



Marathon Training Plan

Congratulations on signing up for a marathon - tough enough to be rewarding but within most people's capability - with the right training!

Following this training plan will ensure that you are physically prepared and able to complete the challenge safely and relatively comfortably. Being fit and well-prepared will also really contribute to your enjoyment of a marathon!

Don't forget that, even if you are accustomed to jogging or walking, you will probably not be used to running for a prolonged amount of time. You should aim to increase your fitness levels to prepare yourself for this type of challenge.

Medical check-up

Before you start on a new training programme, it is always a good idea to consult with your doctor. You may wish to take our recommended training programme along with you so the doctor knows the level of training you are hoping to carry out.

NB all people have different levels of 'trainability' and natural potential. It is possible for complete beginners to make very rapid progress and move up through the targets, while others find initially that they can't achieve the early training levels.

Remember the two golden rules:

- build up very gradually
- you must rest and recover to enable the training to become beneficial.

Walking /Jogging/ Running / Levels

Miles per hour or heart rate can be a measure of exertion across different terrain so use Sing - Talk - Gasp

SING - easy jogging. You should be moving comfortably enough to sing your favourite songs

TALK - steady running. You are moving quickly but still able to talk intelligibly (if not intelligently!)

GASP - sprinting or speed work. You can't string a complete sentence together without running out of puff

For extra fat loss Do the short sessions in the morning after a glass of water but before eating. Otherwise leave three hours post-meal before heading out. On longer runs, sip a dilute juice drink (half and half with water) - 1 litre per hour.

Always eat within 30 minutes of finishing and include a portion of lean protein such chicken, fish or cottage cheese.

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Important Note! Listen to your body. As you start and continue your training you will expect to feel slightly fatigued and your muscles may ache after training. Gentle stretching is important after exercise. If any tenderness or discomfort does not go away after rest, consult your doctor. If you experience any sudden pain, tightness in the chest or breathlessness seek medical advice immediately.

Kit Selection

Jogging and running are generally one of the cheaper activities to engage in, but it doesn't hurt to put in a little money and purchase the right gear to help make your jogging experience a lot more enjoyable.

Basic Kit consists of:

- Running top / vest
- Running shorts / leggings
- Water-resistant / windproof jacket
- Water bottle
- Good-quality running shoes

Socks

Running specific synthetic socks are light and cool, and do not add bulk to your feet. They also promote moving the sweat away from your feet.

Shorts / leggings / running tops

Synthetic fibres are definitely popular choices as they provide a dry jogging experience. These fibres move moisture away from the skin towards the outer layers of the material for easy evaporation.

Running Shoes

The most important piece of equipment any runner needs is a good and trusty pair of shoes. Choosing the right pair of shoes is essential to maximizing your running experience and helping to avoid injuries. Visit a reputable sports shop to have your feet measured and your gait analysed.

The Nutrition Plan

'Healthy eating' needn't be 'fun free', we need fat in our diet to remain healthy; we need carbohydrate in our diet and we need fibre too. At the end of the day it's a question of balance.

Leading up to your marathon you should try to follow a healthy balanced diet. The training is very physically demanding, so you will need to increase your calorie intake. Food choices are important when training for any fitness challenge and whether you are looking at your marathon as a fun day

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out or a race against the clock, subtle changes to what you eat and drink will help to improve your performance and help keep you healthy so you can train regularly and also recover afterwards.

Fluid intake is especially important during training. It is vital to drink plenty of water before and after exercise sessions – aim to drink two litres of water per day. Try to reduce your intake of tea, coffee, sugary drinks and alcohol.

