Marathon Training Plan: Advanced

If you've run a number of marathons before and are ready to be challenged then this is your training plan. You'll want at least 2 years of consistent running before following this plan, as there's a lot of demand from the training right from the beginning. We want you to train on a mixture of surfaces to really help develop you as an athlete. With 6 days of training a week, you'll want to make sure there's space in your life to fit this all in.

It's important that you run at the right effort level and intensity to ensure you're training to reach your full potential. Most people think that training "harder is better" so we end up running too quickly, which can result in feeling tired, getting ill or picking up an injury. Understanding what each session is trying to achieve and how it should feel is the way to train smart. Here's our guide to the running sessions that you'll find mentioned in your training plan and a note of how they should feel as a 'talk test'.

Type of Session	PERCEIVED EFFORT LEVEL (1-10)*	HOW IT SHOULD FEEL – "THE TALK TEST"
Recovery / Easy Run	6-6.5	You can speak in complete sentences, totally conversational, you're running relaxed, enjoying it and not worrying about the watch
Steady Effort Run	7-8	You can speak in short sentences but have a slight pause on your breath. It sits between Easy and Threshold running.
Threshold runs	8-8.5	You could speak 4-5 words if somebody asked you a question. Your breathing is more laboured and you know you're working, we call this 'controlled discomfort'
Long Run	6.5-7	You're in control, running fluidly and very much at a conversational level but you'll feel slightly flushed with a gradual build up of muscular fatigue
Marathon Pace	7.5-8	You can speak in short sentences, you have a slight pause on your breath but are not out of breath, relaxed and in control
10km / Speedwork	9-9.5	You can say only 2-3 words maximum and are out of breath but still know that you could do more if you had to

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	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
Week 1	30 minutes Conditioning Work	10 minutes Warm Up, 5 x 5 minutes at Threshold effort with a 90 second recovery, 10 minutes Cool Down	30 minutes Easy Cross Training / Gym Class	35 minutes Easy Run	Rest Day	10 minutes Warm Up, 10 x 1:30 on (85-90% effort) with 1 minute Easy Jog Recovery, 10 minutes Cool Down	90 minutes Easy Long Run
Week 2	30 minutes Conditioning Work	Rest Day	10 minutes Warm Up, 8 x 1 minute on (90%+ effort) with 1 minute Easy Jog Recovery, 10 minutes Cool Down	30 minutes Easy Cross Training / Gym Class	10 minutes Warm Up, 3 x 6 minutes at Threshold effort with a 90 second recovery, 10 minutes Cool Down	Rest Day	105 minutes Easy Long Run
Week 3	30 minutes Conditioning Work	60 minutes Easy Run	45 minutes Easy Cross Training / Gym Class	Rest Day	30 minutes Easy Cross Training / Gym Class	10 minutes Warm Up, 3 x 8 minutes at Threshold effort over undulating terrain with a 90 second recovery, 10 minutes Cool Down	120 minutes Easy / Steady Long Run
Week 4	30 minutes Conditioning Work	10 minutes Warm Up, 12 x 1:30 on (85-90% effort) with 1 minute Easy Jog Recovery, 10 minutes Cool Down	45 minutes Easy Cross Training / Gym Class	Rest Day	30 minutes Easy Cross Training / Gym Class	10 minutes Warm Up, 4 x 8 minutes at Threshold effort over undulating terrain with a 90 second recovery, 10 minutes Cool Down	120 minutes Easy / Steady Long Run
Week 5	Rest Day	30 minutes Conditioning Work	10 minutes Warm Up, 16 minutes at Threshold, 10 minutes Cool Down	30 minutes Easy Cross Training / Gym Class	10 minutes Easy, 10 minutes Steady, 10 minutes Easy	Rest Day	75 minutes Easy Long Run

