

# HALF MARATHON IMPROVERS TRAINING PLAN

- The following training plan is aimed at an experienced runner who may have run a half before and wants to improve or a regular runner stepping up in distance, it's based on up to 5 runs per week over a 12-week period. It does need a fair bit of commitment on your part, you can move the days around, it's not essential to always do the long runs on a Sunday if that doesn't suit, just try to cover at least three of these sessions including the long run within each week. Don't forget that we have our team session every Thursday evening which could substitute one of these sessions.
- If you are feeling really tired or suffering a niggle, add an extra rest day or go for cross training or strength and conditioning instead.
- Nutrition is really important; your body needs the right sort of fuel to make it run and to aid recovery. Aim to eat within 20 minutes of finishing a run, protein shakes and bars are perfect for post run refueling.
- Do a warm up and cool down before and after every session and try to include 10 minutes of stretching into your every-day routine.

	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
Week 1	Rest or strength and conditioning	Threshold session 45 mins including 3 x 5 mins at threshold with 2 mins easy recoveries	30 mins easy or 45 mins cross training	30-40 mins easy	Rest	3 x 5 mins of continuous hills with 2 min recoveries between each	Long run 40-50 mins easy
Week 2	Rest or strength and conditioning	Threshold session 45 mins including 4 x 5 mins at threshold with 2 mins easy recoveries	30 mins easy or 45 mins cross training	30 mins progressive run, 10 mins easy, 10 mins steady, 10 mins at close to threshold	Rest	Sisyphus Hills 4 x 15, 30, 45, 60 seconds hard uphill with easy downhill.	Long run 50-60 mins easy
Week 3	Rest or strength and conditioning	Threshold session 45 mins including 3 x 7 mins at threshold with 3 mins easy recoveries	30 mins easy or 45 mins cross training	30 mins progressive run, 10 mins easy, 10 mins steady, 10 mins at close to threshold	Rest	2 x 10 mins of continuous hills with 3 min recoveries between each	Long run 60-70 mins easy

*Continued*



## RUNNING GLOSSARY

- **Cross training** involves working your heart and lungs but not through running. This could be cycling, swimming or on a rower.
- **Recovery runs** are your easiest runs of the week. They should be at a comfortable pace. Relax and aim to feel better at the end than you did at the start.
- **Threshold running** involves blocks of running at a controlled discomfort effort. You should only be able to speak 4-5 words at a time but if pushed you could still slightly speed up. Include short recovery jogs between each threshold block.
- **Fartlek sessions** are running at different speeds for different lengths of time.

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	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
Week 4	Rest	Easy run 30 mins plus strength and conditioning	45 mins run with 8 x 3 mins – odd numbers reps at threshold, even numbers at steady run pace	30 mins relaxed run or rest	Rest	40 min hilly run, easy but faster up hills or easy 20 min run if racing tomorrow	60 mins easy or a 10k race
Week 5	Rest or strength and conditioning	Easy run 40 mins	45 mins relaxed run	45 mins Progression Run. 15 mins easy, 15 mins steady, 15 mins at near to threshold	Rest	2 x 10 mins of continuous hills with 3 min easy recovery between	Long run 80 mins easy
Week 6	Rest or strength and conditioning	Threshold session 5 x 5 mins at threshold with 2 mins easy recoveries	30 mins recovery run or 45 mins cross training	45 mins Progression Run. 15 mins easy, 15 mins steady, 15 mins at near to threshold	Rest	45 mins relaxed run	Long run 90 mins with last 20 mins at half marathon pace
Week 7	Rest	30 mins easy plus strength and conditioning	45 mins Progression Run. 15 mins easy, 15 mins steady, 15 mins at near to threshold	30 mins easy or rest	Rest	Sisyphus Hills 10 x 20 seconds hard uphill with 60 seconds easy downhill recoveries	Long run 60 mins easy
Week 8	Rest or strength and conditioning	Threshold session. 3 x 10 mins with 2–3 min recoveries	30 mins recovery run or 45 mins cross training	Fartlek session of 5,4,3,2,1 min blocks built into a 45 min run with 90 sec recoveries between each rep	Rest	45 mins relaxed run	Long run 100 mins with last 30 mins at half marathon pace

- **Continuous hills** is an exercise running on a steady gradient at threshold pace up and down the hill.
- **Sisyphus hill** session is a series of repeated uphill sprints for 15, 30, 45 and 60 seconds with easy downhill recoveries or 20 seconds hard uphill with 60 second easy downhill recoveries.
- **Long run**, these build up week on week, increasing in duration with an easier week every few weeks. Your longest run should be three weeks before race day before you start tapering to allow your body time to recover before the big event.
- **Progressive Runs** are runs where you pick up the pace in blocks from easy to steady and finishing at threshold pace.

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	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
Week 9	Rest or strength and conditioning	Easy run 40 mins	10 mins at threshold + 4 × 3 mins at 10k pace + 10 mins at threshold with 2 min easy recoveries	30 mins easy	Rest	45 mins p rogression run. 15 mins easy, 15 mins steady, 15 mins at near threshold	Long run 100–110 mins easy run.
Week 10	Rest or strength and conditioning	Easy run 40 mins	Fartlek session of 2 × 4,3,2,1 min blocks, built into a 45 min run with 90 sec recoveries	30 mins easy or rest	Rest	30 mins recovery run	Long run 120 mins easy run with last 20–30 mins at half marathon pace
Week 11	Rest	Easy run 30 mins plus strength and conditioning	60 mins with 8 × 3 min threshold/3 min easy within the run	30 mins easy	Rest	5 × 4 mins at 10k pace. 90 sec recovery	Long run 60 mins relaxed
Week 12	Rest	30 mins including 3 × 5 mins at half marathon pace with 3–5 min recoveries	30 mins easy or cross train	20–25 mins easy run	Rest	15 mins easy run and stretch	Race Day Have fun