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# Half Marathon Training Plan

## For Beginners

# Our top tips for first time half marathon runners.



By taking on this challenge in support of Guts UK, you're helping the UK get to grips with guts. So, let's help you get to grips with your half marathon training!

If this is your first half marathon and you're not sure where to start, here are our top tips on how to approach your the first few weeks of training.

## 1. Slow and steady wins the race.

The slower and steadier you approach training, the less chance there is that you'll get injured and the more like you are to enjoy the experience.

## 2. Always warm up.

Avoid the temptation to dive straight into a run without warming up first. It's important to stretch key muscles, such as the calves, quads and hamstrings.

## 3. Run happy.

Do whatever it takes to make your training enjoyable. Jog with a friend to make it more social or listen to your favourite music or podcast.

## 4. Do what suits you.

This training plan is just a guide. If you need to add more walking breaks or make breaks longer, that's ok. Add a minute or two to each walking break. Equally if you are adapting well to training, jog a bit further or reduce your walking breaks.

## 5. Work those glutes.

Strengthening exercises for the core and glutes are really important to help prevent injury. Try and do them at least twice a week alongside your runs.

## 6. Keep up the fluids.

Drinking fluids regularly is important to keep the body well hydrated. Try getting into the habit of taking frequent sips from a water bottle.

## 7. Vary your training.

Mixing up your training up by running different routes and changing up your pace are great ways to keep your training interesting.

## 8. Listen to your body and remember to rest.

The importance of rest is under-estimated by many runners. Don't feel guilty taking an extra day off to recover. Whether it's injury, illness or fatigue, always listen to what your body is telling you. If something isn't right, your body will let you know and it's really important you listen to it.

# Explanation of training session terms.



## Easy

This is a gentle jog. It is totally fine to blend walking and easy jogging, particularly in the early stages of training. You should feel comfortable jogging at this pace. (RPE scale 2-3).

## Tempo

A controlled, 'comfortably hard' effort. You should be working, breathing a little heavier, and only able to speak in short phrases. But you should still feel in control and able to maintain the pace. (RPE scale 4-5).

## Steady run

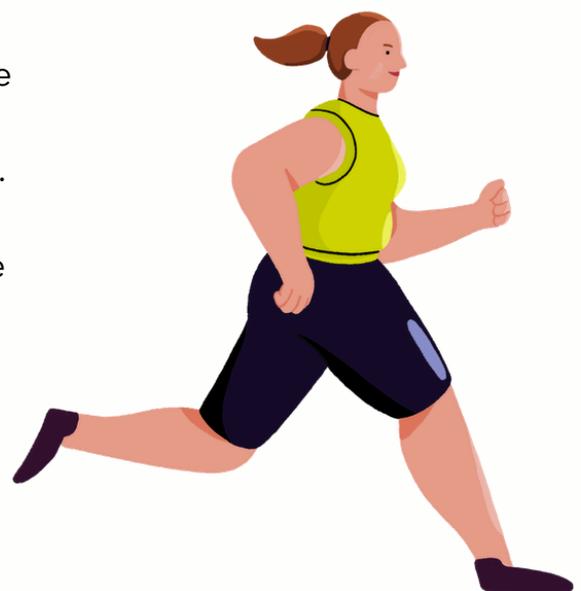
This is the pace the majority of your runs should be run at. It's a comfortable pace and one you feel you can run for a long period of time. You should just about be able to count to 10 in one breath whilst running at this pace and you should be able to hold a conversation with someone. (RPE scale 4-5).

## Fartlek

Predominantly an easy run, but with randomised faster intervals thrown in every now and again. Include as many intervals as you like, as often, as far and as fast as you wish. (RPE scale 3-8).

## Cross-training

Any low-impact activity that raises your heart rate without the stress of running. Think cycling, swimming, rowing, cross trainer or brisk walking. The goal is simply to build fitness while giving your legs and joints a break. Keep it comfortable and controlled. You should finish feeling refreshed, not exhausted. (RPE scale 3-5).



# Rate of perceived exertion (RPE) scale.



RPE	How you feel	HR max %
1	Sitting down with your feet up.	30-40%
2	A steady walking pace.	45-55%
3	A light jog or brisk walk.	60-70%
4	A perfect sociable pace. Quicker than a jog but able to have a chat.	70-75%
5	Pretty comfortable. Got a good sweat on and you feel great.	75-80%
6	Comfortable-ish. You feel like it's a good paced run.	80-85%
7	Talking is getting difficult. It's possible but not very easy.	85-90%
8	Only short answers to important questions are possible.	90-95%
9	Talking is now really difficult.	95%+
10	Talking is impossible. You can only keep this intensity up for 10-15 seconds.	N/A

**Remember, this plan is just a guide and offers a guide on suggested running distances and sessions. Feel free to adapt it to suit you, your lifestyle and your comfort level.**

# Half marathon training session plan.



Week	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5	Day 6	Day 7
1	2-3 miles (easy) or rest	Rest	2-3 miles (easy)	Rest or cross-train	2-3 miles (steady)	Rest	3-4 miles (easy)
2	2-3 miles (easy) or rest	Rest	3 miles (fartlek)	Rest or cross-train	2-3 miles (steady)	Rest	3-4 miles (easy)
3	2-3 miles (easy) or rest	Rest	3-4 miles (tempo)	Rest or cross-train	2-3 miles (steady)	Rest	4-5 miles (easy)
4	Rest	Rest	3-4 miles (tempo)	Rest or cross-train	3 miles (fartlek)	Rest	5-6 miles (easy)
5	2-3 miles (easy) or rest	Rest	3-4 miles (tempo)	Rest or cross-train	3-4 miles (fartlek)	Rest	5-6 miles (easy)
6	3-4 miles (easy) or rest	Rest	4 miles (tempo)	Rest or cross-train	3-4 miles (fartlek)	Rest	6-7 miles (easy)
7	3-4 miles (easy) or rest	Rest	4 miles (tempo)	Rest or cross-train	3-4 miles (fartlek)	Rest	7-8 miles (easy)
8	Rest	Rest	4-5 miles (fartlek)	Rest or cross-train	3-4 miles (fartlek)	Rest	8-9 miles (easy)
9	3-4 miles (easy) or rest	Rest	4-5 miles (tempo)	Rest or cross-train	3-4 miles (fartlek)	Rest	9-10 miles (easy)
10	3-4 miles (easy) or rest	Rest	4-5 miles (tempo)	Rest or cross-train	3-4 miles (fartlek)	Rest	10-11 miles (easy)
11	Rest	Rest	4-5 miles (tempo)	Rest or cross-train	3-4 miles (easy)	Rest	4-5 miles (easy)
12	Rest	Rest	2-3 miles (easy)	Rest or cross-train	1-2 miles (easy)	Rest	Race day



**Guts UK is the national charity for the digestive system. Thank you for helping us get to grips with guts.**

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