

Marathon Training Guide

Beginner



Thank You

Thank you so much for running to change the lives of people living with neurological conditions and welcome to Team #BrainResearchUK!

There are over 12.5 million people currently living in the UK with a neurological condition. By running a marathon and raising money, you are helping to fund ground-breaking neurological research to discover the causes, develop new treatments and improve the lives of those affected. We couldn't do it without you, and are incredibly grateful for your support.

This is a beginner training guide, best suited to someone who is new to running. It includes an eight week training plan to get you ready for a 10k, followed by a 16-week plan to prepare you for a marathon itself. Intermediate and Advanced training guides are also available to download on our website.

Should you have any questions about your training, get in touch by emailing events@brainresearchuk.org.uk or by calling 020 7404 9982 —we are behind you 100% of the way!

1 in 6 of us



has a neurological condition

12,300



people are diagnosed with a primary brain tumour every year

2.6 million



people live with the effects of traumatic brain injury or stroke

190,000



migraine attacks occur every day

Beginner's training plan

This training plan is aimed at novice marathon runners covering the distance for the first time, with a few tweaks and challenges if you want to test yourself, or if you feel like pushing if your training is going really well.

The plan assumes that you will run three times a week and that you've done very little running in the past but are generally in good health and committed to your marathon journey.

The days of the week shown are not fixed and only proposed. If you change them to fit your lifestyle, try to ensure that a run day is followed by a rest day (for example, run on Monday, Wednesday and Saturday or Tuesday, Thursday and Sunday).

Different types of training run

EASY RUNS (less than 60 per cent maximum effort)

During an easy run, you should feel relaxed. You should be breathing comfortably and capable of holding a conversation throughout the run. If you're a new runner nothing may feel easy at first – slow down, walk if necessary and control your effort.

STEADY RUNS (60-70 per cent maximum effort)

These are the bread and butter of your training - the 'miles in the bank'. Steady runs build the base that is the foundation for the rest of your training. Conversations are still possible at this pace but only in shorter sentences.

TEMPO RUNS (70-80 per cent maximum effort)

Running at tempo pace is great for improving your running economy. It's a sustained cruise pace that requires concentration. You will find these runs slightly uncomfortable as you try to run faster, but they are worth it.

LONG RUNS

These are a real focus of the plan. They should be used to develop strength and endurance but also to practise your target marathon pace and control. Long runs are shown in both time and distance.

16-week Marathon training

Week 1

- Mon: Rest Day
- Tue: Walk 30 Minutes
- Wed: Rest Day
- Thu: Run/Walk 40 Minutes – 10-minute brisk walk, 20-minute easy run, 10-minute brisk walk
- Fri: Rest Day
- Sat: Rest Day
- Sun: Run/Walk 50 Minutes – 10-minute walk, 30-minute easy run, 10-minute walk

Week 2

- Mon: Rest Day – The first few weeks are important. Find the time to fit in your workouts.
- Tue: Run/Walk 40 Minutes – (10-minute walk, 10-minute run) x2
- Wed: Rest Day
- Thu: Run/Walk 50 Minutes – 10-minute brisk walk, 30-minute easy run, 10-minute brisk walk
- Fri: Rest Day
- Sat: Rest Day
- Sun: Run/Walk 65 Minutes – 10-minute walk, 20-minute easy run, 10-minute walk, 10-minute easy run, 10-minute walk

Week 3

- Mon: Rest Day – You’re doing a great job. The more you do the easier it feels!
- Tue: Run/Walk 40 Minutes – 5-minute walk, 30-minute easy run, 5-minute walk
- Wed: Rest Day
- Thu: Run/Walk 50 Minutes – 5-minute brisk walk, 40-minute easy run, 5-minute brisk walk
- Fri: Rest Day
- Sat: Rest Day
- Sun: Walk/Run 80 Minutes – 10-minute walk, 30-minute jog, 10-minute walk, 20-minute jog, 10-minute walk

Week 4

- Mon: Rest Day – The first block of four weeks is almost done. Stick to your plan this week and build up to your longest time on your feet.
- Tue: 40 Minutes Easy Run
- Wed: Rest Day
- Thu: Run/Walk 55 Minutes – 5-minute brisk walk, 45-minute easy run, 5-minute brisk walk
- Fri: Rest Day
- Sat: Rest Day
- Sun: Run/Walk 90 Minutes – 10-minute walk, 30-minute jog, 10-minute walk, 30-minute jog, 10-minute walk, or distance goal of 6 to 8 miles