Week 6	30 minutes Conditioning Work	10 minutes Warm Up, 6 x 3 minutes at 90% (10k) effort with a 90 second recovery, 10 minutes Cool Down	40 minutes Recovery Run	Rest Day	30 minutes Easy Cross Training / Gym Class	10 minutes Warm Up, 4 x 8 minutes at Threshold effort over undulating terrain with a 90 second recovery, 10 minutes Cool Down	135 minutes Easy / Steady Long Run
Week 7	30 minutes Conditioning Work	10 minutes Warm Up, 1,2,3,4,3,2,1 minutes at 90% (10km) effort with a 90 second recovery, 10 minutes Cool Down	30 minutes Recovery Run	45 minutes Easy Cross Training / Gym Class	Rest Day	10 minutes Warm Up, 3 x 10 minutes at Threshold effort over undulating terrain with a 90 second recovery, 10 minutes Cool Down	120 minutes Easy / Steady Long Run
Week 8	30 minutes Conditioning Work	20 minutes Easy, 20 minutes Steady, 20 minutes Easy	40 minutes Easy Cross Training / Gym Class	Rest Day	10 minutes Warm Up, 6 x 4 minutes at 90% (10k) effort with a 90 second recovery, 10 minutes Cool Down	30 minutes Easy Cross Training	150 minutes Easy / Steady Long Run
Week 9	Rest Day	30 minutes Conditioning Work	10 minutes Warm Up, 8 x 3 minutes at 90% (10k) effort with a 90 second recovery, 10 minutes Cool Down	Rest Day	10 minutes Warm Up, 4 x 6 minutes at Threshold effort with a 90 second recovery, 10 minutes Cool Down	40 minutes Easy Cross Training / Gym Class	90 minutes Long Run - Pick up last 20 minutes to Half Marathon Pace
Week 10	Rest Day	15 minutes Easy, 15 minutes Threshold, 15 minutes Easy	Rest Day	10 minutes Warm Up, 5 x 2 minutes at 90% (10k) effort with a 90 second recovery, 10 minutes Cool Down	Rest Day	20 minutes Easy Run + Strides	Half Marathon Race
Week 11	30 minutes Conditioning Work	Rest Day	60 minutes Easy Cross Training / Gym Class	Rest Day	10 minutes Warm Up, 3 x 12 minutes at Threshold effort with a 90 second recovery, 10 minutes Cool Down	30 minutes Easy Cross Training	120 minute Long Run; First 60 minutes Easy, Second 60 minutes at Marathon Pace

Week 12	30 minutes Conditioning Work	10 minutes Warm Up, 3 x 15 minutes at Threshold effort with a 90 second recovery, 10 minutes Cool Down	Rest Day	30 minutes Recovery Run	10 minutes Warm Up, 8 x 3 minutes at 90% (10k) effort with a 90 second recovery, 10 minutes Cool Down	30 minutes Easy Cross Training / Gym Class	165 minute Long Run; First 90 minutes Easy, Second 75 minutes at Marathon Pace
Week 13	30 minutes Conditioning Work	45 minutes Easy Cross Training / Gym Class	10 minutes Warm Up, 3 x 15 minutes at Threshold effort with a 90 second recovery, 10 minutes Cool Down	Rest Day	10 minutes Warm Up, 1,2,3,4,3,2,1 minutes at 90% (10km) effort with a 90 second recovery, 10 minutes Cool Down	Rest Day	180 minute Long Run; First 90 minutes Easy, Second 90 minutes at Marathon Pace
Week 14	30 minutes Conditioning Work	10 minutes Warm Up, 4 x 10 minutes at Threshold effort with a 90 second recovery, 10 minutes Cool Down	30 minutes Recovery Run	Rest Day	10 minutes Warm Up, 6 x 3 minutes at 90% (10k) effort with a 90 second recovery, 10 minutes Cool Down	30 minutes Easy Cross Training / Gym Class	120 minute Long Run; First 60 minutes Easy, Second 60 minutes at Marathon Pace
Week 15	30 minutes Conditioning Work	10 minutes Warm Up, 4 x 5 minutes at Threshold effort with a 90 second recovery, 10 minutes Cool Down	Rest Day	30 minutes Recovery Run	10 minutes Warm Up, 6 x 2 minutes at 90% (10k) effort with a 90 second recovery, 10 minutes Cool Down	Rest Day	60 minute Long Run; Pick up middle 30 minutes to Marathon Pace
Week 16	Rest Day	10 minutes Warm Up, 3 x 3 minutes at Threshold effort with a 60 second recovery, 10 minutes Cool Down	Rest Day	30 minutes Easy Run	Rest Day	20 minutes Easy Run + Strides	**Marathon Race Day**

Making the Training Plan work for you

You'll probably not be able to follow the plan as it is set out. We've written our plans with this in mind:

Key sessions for each week are highlighted in Red. These as the non-negotiable sessions that you need to fit into your diary one way or view in order to run your best race.

Avoid key sessions on back to back days. You need to recover after the harder sessions, they can't be crammed into a few days within your week. The only excpetion to this is a key session followed by an Easy Long Run, but this is for more advanced runners.

Sessions in Black are the supplementary training within the plan. These sessions are the ones to drop in your week if you can't fit it all in, although we hope you can find the time.