



Marathon Training Plan Experienced

Created by Tom Craggs
England Athletics Running Coach



| | MON | TUES | WED | THU | FRI | SAT | SUN |
|---------------|---|---|---|---|--|--|---|
| WEEK 1 | Run or XT Session: 30-45 mins easy at 2-3/10 effort | Warm up: 10 min easy run at 2-3/10 effort Main Session: 5 sets of 5 minutes at 6-7/10 effort with 75-90s jog recovery Cool down: 5-10 min easy run at 2-3/10 effort | Run or XT Session: 40-55 mins easy at 2-3/10 effort | Rest | Run Session: 45-60 min easy run at 2-3/10 effort | Run Session: 45 min run as: 15 mins easy at 2-3/10, 15 mins steady at 4-5/10, 15 mins at controlled discomfort 6-7/10 effort | 1:30 – 1:50 hrs at 3-5/10 effort. |
| WEEK 2 | Run or XT Session: 30-45 mins easy at 2-3/10 effort | Warm up: 10 min easy run at 2-3/10 effort Main Session: 8-10 x 2 mins at 8-9/10 with 90 secs rest Cool down: 5-10 min easy run at 2-3/10 effort | Run or XT Session: 40-55 mins easy at 2-3/10 effort | Run Session: 45 min run as: 15 mins easy at 2-3/10, 15 mins steady at 4-5/10, 15 mins at controlled discomfort 6-7/10 effort | Rest | Run session: 30-40 min easy at 2-3/10 effort | 1:40 – 2:00 hrs at 3-5/10 effort building to run final 30 at marathon pace if you feel good |
| WEEK 3 | Run or XT Session: 30-45 mins easy at 2-3/10 effort | Warm up: 10 min easy run at 2-3/10 effort Main Session: 3 sets of 8 minutes at 7/10 effort with 90 jog recovery Cool down: 5-10 min easy run at 2-3/10 effort | Run or XT Session: 40-55 mins easy at 2-3/10 effort | Rest | Run Session: 45-60 min easy run at 2-3/10 effort with the final 10-15 at 6-7/10 if you feel good | Run session: 40-50 min easy at 2-3/10 effort | 1:45 – 2:00 hrs at 3-5/10 effort. |
| WEEK 4 | Run or XT Session: 30 mins easy at 2-3/10 effort | Warm up: 10 min easy run at 2-3/10 effort Main Session: 4 sets of 6 minutes at 6-7/10 effort with 60-75s jog recovery Cool down: 5-10 min easy run at 2-3/10 effort | Run or XT Session: 30-45 mins easy at 2-3/10 effort | Run Session: 30 min run as: 10 mins easy at 2-3/10, 10 mins steady at 4-5/10, 10 mins at controlled discomfort 6-7/10 effort. | Rest | Run session: 5km-10km race or time trial | 1:15 – 1:30 hrs at 3-5/10 effort. |