Week 5

- Mon: Rest Day – A lighter week to allow for adaptation of training loads
- Tue: 20 Minutes Easy Run
- Wed: Rest Day
- Thu: 30 Minutes Easy Run
- Fri: Rest Day
- Sat: Rest Day
- Sun: Run 52 Minutes – 25-minute easy run, 2-minute walk, 25-minute easy run

Week 6 Marathon training kicks in!

- Mon: Rest Day – This week is when the marathon training kicks in, building more time on your feet, and introducing some mixed pace running
- Tue: 40 Minutes Easy Run
- Wed: Rest Day
- Thu: Run 40 Minutes – 10-minute easy run, (30-second tempo run, 2-minute walk) x8, 10-minute easy run
- Fri: Rest Day
- Sat: Rest Day
- Sun: Run/Walk 1 Hour 40 Minutes – (20-minute easy run, 5-minute brisk walk) x4

Week 7 Training reduction and half marathon race

- Mon: Rest Day – A solid week in the bank allowing training to settle and routine to continue
- Tue: 40 Minutes Easy Run
- Wed: Rest Day
- Thu: Run 40 Minutes – 10-minute easy run, (40-second tempo run, 1 minute 45-second walk/run) x8, 10-minute easy run
- Fri: Rest Day
- Sat: Rest Day
- Sun: Run 1 Hour 45 Minutes – (30-minute jog, 5-brisk walk) x3, or distance goal of 8 miles

Week 8 Start of peak mileage phase

- Mon: Rest Day – This week, feel your heart pounding and your breathing quicken with the tempo running
- Tue: 40 Minutes Easy Run
- Wed: Rest Day
- Thu: Run 50 Minutes – 10-minute easy run, (60-second tempo run, 2-minute walk/jog) x10, 10-minute easy run
- Fri: Rest Day
- Sat: Rest Day
- Sun: Run 1 Hour 40 Minutes – (25-minute jog, 5-minute brisk walk) x4, or distance goal of 8 to 10 miles

Week 9 Building long endurance runs

- Mon: Rest Day – The next few weeks are all about the long run, building your capacity to complete the marathon. Don't worry about covering the race distance before the event, just trust the training. Practise your hydration and fuel strategies on your long runs
- Tue: 40 Minutes Easy Run
- Wed: Rest Day
- Thu: Run 30 Minutes – 10-minute easy run, (4-minute tempo run, 3-minute easy jog/walk recovery) x4, 10-minute easy run
- Fri: Rest Day
- Sat: Rest Day
- Sun: Run 2 Hours – (28-minute run, 2-minute walk) x4, or distance goal of 10 to 12 miles

Week 10

- Mon: Rest Day – Enter a half marathon to familiarise yourself with race day routines, such as pre-race nutrition, race clothing and hydration strategies
- Tue: Run 35 Minutes – 10-minute easy run, (3-minute tempo run, 2-minute jog recovery) x3, 10-minute easy run
- Wed: Rest Day
- Thu: 30 Minutes Easy Run
- Fri: Rest Day
- Sat: Rest Day
- Sun: Race – race a half marathon or run for 2 hours 15 minutes (12 miles)

Week 11

- Mon: Rest Day – The next four weeks are about getting to know your race pace. Have a target time in minutes and work out your pace per mile
- Tue: 45 Minutes Easy Run
- Wed: Rest Day
- Thu: Run 60 Minutes – 10-minute easy run, (5-minute tempo run, 3-minute easy run/walk recovery) x5, 10-minute easy run
- Fri: Rest Day
- Sat: Rest Day
- Sun: Run 2 Hours 30 Minutes – (28-minute easy run, 2-minute walk) x5, or distance goal of 14 to 16 miles. Include a few miles at target marathon pace

Week 12

- Mon: Rest Day – There are just three more weeks of hard training left before the taper and you start to run less and sharpen up
- Tue: 50 Minutes Easy Run
- Wed: Rest Day
- Thu: Run 52 Minutes – 10-minute easy run, (6-minute tempo run, 2-minute easy run/walk) x4, 10-minute easy run
- Fri: Rest Day
- Sat: Rest Day
- Sun: Run 3 Hours – (28-minute easy run, 2-minute walk) x6, or distance goal of 16 to 18 miles. Include a few miles at target marathon pace