Increase your intake of fruit and vegetables high in vitamins A, C and E as they contain anti-oxidants, which help to reduce toxin build up in the body. Eat lots of the following:

- Non citrus fruits such as strawberries, cherries and pears
- Brightly coloured vegetables such as peppers, carrots and aubergines
- Green vegetables, especially broccoli, courgettes and spinach

As always try and stick to the daily recommended intake of at least five fruit and vegetable portions per day. Everybody should try and do this as part of a healthy diet. 80g makes up a portion e.g. one apple, two plums, a glass of fruit juice, two heaped tablespoons of peas or one bowl of salad.

It is important to get enough protein, but you don't need to overdo it. Try and incorporate one or two servings of fish per week. White fish is a great low fat option and oily fish, like sardines or salmon gives us a good supply of unsaturated omega-3 fats.

Try and get around 60% of your calories from carbohydrates – at least one rice, pasta or potato portion per day should cover this. Think of these foods as fuel – these will give your muscles the energy you need to train.

You will have depleted your energy stores during your training sessions, so try to consume some carbohydrates as soon as possible. This will speed up your recovery and enable your body to rebuild, restock and be ready for your next exercise session. During the 15-minute period following your exercise session, your muscles are very receptive to loading on fuel and can restock at a much faster rate than usual. By refuelling correctly after exercise you will experience less overall fatigue for the remainder of the day. Even if you are not feeling very hungry try a piece of fruit and yoghurt. Within two hours of exercise you should try to eat a balanced meal of complex carbohydrates and low fat protein, for instance chicken with pasta. Go for wholegrain varieties where possible.

There is some sense in 'loading up' on carbohydrates the night before your run as they are slow energy releasers, but try healthier options such as brown rice, wholemeal or wheat free pasta with a light non dairy sauce. Don't eat anything too high in fat or heavy protein or you'll find it sitting on your stomach in the morning. Drink plenty of water the night before you race. On the morning of the run get up nice and early and have a light breakfast. Porridge made with water and a little honey would be a good option.

You will also need to experiment with forms of energy to take on board during the run. There are many different options ranging from pre mixed sports drinks to powdered energy gels and bars. Use a variety on your training sessions and find the one that suits you, and your stomach, the best. You

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need to also get used to drinking and snacking while running - most people 'hit the wall' because they are simply dehydrated. Work on a steady intake of one litre per hour of exercise..

The Training Plan

Try and follow the plan as closely as possible. If it looks a little daunting, don't worry - one of the best things about running is that it's so adaptable.

Short of time? Take a break from the computer screen at lunchtime and go for a jog or a brisk walk - why not get your colleagues to join you!

More of a gym bunny? No problem - the treadmill will be your friend - and the stepper is ideal for your hill training sessions too.

Worried about your training interfering with normal life at the weekend? The long runs at the weekend are ideal to catch up with fellow runners, friends, family and partners. The dogs will love the extra exercise too!

So, now's the time to get started

NB The Willow Foundation does not accept responsibility for any injury, loss or damage to you or your property incurred during training or participation in this event. Any participant who has any concern about his or her physical condition is advised to consult his/her own doctor before taking part in the event or any training leading up to the event.

Week One

This week's training objective is about getting into a routine and building up your training gradually.

The Programme - Week 1				
Day	'Get you round..'	Sub 5 hours	Sub 4 hours	Sub 3 hours
Sun	30 min walk/jog	30 min run	60 min run	90 min run
Mon	Rest day	Rest day	Rest day	45 min run
Tues	15 min walk/jog	30 min run	45 min run	8 x 2 min run at marathon pace with 2 min jog recovery between efforts
Wed	Rest day	Rest day	Rest day	45 min run
Thu	15 min walk/jog	30 min run	45 min run	30 min run – last 10 mins at marathon pace
Fri	Rest day	Rest day	Rest day	Rest day
Sat	15 min walk/jog	Circuits of a park – alternating 1 min at faster than normal pace then 1 min at slower than normal pace – repeat 10 times	Circuits of a park – alternating 1 min at faster than normal pace then 1 min at slower than normal pace – repeat 10 times	Morning – 30 mins easy jog Afternoon – circuits of a park - alternating 1 min at faster than normal pace then 1 min at slower than normal pace – repeat 10 times

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Week Two

This week's training objective is about continuing to get your body used to regular exercise and building up your training.

