

# Preparing to run a marathon

Your 16-week improver  
training plan

**DiABETES UK**  
KNOW DIABETES. FIGHT DIABETES.

In partnership with



[runningwithus.com](http://runningwithus.com)



**RAKHEE**  
**DiABETES UK**  
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# Well done for deciding to run a marathon

We're here to encourage and support you every step of the way to the finish line.

## Who is this plan for?

If you can run for 75 mins and want to run a marathon, this is a good plan for you. You can also use it to improve on a recent marathon or step up from a 10k or half marathon. It is aimed at those looking to run the marathon in four hours or more. Of course your goal could be much longer.

Our training plans are suitable for people with and without diabetes.

If you have diabetes there are things you need to know to get the most from your training and help you manage your diabetes.

If you have Type 1 diabetes, please read our web page about exercising and managing your condition.

[www.diabetes.org.uk/sport-type-1](http://www.diabetes.org.uk/sport-type-1)

If you have Type 2 diabetes, please read our web page about exercising and managing your condition.

[www.diabetes.org.uk/sport-type-2](http://www.diabetes.org.uk/sport-type-2)

## How much training will I have to do?

You'll be training 5 days a week. On one of your 2 rest days, you can opt to do a different type of exercise. Your training will include a half a marathon and a couple of parkruns.

The training plan isn't set in stone: it's just one approach to get you in great shape. Feel free to adapt it and shift sessions to different days that may work better for you.

If you miss days through work, holiday, sickness or injury, don't try to play catch-up.

## Getting the balance right

To make real gains in getting fitter, faster and stronger, you'll need to put as much focus on eating well and resting as you do the training.



## Training tips

- Eat within 20 to 30 minutes of finishing a session.
- Stretch well after each session.
- For faster runs do a 15-minute warm-up and cool-down.

# Training plan for marathon improvers

This 16-week plan will get you ready to run a marathon in four hours or more.

Ideal if you can run for 75 min, want to step up to a marathon or improve on a recent marathon performance.



Book yourself a place on a half marathon for two months' from now – week 9 – and aim to do a couple of parkruns.

## Quick guide to terms used:

- **Easy run:** can hold a conversation
- **Steady run:** can exchange a sentence or two
- **Threshold run:** can only say a word or two
- **Marathon pace:** the pace you're planning to run the marathon
- **Cross training:** exercise that's different to your normal running such as yoga, swimming, cycling or Pilates.

Prep week 1		Here we go, let's get started.				
Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Rest	<b>30 min progression run</b> 10 min easy, 10 min steady, 10 min threshold.	<b>30 min easy run or 30 min aerobic cross training session with core exercises.</b>	<b>30 min easy or steady run</b>	Rest	<b>45 min hill running</b> Include: 5 min running up down a hill, 90 second jog recovery x4. Core exercises.	<b>75 to 90 min long run</b> Easy pace.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Prep week 2		Blister plasters are on, and we're off.				
Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Rest	<b>30 min progression run</b> 10 min easy, 10 min steady, 10 min threshold.	<b>30 min easy run or 30 min aerobic cross training session with core exercises.</b>	<b>30 to 40 min easy or steady run</b>	Rest	<b>45 min hill running</b> Include: 7 min running up down a hill, 2 min jog recovery x3. Core exercises.	<b>90 min long run</b> Easy pace.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Prep week 3		Getting into the swing of things.				
Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Rest	<b>45 min progression run</b> 15 min easy, 15 min steady, 15 min threshold.	<b>30 min easy run or 30 min aerobic cross training session with core exercises.</b>	<b>40 min easy or steady run</b>	Rest	<b>45 min hill running</b> Include: 10 min running up down a hill, 2 min jog recovery x2. Core exercises.	<b>90 to 100 min long run</b> Easy pace. Pick a route with some gentle inclines.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

# Training plan for marathon improvers

Prep week 4		You know you can do it.				
Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Rest	<b>30 min to 40 min easy run</b>	<b>30 min easy run or 30 min aerobic cross training session with core exercises.</b>	<b>30 min easy run</b>	Rest	<b>parkrun or self-timed 5km</b>	<b>75 to 90 min long run</b> Easy pace.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Prep week 5		You're going strong. Keep it up.				
Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Rest	<b>45 min threshold run session</b> Include: 5 min threshold run, 2 min jog recovery x4.	<b>30 to 40 min easy run or 30 to 40 min aerobic cross training session with core exercises.</b>	<b>40 min out and back run</b> Run out steady pace for 20 min, turn back 2 to 3 min faster.	Rest	<b>45 min hill running</b> Include: 10 min run up and down a hill 90 second jog recovery x4 Core exercises	<b>1 hour 45 min long run</b> Easy pace. Pick a route with some gentle inclines.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Prep week 6						
Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Rest	<b>45 min threshold run session</b> Include: 5 min threshold run, 90 second jog recovery x5.	<b>40 min easy run or 40 min aerobic cross training session with core exercises.</b>	<b>40 min out and back run</b> Run out steady pace for 20 min, turn back 2 to 3 min faster.	Rest	<b>50 min hill running</b> Include: 8 min running up and down a hill – 90 second jog recovery x3. Core exercises.	<b>1 hour 50 min long run</b> Easy pace. Pick a route with some gentle inclines.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



“Loved every moment of the run up and the day itself.  
Dream come true and to be repeated this year. Team DUK  
are amazing!!”