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| WEEK 5 | Run or XT Session: 30-45 mins easy at 2-3/10 effort | Warm up: 10 min easy run at 2-3/10 effort Main Session: 5 minutes at 6-7/10 effort, then 5 x 4 minutes at 8/10 with 120s rest Cool down: 5-10 min easy run at 2-3/10 effort | Run or XT Session: 45-60 mins easy at 2-3/10 effort | Run Session: 60 min easy run at 2-3/10 effort | Rest | Run session: 30-40-50 min easy at 2-3/10 effort | 2:00 – 2:15 hrs at 2-4/10 but to include 3 x 15 mins at goal marathon pace in the final hour with a 5 min easy recovery |
| WEEK 6 | Run or XT Session: 30-45 mins easy at 2-3/10 effort | Warm up: 10 min easy run at 2-3/10 effort Main Session: 8 x 3 mins running numbers 1, 3, 5, 7 at 6-7/10, numbers 2, 4, 6, 8 at 8-9/10 with 90 secs rest Cool down: 5-10 min easy run at 2-3/10 effort | Run or XT Session: 45-60 mins easy at 2-3/10 effort | Rest | Warm up: 10 min easy run at 2-3/10 effort Main Session: 3 sets of 8 minutes at 7/10 effort with 90-120s jog recovery Cool down: 5-10 min easy run at 2-3/10 effort | Run Session: 40-50 min easy run at 2-3/10 effort | 2:00hrs – 2:15 hrs at 3-5/10 effort |
| WEEK 7 | Run or XT Session: 30-45 mins easy at 2-3/10 effort | Warm up: 10 min easy run at 2-3/10 effort Main Session: 6 sets of 5 minutes at 7/10 effort with 75-90s jog recovery Cool down: 5-10 min easy run at 2-3/10 effort | Run or XT Session: 45-60 mins easy at 2-3/10 effort | Rest | 50-70 minutes easy to steady at 3-4/10 effort | Run session: 40-50 min easy at 2-3/10 effort | 2:10 – 2:25 hrs at 3-4/10 effort but the final 65 mins run as 2 x 30 mins goal marathon pace with 5 mins easy recovery |
| WEEK 8 | Run or XT Session: 30-45 mins easy at 2-3/10 effort | Run session: 40-50 min easy at 2-3/10 effort | 60-75 minutes with 45 minutes run as 15 x 3 minutes alternating 7-8/10 with 5-6/10 with no rest | Run or XT Session: 45-60 mins easy at 2-3/10 effort | Rest | Run Session: 60 min run as: 20 mins easy at 2-3/10, 20 mins steady at 4-5/10, 20 mins at controlled discomfort 6-7/10 effort | 2:20hrs – 2:35 hrs at 3-5/10 effort. |

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| WEEK 9 | Run or XT Session: 30 mins easy at 2-3/10 effort | Warm up: 10 min easy run at 2-3/10 effort Main Session: 10 x 3 mins running numbers 1, 3, 5, 7, 9 at 6-7/10, numbers 2, 4, 6, 8, 10 at 8-9/10 with 90 secs rest Cool down: 5-10 min easy run at 2-3/10 effort | Run or XT Session: 30-45 mins easy at 2-3/10 effort | 40-50 minutes easy to steady at 3-4/10 effort | Rest | Run session: 30-40 min easy at 2-3/10 effort | Half Marathon race or TT, consider running at goal marathon pace or harder if fresh |
| WEEK 10 | Run or XT Session: 30-45 mins easy at 2-3/10 effort | Run session: 40-50 min easy at 2-3/10 effort | 75-90 mins to include 3 x 15 minutes starting at marathon pace and getting a little faster on block 2 and 3. 3 minutes jog between sets | Rest | Run or XT Session: 45-60 mins easy at 2-3/10 effort | Run Session: 45 min run as: 15 mins easy at 2-3/10, 15 mins steady at 4-5/10, 15 mins at controlled discomfort 6-7/10 effort | 2:20hrs – 2:35 hrs at 3-5/10 effort |
| WEEK 11 | Run or XT Session: 30-45 mins easy at 2-3/10 effort | Warm up: 10 min easy run at 2-3/10 effort Main Session: 3 sets of 10 minutes at 7/10 effort with 90-120s jog recovery Cool down: 5-10 min easy run at 2-3/10 effort | Run or XT Session: 45-60 mins at 2-3/10 effort | Rest | Warm up: 10-15 min easy run at 2-3/10 effort 10-14 x 60s at 8-9/10 with 60s easy to steady running between each. Cool down: 10-15 min easy run at 2-3/10 effort | Run session: 40-50 min easy at 2-3/10 effort | 2:45hrs – 3:00hrs at 3-4/10 effort building to run the final 60-75 mins at goal marathon pace |
| WEEK 12 | Run or XT Session: 30-45 mins easy at 2-3/10 effort | Run session: 40-60 min steady at 3-5/10 effort | 75-90 mins to include 20 mins, 15 mins, 10 mins, 5 mins with the 20 min effort at marathon pace and getting faster each following block with 2-3 mins easy between each. | Rest | 45-60 minutes easy to steady at 3-5/10 effort | Run or XT Session: 40-50 mins at 2-3/10 effort | 2:45hrs – 3:00hrs at 3-5/10 effort. |