The Programme - Week 2				
Day	'Get you round..'	Sub 5 hours	Sub 4 hours	Sub 3 hours
Sun	40 min walk/jog	40 min steady jog	60 min steady jog	90 min steady jog
Mon	Rest day	Rest day	Rest day	45 min run
Tues	15 min walk/jog	30 min run	45 min run	8 x 2 mins at marathon pace with 2 mins jog recovery between efforts
Wed	Rest day	Rest day	30 min run – last 10 mins at marathon pace	45 min run
Thu	15 min walk/jog	30 min run	45 min run	30 min run – last 10 mins at marathon pace
Fri	Rest day	Rest day	Rest day	Rest day
Sat	15 min walk/jog	Circuits of a park – alternating 1 min at faster than normal pace then 1 min at slower than normal pace – repeat 10 times	Circuits of a park – alternating 1 min at faster than normal pace then 1 min at slower than normal pace – repeat 10 times	Morning – 30 mins easy jog Afternoon – circuits of a park - alternating 1 min at faster than normal pace then 1 min at slower than normal pace – repeat 10 times

Week Three

This week's training objective is about starting to run short distances and building strength in your legs.

The Programme - Week 3				
Day	'Get you round..'	Sub 5 hours	Sub 4 hours	Sub 3 hours
Sun	50 min walk/jog	60 min steady jog	90 min steady jog	2 hours steady jog
Mon	Rest day	Rest day	30 min slow jog	Morning – 30 min easy jog Afternoon - 45 min easy jog
Tues	20 min jog	45 min slow jog	45 min continuous run including 10 faster pace efforts of between 1 & 3 mins – jog recovery	5 x 1 mile efforts 10 sec per mile faster than marathon pace
Wed	Rest day	Rest day	Rest day	60 min run
Thu	20 min jog	45 min slow jog	45 min slow jog	Morning – 30 min easy jog Afternoon - 45 min easy jog
Fri	Rest day	Rest day	30 min easy jog	30 min easy jog
Sat	Circuit in park – run 1 min continuously then walk 1 min to recover, repeat 10x	10 x 1 min running up shallow hill – walk back down to recover	Rest day	30 min jog

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Week Four

This week's training objective is lengthening runs and building speed.

The Programme - Week 4				
Day	'Get you round..'	Sub 5 hours	Sub 4 hours	Sub 3 hours
Sun	60 min walk/jog	75 min steady jog	10km run	10km run
Mon	Rest day	Rest day	30 min easy jog	30 min easy jog
Tues	25 min easy jog	45 min continuous run including 10 faster pace efforts of between 1 & 3 min with slow jog recovery	45 min continuous run including 10 faster pace efforts of between 1 & 3 mins – with slow jog recovery	6 x 1000m at half marathon pace – 2 min recovery between each
Wed	Rest day	Rest day	30 min easy jog	Morning – 30 min easy jog Afternoon - 60 min steady jog
Thu	25 min easy jog	45 min steady jog	60 min easy jog	Morning – 30 min easy jog Afternoon - 30 min steady jog followed by 10 x 200m
Fri	Rest day	Rest day	Rest day	Rest day
Sat	Circuit in park – run 1 min continuously then walk 1 min to recover, repeat 10x	10 x 1 min running up shallow hill – walk back down to recover	12 x 1 min running up a shallow hill – walk back down to recover	16 x 1 min running up a shallow hill – walk back down to recover

Week Five

This week's training objective is about getting used to the balance between long distances and speed work.

