## RUNNER'SWORLD

## TRAINING PLAN

## Half Marathon • Beginners

This 10-week plan was designed for beginners who have at least a year of experience running on a regular basis and who log an average of 15 to 20 miles per week. Each week includes three days of rest, three or four days of shorter runs, and one long run, which starts at five miles, builds gradually, and peaks at 10 miles. You'll do some gradually longer segments of running slightly faster than your usual pace to give you the stamina you'll need to finish 13.1 miles feeling strong.

| WEEK | MONDAY | TUESDAY | WEDNESDAY | THURSDAY | FRIDAY | SATURDAY | SUNDAY |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| 1 | Day 1 <br> Rest or Cross-Train | Day 2 <br> 2 Miles Easy | Day 3 <br> 4 Miles Easy | Day 4 <br> Rest or Cross-Train | Day 5 <br> 2 Miles Easy | Day 6 <br> Rest or Cross-Train | Day 7 <br> 5 Miles LSD |
| 2 | Day 8 <br> Rest or Cross-Train | Day 9 <br> 2 Miles Easy | Day 10 <br> 5 Miles Easy | Day 11 <br> Rest or Cross-Train | Day 12 <br> 2 Miles Easy | Day 13 <br> Rest or Cross-Train | Day 14 <br> 6 Miles LSD |
| 3 | Day 15 <br> Rest or Cross-Train | Day 16 <br> 2 Miles Easy | Day 17 <br> 5 Miles with 3 Miles at HMP | Day 18 <br> Rest or Cross-Train | Day 19 <br> 2 Miles Easy | Day 20 <br> Rest or Cross-Train | Day 21 <br> 7 Miles LSD |
| 4 | Day 22 <br> Rest or Cross-Train | Day 23 <br> 2 Miles Easy | Day 24 <br> 6 Miles with 4 Miles at HMP | Day 25 <br> Rest or Cross-Train | Day 26 <br> 2 Miles Easy | Day 27 <br> Rest or Cross-Train | Day 28 <br> 7 Miles LSD |
| 5 | Day 29 <br> Rest or Cross-Train | Day 30 <br> 4 Miles Easy | Day 31 <br> 3 Miles Easy | Day 32 <br> Rest or Cross-Train | Day 33 <br> 3 Miles Easy | Day 34 <br> Rest or Cross-Train | Day 35 <br> 5 Miles LSD |
| 6 | Day 36 <br> Rest or Cross-Train | Day 37 <br> 2 Miles Easy | Day 38 <br> 7 Miles with 3 Miles at HMP | Day 39 <br> Rest or Cross-Train | Day 40 <br> 3 Miles Easy | Day 41 <br> Rest or Cross-Train | Day 42 <br> 8 Miles LSD |


| week | MONDAY | TUESDAY | WEDNESDAY | thursday | FRIDAY | SATURDAY | SUNDAY |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| 7 | Day 43 <br> Rest or Cross-Train | Day 44 <br> 2 Miles Easy | Day 45 <br> 7 Miles with 4 Miles at HMP | Day 46 <br> Rest or Cross-Train | Day 47 <br> 3 Miles Easy | Day 48 <br> 2 Miles Easy | Day 49 <br> 9 Miles LSD |
| 8 | Day 50 <br> Rest or Cross-Train | Day 51 <br> 2 Miles Easy | Day 52 <br> 6 Miles with 4 Miles at HMP | Day 53 <br> Rest or Cross-Train | Day 54 <br> 3 Miles Easy | Day 55 <br> Rest | Day 56 <br> 10 Miles LSD |
| 9 | Day 57 <br> Rest or Cross-Train | Day 58 <br> 2 Miles Easy | Day 59 <br> 8 Miles with 6 Miles at HMP | Day 60 <br> Rest or Cross-Train | Day 61 <br> 2 Miles Easy | Day 62 <br> Rest | Day 63 <br> 8 Miles LSD |
| 10 | Day 64 <br> Rest or Cross-Train | Day 65 <br> 2 Miles Easy | Day 66 <br> 4 Miles with 2 Miles at HMP | Day 67 <br> Rest or Cross-Train | Day 68 <br> Rest or Cross-Train | Day 69 <br> 2 Miles Easy | Day 70 <br> Race Day |

## WEEK 1

## Day 1, Monday • Rest or Cross-Train

Welcome to week one of Runner's World's Half Marathon Plan for beginners.