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| WEEK 13 | Run or XT Session: 30-45 mins easy at 2-3/10 effort | Warm up: 10 min easy run at 2-3/10 effort Main Session: 12 minutes, 10 minutes, 8 minutes at 7-8/10 effort with 90s jog recovery Cool down: 5-10 min easy run at 2-3/10 effort | Run or XT Session: 45-60 mins at 2-3/10 effort | 60-75 minutes easy to steady at 3-5/10 effort | Rest | Run session: 40-50 min easy at 2-3/10 effort | Long run, 2hrs 20-45 mins at 3-4/10 but run the last 45-60 mins at marathon pace |
| WEEK 14 | Run or XT Session: 30-45 mins easy at 2-3/10 effort | Run or XT Session: 45-60 mins easy at 2-3/10 effort | 75-90 minutes with 45-60 minutes run as 15-20 x 3 minutes alternating 7-8/10 with 5-6/10 with no rest | Rest | 45-60 minutes easy to steady at 3-5/10 effort | Run session: 40-50 min easy at 2-3/10 effort | 1:45-2 hours at 3-4/10 if you feel good pick up the pace in the final 30-45 minutes to goal marathon pace |
| WEEK 15 | Run or XT Session: 30 mins easy at 2-3/10 effort | Warm up: 10 min easy run at 2-3/10 effort 10-12 x 75s at 8-9/10 with 60s rest, jog for 2-3 minutes then run 20-30 mins at marathon pace Cool down: 5-10 min easy run at 2-3/10 effort | Run or XT Session: 40 mins easy at 2-3/10 effort | Rest | 60-75 minutes start easy build to run the final 20-30 minutes at marathon pace | Run session: 30-45 min easy at 2-3/10 effort | Run Session: 70 mins at 3-4/10 effort |
| WEEK 16 | Run or XT Session: 30 mins easy at 2-3/10 effort | Warm up: 5-10 min easy run at 2-3/10 effort Main Session: 3 sets of 6 minutes at marathon pace with 90s jogged recovery Cool down: 5-10 min easy run at 2-3/10 effort | Run or XT Session: 20-30 mins easy at 2-3/10 effort | Run Session: 20-30 mins at 2-3/10 | Rest | Run session: 15 mins easy jog at 2-3/10 | MARATHON RACE!! GOOD LUCK! |

| RPE SCALE | WHAT IT MIGHT FEEL LIKE |
|-----------|--|
| 0 | Sat at home in your armchair |
| 1 | Brisk walking for some, very easy jogging for others. Able to fully converse with no effort. |
| 2-3 | Easy running, able to hold a full conversation, you might have consciously work to slow down. Gentle, relaxed, feeling like you could run forever. |
| 4-5 | Steady running. Able to speak but in shorter sentences. You might hear yourself breathing but could still keep going for between 75 minutes – 2 hours. |
| 6-7 | Controlled discomfort. A pace you could hold for around 60 mins in a race. You should be able to speak 2-3 words at a time. Cruising at speed. |
| 8-9 | Working hard at 3km-10km effort. You have to focus and work to maintain pace. You'll be breathing strongly and will feel like you need the recovery between efforts. |
| 10 | Working very hard. A effort you can sustain for only short periods before you effort feels unsustainable. |

THE PLAN

This plan is aimed at experienced marathon runners likely looking for a time of 3 hours – 3:30 or faster and who can train 5-6 times a week. You'll likely have experience completing interval training before, and have raced regularly over 10km-half marathon, or indeed a full marathon.

COMPLETING THE PLAN

The majority of the sessions are runs, but you can replace with cardiovascular cross training using a bike, rowing machine, swimming etc. You might see cross training included in the plan to – these are labelled as 'XT'. If you need to swap days, don't run two runs harder than 6/10 effort on back to back days. It's fine to add more running but always remember you need to recover well to progress and you are better to do a little less than too much. If you are tired, sore, have a cold or are worried about a niggle stop, rest and if necessary, speak to a physio or medical expert.

GUIDING YOUR EFFORT

The plan is written to time and perceived effort to make it flexible for runners at different levels, running over different terrain and in different weather conditions. As you build confidence you will learn what the right pace is for you on the 0-10 scale of rate of perceived exertion (RPE).