

MARATHON IMPROVERS TRAINING PLAN

- The following training plan is aimed at an experienced runner who may have run a marathon 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 16-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. Sleep is also a really important part of the plan so make sure you get plenty.
- 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	30 mins aerobic cross training and strength and conditioning	Progression run, 30 mins. 10 mins easy, 10 mins steady, 10 mins threshold	30 mins recovery run or 30 mins aerobic cross training	Easy/Steady run 30mins	Rest	Continuous hills, Including 4 x 5 mins with 2 mins recoveries	Long run 60 min total at conversational pace
Week 2	30 mins aerobic cross training and strength and conditioning	Progression run, 30 mins. 10 mins easy, 10 mins steady, 10 mins threshold	30 mins recovery run or 30 mins aerobic cross training	Continuous hills, 45 mins total. Including 3 x 7 mins with 2 mins recoveries	Rest	Easy/Steady run 30 mins	Long run 70 min total at conversational pace
Week 3	30 mins aerobic cross training and strength and conditioning	Progression run, 45 mins. 15 mins easy, 15 mins steady, 10 mins threshold	30 mins recovery run or 30 mins aerobic cross training	Easy/Steady run 45mins	Rest	Continuous hills, 45 mins total. Including 2 x 10 mins with 2 mins recoveries	Long run, 80 mins easy pace on undulating route

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.

MARATHON IMPROVERS TRAINING PLAN

	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
Week 4	30 mins aerobic cross training and strength and conditioning	Threshold run 45 minutes including 4 x 5 mins at threshold pace with 2 mins recoveries	30 mins recovery run or 30 mins aerobic cross training	40 min out and back run – run out steady pace for 20 mins, turn back 2–3 mins faster	Rest	Sisyphus Hills, 4 x 15, 30, 45, 60 second hard uphill with easy downhill recoveries	Long run, 90 mins easy pace on undulating route
Week 5	Rest	Easy run 30 mins	30 mins recovery run, or 30 mins aerobic cross training	Easy run 30 mins	Rest	30 mins easy run	Long run 60 mins easy
Week 6	30–40 mins aerobic cross training + strength and conditioning	Threshold run, 45 mins including 5 x 5 mins threshold with 90 sec recoveries	40 mins easy run, or 40 mins aerobic cross training	40 min out and back run – run out steady pace for 20 mins, turn back and chase home faster	Rest	Continuous hills, 50 mins run total including 5 x 5 mins with 90 sec recoveries	Long run 105 mins easy over an undulating route
Week 7	30–40 mins aerobic cross training + strength and conditioning	Threshold run, 45 mins including 5 x 5 mins threshold with 75 sec recoveries	40 mins easy run, or 40 mins aerobic cross training	60 min progressive run. 20 mins easy, 20 mins steady, 20 mins threshold	Rest	Sisyphus Hills 4 x 15, 30, 45, 60 sec hard uphill, easy downhill recoveries.	Long run 2 hours easy
Week 8	30–40 mins aerobic cross training + strength and conditioning	Threshold run, 60 mins including 5 x 6 mins threshold with 90 sec recoveries	40 mins easy run, or 40 mins aerobic cross training	75 mins including 2 x 10 mins threshold within final 30 mins	Rest	Continuous hills, 45–60 mins including 3 x 12 mins effort with 90 sec recoveries	Long run 135 mins easy.

- **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.

MARATHON IMPROVERS TRAINING PLAN

	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
Week 9	30–40 mins aerobic cross training + strength and conditioning	Threshold session 60mins including 3 × 10 mins threshold with 90–120 sec recoveries	40 mins easy run, or 40 mins aerobic cross training	Threshold session, 75 min with middle 60 mins as 10 × 3 mins threshold then 3mins and steady	Rest	45 mins recovery run	Long run, 90 mins total. 30 mins easy, 30 mins steady, 30 mins at half marathon target pace
Week 10	Rest	Recovery run, 40 mins total + conditioning work	30 mins easy run	Progression run of 10 mins easy, 10 mins steady, 10 mins and threshold	Rest	20 mins easy run and stretch	Half marathon race + 15–20 mins easy jog (warm down) or 2 hr long run with the last 60 mins at MP
Week 11	30–40 mins aerobic cross training + strength and conditioning	Recovery run, 40 mins total + conditioning work	45 mins easy run, or 45 mins aerobic cross training	Threshold session, 60–70 mins including 6 × 5 mins at threshold with 1 min recoveries	Rest	45 mins recovery run	Long run 150 mins including last 30 mins at MP
Week 12	30–40 mins aerobic cross training + strength and conditioning	Interval session 6 × 3 mins run. Alternate odd numbers at threshold effort, even at 5km effort with 90 sec recoveries	Easy run, 45 mins or 45 mins aerobic cross training	Marathon Pace Run with 12 mins at MP + 3 × 4 mins at threshold + 12 mins at MP with 2 mins recoveries	Rest	45 mins recovery run	Long run 180 to 195 mins with last 60 mins at target MP
Week 13	30–40 mins aerobic cross training or run + strength and conditioning	8 × 3 mins alternating odd numbers at threshold effort, even at 5km effort with 90 sec recoveries	Easy run, 45 mins or 45 mins aerobic cross training	90 mins run including 3 × 15 mins at MP with 2–3 min recoveries	Rest	Threshold run, 45 mins total. 15 mins easy, 15 mins steady, 15 mins threshold	Long run, 165 mins – 180 hrs total. Last 45 mins at MP
Week 14	30 mins aerobic cross training or run + strength and conditioning	5 mins at threshold, then 2 sets of 5 × 90 seconds at 5km effort with 60 sec between efforts, 120 sec between sets	Easy run, 40 mins or 40 mins aerobic cross training	90 mins with final 30–40 mins at MP	Rest	Threshold run, 45 mins including 6 × 3 mins threshold and 3 mins steady recoveries	Long run: 90 to 120 mins easy with last 30 mins at MP
Week 15	Rest	30 mins recovery run	30 mins recovery run	Progression run of 15 mins easy, 15 mins steady, 15 mins at MP	Rest	30 mins easy aerobic cross training or 30 mins easy run	Long run 75 mins easy
Week 16	Rest	30–40 mins run including 3 × 35 mins at marathon pace with 2mins recoveries	30 mins recovery run	20 mins easy run	Rest	15 mins easy run and stretch	Race Day Enjoy