The Programme - Week 5				
Day	'Get you round..'	Sub 5 hours	Sub 4 hours	Sub 3 hours
Sun	75 min run/walk	90 min easy jog	2 hours steady jog	2 hours steady jog
Mon	Rest day	Rest day	30 min easy jog	Morning – 30 min easy jog Afternoon - 45 min run
Tues	35 min easy jog	45 min continuous run including 10 faster pace efforts of between 1 & 3 min with slow jog recovery	45 min continuous run including 10 faster pace efforts of between 1 & 3 mins with slow jog recovery	10 min at half marathon pace – 5 min recovery. Repeat 3 times.
Wed	Rest day	Rest day	60 min easy jog	Morning – 30 min easy jog Afternoon - 60 min steady jog
Thu	35 min easy jog	60 min easy jog	30 min steady jog	Morning – 30 min easy jog Afternoon - steady 30 min jog followed by 10 x 200m
Fri	Rest day	Rest day	Rest day	Rest day
Sat	Circuit in park – run 1 min continuously then walk 1 min to recover, repeat 10x	10 x 1 min running up shallow hill – walk back down to recover	12 x 1 min running up a shallow hill – walk back down to recover	16 x 1 min running up a shallow hill – walk back down to recover

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Week Six

This week's training objective is about increasing your pace and holding the pace for an increasing amount of time.

The Programme - Week 6				
Day	'Get you round..'	Sub 5 hours	Sub 4 hours	Sub 3 hours
Sun	75 min run/walk	90 min easy run	2 hours steady jog	2 hours steady jog
Mon	Rest day	Rest day	30 min easy jog	Morning – 30 min easy jog Afternoon - 45 min run
Tues	40 min easy jog	Run 1 min fast/1 min slow, 2 mins fast/2 mins slow, 3 mins fast/3mins slow, 4 mins fast/4mins slow, 5 mins fast/5 mins slow	Run 1 min fast/1 min slow, 2 mins fast/2 mins slow, 3 mins fast/3mins slow, 4 mins fast/4mins slow, 5 mins fast/5 mins slow	Run 1 min fast/1 min slow, 2 mins fast/2 mins slow, 3 mins fast/3mins slow, 4 mins fast/4mins slow, 5 mins fast/5 mins slow, repeat in reverse
Wed	Rest day	Rest day	30 min easy jog	Morning – 30 min easy jog Afternoon - 10 min warm up, 20 min fast paced run (10 mile race pace) – 10 mins warm down
Thu	40 min easy jog	60 min easy jog	75 min easy jog	30 min easy jog
Fri	Rest day	Rest day	30 min easy jog	Rest day
Sat	10 x 1 min running up shallow hill – walk back down to recover	12 x 1 min running up a shallow hill – walk back down to recover	Rest day	Rest day

Week Seven

This week's training objective is about building your endurance and getting used to the speed that you want to race at.

The Programme - Week 7				
Day	'Get you round..'	Sub 5 hours	Sub 4 hours	Sub 3 hours
Sun	90 min run/walk	2 hour steady jog	10km run	10km run
Mon	Rest day	Rest day	30 min easy jog	Morning – 30 min easy jog Afternoon - 30 min easy jog
Tues	45 min steady jog	10 min warm up – 20 min at marathon pace – 10 min warm down	10 min warm up – 20 min at marathon pace – 10 min warm down	4 sets of 5 x 300m at 10km pace with 100m jog recovery between efforts – 3 mins standing recovery between sets
Wed	Rest day	Rest day	75 min steady jog	90 min steady jog
Thu	60 min steady jog	60 min steady jog	Morning – 30 min easy jog Afternoon - 30 min easy jog	Morning – 30 min easy jog Afternoon - 30 min easy jog
Fri	Rest day	Rest day	Rest day	Rest day
Sat	10 x 1 min running up shallow hill – walk back down to recover	12 x 1 min running up a shallow hill – walk back down to recover	15 x 1 min running up a shallow hill – walk back down to recover	20 x 1 min running up a shallow hill – walk back down to recover

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Week Eight

This week's training objective is about increasing distances and then tapering down towards the end of the week.