Lisa Napier, who has Type 1 diabetes

# Training plan for marathon improvers

## Prep week 7

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Rest	<b>45 min threshold run session</b> Include: 5 min threshold run, 75 second jog recovery x5.	<b>40 to 50 min easy run or 40 to 50 min aerobic cross training session with core exercises.</b>	<b>45 min threshold run session</b> 20 min run, 25 min at threshold pace.	Rest	<b>45 to 60 min hill running</b> Include: 10 min running up and down a hill – 90 second jog recovery x3. Core exercises.	<b>2 hour or 2 hour 15 min long run</b> Easy pace.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## Prep week 8

You're halfway there. High fives all round.

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Rest	<b>60 min threshold run session</b> Include: 6 min threshold run, 90 second jog recovery x5.	<b>40 to 50 min easy run or 40 to 50 min aerobic cross training session with core exercises.</b>	<b>1 hour progression run</b> 20 min easy, 20 min steady, 20 min threshold.	Rest	<b>parkrun or self-timed 5km</b>	<b>2 hour 15 min or 2 hour 30 min long run</b> Easy pace.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## Prep week 9

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Rest	<b>45 min run</b> Include: 6 min half marathon pace, 2 to 3 min jog recovery. x3.	<b>30 min recovery jog</b> Include: Core exercise.	<b>30 min progression run</b> 10 min easy, 10 min steady, 10 min half marathon pace and strides.	Rest	<b>20 to 30 min easy run</b>	<b>Half marathon at personal best pace or two hour long run with second hour at marathon pace.</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## Prep week 10

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Rest	<b>45 minute easy run</b>	<b>40 to 50 min easy run or 40 to 50 min aerobic cross training session with core exercises.</b>	<b>75 min threshold session</b> Final 30 mins to include: 6 min threshold run, 3 min easy run recovery x4.	Rest	<b>40 to 50 mins easy run</b> Include: Core exercises.	<b>2 hour 45 min long run</b> Include: 20 min marathon pace, 5 min easy run x3.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>























# Training plan for marathon improvers





















## Prep week 11

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Rest	<b>45 min threshold session</b> Include: 3 min threshold run, 90 second jog recovery x6. Try 5k pace on odd minute numbers rather than threshold.	<b>45 to 60 min easy run or            45 to 60 min aerobic cross            training session with            core exercises.</b>	<b>75 min threshold run</b>	Rest	<b>40 to 50 mins easy run</b> Include: Core exercises.	<b>2 hour 30/45 min long run</b> Easy pace, last 45 mins marathon pace.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>    	<input type="checkbox"/>    	<input type="checkbox"/>    	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>    	<input type="checkbox"/>    

## Prep week 12

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Rest	<b>45 min threshold session</b> Include: 3 min threshold run – or even 5km pace, 90 second jog recovery x8. Try 5k pace on odd minute numbers rather than threshold.	<b>45 to 60 min easy run or            45 to 60 min aerobic cross            training session with            core exercises.</b>	<b>80 min run</b> Include: 15 min marathon pace, 2 to 3 min jog x3.	Rest	<b>40 to 50 min easy run</b> Include: Core exercises.	<b>3 hours or 3 hours 15 mins            long run</b> Easy pace, last 60 mins marathon pace.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>    	<input type="checkbox"/>    	<input type="checkbox"/>    	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>    	<input type="checkbox"/>    

## Prep week 13

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Rest	<b>45 min threshold session</b> 3 min threshold run – or even 5km pace, 90 second jog recovery x10. Try 5k pace on odd minute numbers rather than threshold.	<b>45 to 60 min easy run or            45 to 60 min aerobic cross            training session with            core exercises.</b>	<b>80 min to 90 min run</b> Include: 15 min marathon pace, 2 to 3 min jog x3.	Rest	<b>45 min progression run</b> 15 min easy, 15 min steady, 15 min threshold. Include: Core exercises.	<b>2 hour 45 or 3 hour long run</b> Easy pace, last 45 mins at marathon pace.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>    	<input type="checkbox"/>    	<input type="checkbox"/>    	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>    	<input type="checkbox"/>    

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Prep week 14						
Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Rest	<b>Interval run session</b> 5 min threshold run. 90 second at 5km effort, 60 second recovery x5 then repeat.	<b>45 to 60 min easy run or 45 to 60 min aerobic cross training session with core exercises.</b>	<b>90 min run</b> Last 30 to 40 mins marathon pace.	Rest	<b>45 min threshold run session</b> Include: 3 min threshold, 3 min steady x6. Include: Core exercises.	<b>1 hour 45 or 2 hour run</b> Last 30 mins at marathon pace.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Prep week 15						
Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Rest	<b>Interval run session</b> 5 min threshold run. 90 second at 5km effort, 60 second recovery x10.	<b>30 to 45 min easy run or 30 to 45 min aerobic cross training session with core exercises.</b>	<b>45 min progression run</b> 15 min x3. Middle 15 min at marathon pace.	Rest	<b>parkrun or 30 min steady run and core exercises</b>	<b>75 min easy run</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Prep week 16						
Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Rest	<b>30 min easy run session</b> Include: 5 min threshold run, 3 min jog recovery x3.	<b>30 min easy run</b>	<b>25 to 30 min easy run</b>	Rest	<b>25 min super easy run</b> We're proud of you. One more run to go.	<b>Marathon day</b> You deserve a medal for all your hard work. Good luck.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



“Running even started having a positive effect on my job and career. It’s amazing how much your personality changes and that people around you get to see the real you.”

Andrew Clayton who has Type 2, took up running after losing 10 stone