

How to use Marathon Training Schedule

Following one of these three 16 WEEK training plans (Beginner, Improver and Advanced) will help you to structure your running and provide appropriate progression and workouts week by week.

The plans feature a variety of training (see below) in the right quantities and at the right times. The key is to make the plan personal to you. If you do miss some of the plan due to injury, illness or other pressures, don't panic or try to make up for lost time by cramming the missed training in and doing more. If you're feeling tired, adapt the plan or go for an 'easy' run instead of trying to force yourself to fit in the workout and risk fatigue, injury or illness.

Easy or recovery runs (less than 60 per cent effort)

During an easy run you should feel relaxed. You should breathe comfortably and be able to hold a conversation throughout the run. If you're a new/novice runner then you'll probably wonder whether any run can feel 'easy' so slow down, walk if necessary, and try to control your effort.

Steady runs (60-70 per cent effort)

These are the bread and butter of your marathon training. Steady runs build the aerobic base that acts as the foundation for the rest of your training. Conversations are still possible at this pace but in sentences not a long gossip.

Tempo runs (70-75 per cent effort)

These are great for improving your running economy. It's a sustained cruise pace that requires concentration but you can hold on to. You will feel slightly uncomfortable and need to concentrate but they are worth the effort.

Threshold runs (80 per cent effort)

These are a little harder than tempo running. You'll only be capable of uttering four or five words as you run. As you get fitter and more experienced you'll learn how to find your own threshold pace. These runs are all about 'controlled discomfort'.

Long runs

These are a real focus of the plan. They should be used to develop strength and endurance but also to practice our target marathon pace and control.