The Programme - Week 8				
Day	'Get you round..'	Sub 5 hours	Sub 4 hours	Sub 3 hours
Sun	90 min run/walk	2 hour easy jog	2 hour steady jog	2 hour steady jog
Mon	Rest day	Rest day	30 min easy jog	Morning - 30 min easy jog Afternoon – 45 min run
Tues	45 min run	10 min warm up – 20 min at marathon pace – 10 min warm down	10 min warm up – 20 min at marathon pace – 10 min warm down	Pyramid session 200m/400m/600m /800m/1000m/800m/ 600m/400m/200m – 2 mins recovery between each
Wed	Rest day	Rest day	75 min easy jog	75 min steady jog
Thu	60 min easy jog	30 min steady jog	30 min easy jog	Morning - 30 min easy jog Afternoon – 45 min run
Fri	Rest day	30 min steady jog	30 min easy jog	30 min easy jog
Sat	10 x 1 min running up shallow hill – walk back down to recover	Rest day	Rest day	Rest day

Week Nine

This week's training objective is about increasing distances and speed.

The Programme - Week 9				
Day	'Get you round..'	Sub 5 hours	Sub 4 hours	Sub 3 hours
Sun	100 min run/walk	10 mile run	10 mile run	10 mile race
Mon	Rest day	Rest day	30 min easy jog	Morning - 30 min easy jog Afternoon – 45 min run
Tues	50 min easy jog	Run 1 min fast/1 min slow, 2 mins fast/2 mins slow, 3 mins fast/3mins slow, 4 mins fast/4mins slow, 5 mins fast/5 mins slow	Run 1 min fast/1 min slow, 2 mins fast/2 mins slow, 3 mins fast/3mins slow, 4 mins fast/4mins slow, 5 mins fast/5 mins slow	Run 1 min fast/1 min slow, 2 mins fast/2 mins slow, 3 mins fast/3mins slow, 4 mins fast/4mins slow, 5 mins fast/5 mins slow
Wed	Rest day	Rest day	75 min easy jog	90 min steady jog
Thu	60 min easy jog	60 min steady jog	On straight uninterrupted route – 10 min at half marathon pace – 5 min recovery – run 10 min back	Morning – 30 min easy jog Afternoon - on straight uninterrupted route – 10 min at half marathon pace – 5 min recovery – run 10 min back
Fri	Rest day	Rest day	Rest day	Rest day
Sat	Rest day	30 min faster paced run	30 min faster paced run	30 min fasted paced run

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Week Ten

This week's training objective is about running a longer distance and then tapering down in preparation for the following week's longer run.

The Programme - Week 10				
Day	'Get you round..'	Sub 5 hours	Sub 4 hours	Sub 3 hours
Sun	2 hour easy jog	2 hour steady jog	2 hour steady jog	2 hour steady jog plus 30 min at marathon pace towards the end
Mon	Rest day	Rest day	30 min easy jog	Morning - 30 min easy jog Afternoon – 45 min run
Tues	30 min run	45 min run	45 min run	60 min run
Wed	30 min run	45 min run	45 min run	45 min run
Thu	Rest day	Rest day	Rest day	30 min steady jog
Fri	20 min easy jog	30 min easy jog	30 min easy jog	30 min easy jog
Sat	Rest day	Rest day	Rest day	Rest day

Week Eleven

This week's training objective is about running a half marathon and then reflecting on how it went and how you can improve.

