31 | 50 min. run or walk | 50 min. cross train | 6 times: 3 min run at hard pace + 3 min run at easy pace | Rest or 30 min. recovery run | 50 min. cross train | 10 mile run or walk | Rest |
| 14 April 1-7 | 50 min. run or walk | 50 min. cross train | 8 times: 1 min run at hard pace + 3 min run at easy pace | Rest or 30 min. recovery run | One Month To Go! 50 min. cross train | 6 mile run or walk | Rest |
| 15 April 8-14 | 60 min. run or walk | 60 min. cross train | 8 times: 1 min run at hard pace + 3 min run at easy pace | Rest or 30 min. recovery run | 60 min. cross train | 11 mile run or walk | Rest |
| 16 April 15-21 | 50 min. run or walk | 50 min. cross train | 5 times: 3 min run at moderate pace + 1 min run at easy pace | Rest or 30 min. recovery run | 50 min. cross train | 7 mile run or walk | Rest |
| 17 April 22-28 | 40 min. run or walk | 40 min. cross train | 5 times: 2 min run at moderate pace + 1 min run at easy pace | 10 Days Left! Rest or 30 min. walk | 40 min. cross train | 5 mile run or walk | Rest |
| 18 April 29 - May 5 | 30 min. run or walk | 30 min. cross train | 25 min. run or walk | Rest or 30 min. walk | Rest | 20 min. run Or complete the STEEL Challenge by MOVING in the Pittsburgh 5K Run! | RACE DAY! |