



A Runner's Playground

2024

15-Week Half Marathon Walking Division Training Plan

This 15-week half marathon walking division training plan is designed especially for someone who has no fitness base. The plan is to exercise 4-5 days each week and gradually build from a 15-minute walk to a 4 hour walk (slightly faster than the 20-minute/mile pace requirement, so you have a little wiggle room on your pace!) and eventually incorporating some optional strength training. If you're aiming to complete this 15-week plan, you should begin your training on Monday, January 22, 2024. Here are some things you should familiarize yourself with before you begin:

Long Walks

Sunday will be your "long walk" days, gradually building you up from walking for 15 minutes to walking for 10 miles. You'll notice that there are some weeks where you actually move less than the week prior (for example, in week 9, your long walk is only 3 miles, but it was 6 miles the previous week). This is to give your body an opportunity to recover before you continue to build upon your distance. Monday will be a key rest day every week after your long walk - your muscles will need the break! Your longest walk will be 10 miles in Week 14. Don't be scared that you're not ready - your excitement and rest the week leading up to race day will propel you the final 3.1 miles to the finish line!

Rest Days

Use them! If you're new to training for an endurance event, you might be surprised by how quickly your body craves exercise! Don't be tempted to do a heavy workout on your rest days - your body needs these rest days, especially as you ramp up your fitness and distance. You can also do something low-impact on these days like stretching or beginner yoga.

Recovery

After your workouts, especially after your long walks on Sundays, be sure to stretch and/or foam roll. This is important for several reasons: it helps your muscles recover after they've been under tension for so long, and it will help you be less sore the next day. Foam rolling is a great addition to your post-walk recovery - it helps you move the lactic acid build-up in your muscles so you can get back to MOVING.

Brisk Walks

When the plan calls for a "brisk walk," this means about 1-2 minutes/mile faster than your personal "slow walk." The Half Marathon Walking Division has a time limit of 4 hours, 20 minutes - that's about 20 minutes/mile (or 3 miles/hour). During the first three weeks of the plan, don't worry about your pace at all - just focus on moving for the time prescribed. For the next eight weeks, you can think a bit about your pace but don't worry about it too much - it's more important to focus on distance. By the last four weeks of the training plan, your "brisk walk" should be at least 20 minutes/mile or faster.

Cardio Cross Training

On your cardio cross training days, you can choose whatever low-impact cardio you like! Try swimming, using the rowing or elliptical machine, or cycling. This will get your heart rate up but be easy on your joints.

Strength Training

Strength training will help you get stronger and change things up a bit so you don't injure yourself from overusing the same muscles. If you're not sure where to start, you can find several free strength training workouts on YouTube!

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BEFORE YOU BEGIN:

Set your goals for 2024 and prepare yourself mentally for the challenge you're about to take on. Imagine yourself crossing the finish line on May 5 and think about who you're going to inspire along the way!

Prepare for your training! Make sure you have a good pair of walking shoes and access to a place to train (on a treadmill at home or at a gym, a trail, or sidewalk outdoors, etc.).

Week	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
1 January 22-28	Rest	15 min. Walk	Rest	15 min. Walk	15 min. Walk	Rest	30 min. Walk
2 Jan. 29 - Feb. 4	Rest	20 min. Walk	Rest	20 min. Walk	30 min. Walk	Rest	45 min. Walk
3 February 5-11	Rest	30 min. Walk	Rest	30 min. Walk	30 min. Walk	Rest	60 min. Walk



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4 February 12-18	Rest	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Warm up walk for 5 minutes. Walk at a brisk pace for 20 minutes Cool down walk for 5 minutes 	30 min. Cardio Cross Training	Rest	Rest	30 min. Options: Strength Train or Walk	3 miles Walk
5 February 19-25	Rest	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Warm up walk for 5 minutes. Walk at a brisk pace for 20 minutes Cool down walk for 5 minutes 	30 min. Cardio Cross Training	Rest	Rest	30 min. Options: Strength Train or Walk	4 miles Walk
6 Feb. 26 - March 3	Rest	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Warm up walk for 5 minutes. Walk at a brisk pace for 35 minutes Cool down walk for 5 minutes 	30 min. Cardio Cross Training	Rest	Rest	30 min. Options: Strength Train or Walk	5 miles Walk
7 March 4-10	Rest	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Warm up walk for 5 minutes. Walk at a brisk pace for 35 minutes Cool down walk for 5 minutes 	30 min. Cardio Cross Training	Rest	Rest	30 min. Options: Strength Train or Walk	5 miles Walk
8 March 11-17	Rest	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Warm up walk for 5 minutes. Walk at a brisk pace for 50 minutes Cool down walk for 5 minutes 	45 min. Cardio Cross Training	30 min. Walk	Rest	30 min. Options: Strength Train or Walk	6 miles Walk
9 March 18-24	Rest	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Warm up walk for 5 minutes. Walk at a brisk pace for 50 minutes Cool down walk for 5 minutes 	45 min. Cardio Cross Training	30 min. Walk	Rest	30 min. Options: Strength Train or Walk	3 miles Walk



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Week	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
10 March 25-31	Rest	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Warm up walk for 5 minutes. Walk at a brisk pace for 50 minutes Cool down walk for 5 minutes 	45 min. Cardio Cross Training	30 min. Walk	Rest	30 min. Options: Strength Train or Walk	7 miles Walk
11 April 1-7	Rest	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Warm up walk for 5 minutes. Walk at a brisk pace for 50 minutes Cool down walk for 5 minutes 	45 min. Cardio Cross Training	30 min. Walk	Rest	30 min. Options: Strength Train or Walk	8 miles Walk
12 April 8-14	Rest	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Warm up walk for 5 minutes. Walk at a brisk pace for 50 minutes Cool down walk for 5 minutes 	45 min. Cardio Cross Training	30 min. Walk	Rest	30 min. Options: Strength Train or Walk	6 miles Walk
13 April 15-21	Rest	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Warm up walk for 5 minutes. Walk at a brisk pace for 50 minutes Cool down walk for 5 minutes 	45 min. Cardio Cross Training	30 min. Walk	Rest	30 min. Options: Strength Train or Walk	9 miles Walk
14 April 22-28	Rest	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Warm up walk for 5 minutes. Walk at a brisk pace for 30 minutes Cool down walk for 5 minutes 	45 min. Cardio Cross Training	30 min. Walk	Rest	30 min. Options: Strength Train or Walk	10 miles Walk
15 April 29 - May 5	Rest	30 min. Walk	30 min. Cardio Cross Training	30 min. Walk	Rest	Rest Or complete the STEEL Challenge at the Pittsburgh 5K Run!	 RACE DAY!