The Programme – Week 11				
Day	'Get you round..'	Sub 5 hours	Sub 4 hours	Sub 3 hours
Sun	Half marathon	Half marathon	Half marathon	Half marathon
Mon	Rest day	Rest day	Rest day	30 min easy jog
Tues	Rest day	Rest day	30 min steady jog	Morning – 30 min easy jog Afternoon – 45 min run
Wed	60 min jog	60 min jog	Morning – 30 min easy jog Afternoon – 60 min easy jog	Morning – 30 min easy jog Afternoon – 75 min run
Thu	Rest day	Rest day	Morning – 30 min easy jog Afternoon – 40 min easy jog (20 mins at marathon pace)	Morning - 30 min easy jog Afternoon – 40 min faced paced run
Fri	30 min jog	30 min run	Rest day	Rest day
Sat	Rest day	Rest day	30 mins steady jog	30 min run

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Week Twelve

This week's training objective is about increasing stamina.

The Programme - Week 12				
Day	'Get you round..'	Sub 5 hours	Sub 4 hours	Sub 3 hours
Sun	3 hour steady walk or jog	3 hour steady jog	3 hour steady jog	3 hour steady jog
Mon	Rest day	Rest day	30 min easy jog	Morning - 30 min easy jog Afternoon – 30 min run
Tues	10 min warm up – alternate 1 min fast/1 min slow x 10	10 min warm up – alternate 1 min fast/1 min slow x 10	10 x 400m at 10km pace – 2 min recovery between each	10 x 400m at 10km pace – 2 min recovery between each
Wed	30 min easy jog	30 min easy jog	Morning – 30 min easy jog Afternoon – 40 min easy jog	Morning – 30 min easy jog Afternoon – 40 min easy jog
Thu	30 min steady jog	30 min steady jog	40 min easy jog – 20 mins at marathon pace	40 min easy jog – 20 mins at marathon pace
Fri	Rest day	Rest day	Rest day	Rest day
Sat	10 x 1 min running up shallow hill – walk back down to recover	Rest day	Rest day	Rest day

Week Thirteen

This week's training objective is about getting ready for race day and running a bit quicker than you will in the marathon.

The Programme - Week 13				
Day	'Get you round..'	Sub 5 hours	Sub 4 hours	Sub 3 hours
Sun	10km run	10km run	10km run	10km run
Mon	Rest day	Rest day	30 min steady jog	Morning - 30 min easy jog Afternoon – 40 min easy jog
Tues	10 min warm up – alternate 1 min fast/1 min slow x 10	10 min warm up – alternate 1 min fast/1 min slow x 10	8 x 400m at 5km pace – 3 min recovery between each	2 x 800m at 5km pace 2 x 600m at 3km pace 4 x 400 at mile pace 4 x 200 at 800m pace 3 min recovery between each
Wed	30 min easy jog	30 min easy jog	Morning – 30 min easy jog Afternoon – 40 min easy jog	Morning – 30 min easy jog Afternoon – 40 min run
Thu	10 min warm up – 10 min at marathon pace – 10 min warm down	10 min warm up – 10 min at marathon pace – 10 min warm down	10 x 200m fast jog – 3 min recovery	10 x 200m fast jog – 3 min recovery
Fri	Rest day	Rest day	Rest day	Rest day
Sat	30 min run	30 min run	30 min run	30 min run

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Week Fourteen

This week's training objective is about cutting back on training in preparation for race day!

The Programme - Week 14				
Day	'Get you round..'	Sub 5 hours	Sub 4 hours	Sub 3 hours
Sun	45 min run	45 min run	60 min run	75 min run
Mon	15 min run	15 min run	30 min run	30 min run
Tues	Rest day	Rest day	20 min run	30 min run with 5 x 30 sec fast paced 'strides'
Wed	15 min easy jog	15 min easy jog	15 min jog	15 min jog
Thu	Rest day	Rest day	15 min jog	15 min jog
Fri	15 min jog	15 min jog	15 min jog	15 min jog
Sat	Rest day	Rest day	Rest day	Rest day

Congratulations! You have finished your training and should now be fully prepared for your marathon. You should be feeling fit, ready to go and confident that the past weeks have put you in the best shape to have a great race!

Good luck and thank you very much for taking on this challenge to raise funds for the Willow Foundation.