Week 13 Peak week

- Mon: Rest Day – Dial in to your long run this week. Focus, plan and prepare. Relax, tune in and tick off the miles
- Tue: 50 Minutes Easy Run
- Wed: Rest Day
- Thu: Run 50 Minutes – 10-minute easy run, 10-minute steady run, 10 minutes at target marathon pace, 10-minute tempo run, 10-minute easy run
- Fri: Rest Day
- Sat: Rest Day
- Sun: Run 3 Hours 30 Minutes – (28-minute easy run, 2-minute walk) x7, or distance goal of 18 to 20 miles. Include a few miles at target marathon pace. Remember, people run at different paces so the distance covered will vary

Week 14 Start of training reduction

- Mon: Rest Day – The long run is reducing in volume. Don't be tempted to do more or you will risk being tired on the Start Line
- Tue: 40 Minutes Easy Run
- Wed: Rest Day
- Thu: Run 50 Minutes – 10-minute easy run, (3 minutes at target marathon pace, 3 minutes faster) x 5, 10-minute easy run
- Fri: Rest Day
- Sat: Rest Day
- Sun: Run 1 Hour 34 Minutes – (45-minute easy run, 2-minute walk) x 2

Week 15 Further training reductions

- Mon: Rest Day – The taper is here. Doing less is all about recovering from the hard training so you can stand on the Start Line ready to do your best
- Tue: Run 30 Minutes
- Wed: Rest Day
- Thu: Run 50 Minutes – 10-minute easy run, (3 minutes at target marathon pace, 3 minutes faster) x 5, 10-minute easy run
- Fri: Rest Day
- Sat: Rest Day
- Sun: 70 Minutes Easy Run

Week 16 Final training reduction and preparation week

- Mon: Rest Day – You can only do too much this week, Relax, look back at your training and see how far you have come. You are ready!
- Tue: Run 30 Minutes
- Wed: Rest Day
- Thu: Run 22 Minutes – 5-minute easy run, 12 minutes at target marathon pace, 5-minute easy run
- Fri: Rest Day
- Sat: Rest Day
- Sun: RACE DAY – Start sensibly at your race pace and stick to your race plan. Trust the training, smile and enjoy yourself. You can do it!

Thank you and well done!

You have come to the end of the marathon training guide, and your fitness has advanced dramatically. You will have made significant health and fitness gains, and equally importantly, you have progressed safely. By maintaining your training, you will be making a major contribution to your long-term health and fitness, and this schedule can also serve as a foundation and springboard to increase your fitness levels further. Now you've completed your race, you may be tempted to step up and try to improve your finishing time. Enjoy your training.



Inspiring progress, together



Team

#BrainResearchUK

Our vision is a world where everyone with a neurological condition lives better, longer.

Disclaimer

Running is physically challenging and carries with it risks that neither the Charity nor any event organiser can entirely eliminate.

These include the risk of personal injury.

Rules

- o You must act responsibly and sensibly at all times.
 - o You must not participate if you are pregnant or under the influence of alcohol or non-prescription drugs.
 - o You must follow any safety warnings or instructions displayed or given to you by a member of staff or ask a staff member if you are unclear.
 - o We are not qualified to express an opinion that you are fit to safely participate. You must obtain professional or specialist advice from your doctor before participating.
- In the absence of any negligence or other breach of duty by us, participation in a running, challenge or similar event is entirely at your risk.
In the absence of any negligence or other breach of duty by us, we are not responsible for any theft, damage, destruction or loss of your property or belongings while using taking part in [the relevant event].

Indemnity

You agree to indemnify us against:

- (a) any claims, actions, demands or other proceedings brought against us by a third party, or
 - (b) any loss suffered by us
- to the extent that such claim, action, demand, other proceeding, or loss arises from either:
- (a) your breach of the Terms and Conditions of the event/s in which you are taking part, or
 - (b) your actions or inactions in relation to the event in which you are taking part that cause damage or injury to any third party; and where such breach, action or inaction cannot be attributed to us.

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