In most weeks throughout the program, you'll have three short runs, three days for rest or cross-training, and one long, slow distance (LSD) run to help you develop the endurance you'll need to cover 13.1 miles. You'll also have the option of cross-training (XT), which will help you build endurance and stave off burnout. You'll log some miles faster than your normal pace-at what's designated as half marathon pace (HMP) - to build your stamina and keep you strong in the later stages of the race.

Your training kicks off with a rest day. Mondays are always reserved for rest so you can recover from the previous week. If you want to run more miles than the program prescribes, do it on an easy day. Don't extend any run by more than one or two miles, and don't add miles on Saturday (the day before your long run).

## Day 2, Tuesday•2 Miles Easy

Run at a comfortable pace, easy enough that you can hold a conversation. If you're huffing and puffing, you're going too fast. Don't worry about your speed. Just focus on covering the distance.

## Day 3, Wednesday • 4 Miles Easy

Be sure to sandwich each run with a warmup and cooldown of five to 10 minutes of walking and easy jogging, even on days that call for short, easy runs. Doing so will help you feel more comfortable on the run and will help prevent injuries such as muscle pulls.

## Day 4, Thursday • Rest or Cross-Train

Ideally, you won't exercise at all on these days. But it's okay to do a no-impact activity like yoga, stretching, or swimming. Whatever you do, just take it easy.

## Day 5, Friday • 2 Miles Easy

A well-kept training log can help keep you motivated and injury free. Take notes on how you feel on the run, how long you ran, where you went, and what the weather was like. Seeing all the miles add up can keep you motivated when the going gets tough. And if you keep track of aches and pains, you can nip them in the bud before they become full-blown injuries.

## Day 6, Saturday • Rest or Cross-Train

On easy days, you can cross-train with an activity such as cycling or using an elliptical trainer. Put in a sustained aerobic effort for the same amount of time you'd spend on the day's mileage.

## Day 7, Sunday • 5 Miles LSD

Today is your first long, slow distance (LSD) run. Since you'll be running farther, you can go out slower than you usually do. On these days your goal is just to cover the distance.

## WEEK 2

## Day 8, Monday • Rest or Cross-Train

This is week two of training. After this week, race day will be eight weeks away.
You'll follow the same pattern as last week, with three short runs and three days of rest. Your long run will bump up to six miles.

Focus on establishing a running routine that blends well into the rhythm of your daily life. Figure out what times of day are most convenient for running, and find a variety of safe, traffic-free routes that you can take on a regular basis.

## Day 9, Tuesday • 2 Miles Easy

The important factor in easy runs is how you feel. These runs should feel smooth and comfortable, as if you could go forever.

Day 10, Wednesday • 5 Miles Easy
Run five miles today at an easy, conversational pace.

## Day 11, Thursday • Rest or Cross-Train

It's important to replace your shoes every 300 to 500 miles. Since it's easy to lose track of how long you've had a particular pair, record the date that you started wearing them in your log.

## Day 12, Friday • 2 Miles Easy

Run at a relaxed pace today, or cross-train on a bike or an elliptical trainer for the same amount of time that you'd run. Just don't go so hard that you're sore tomorrow.

## Day 13, Saturday • Rest or Cross-Train

As your training gets under way, invest in shirts, pants, shorts, underwear, and socks that are made of technical, lightweight fabrics that wick away moisture. These fabrics help prevent blisters and chafing.

Day 14, Sunday • 6 Miles LSD
If you're running for less than 60 minutes, you can probably go without a pre-workout meal. An hour or more, though, and you'll want to fuel up beforehand. Aim for 50 to 80 grams of carbs one hour before running.

## WEEK 3

## Day 15, Monday • Rest or Cross-Train

This is week three of training. After this week, race day will be seven weeks away.
This week you'll have two short runs and a seven-mile long run. On Wednesday you'll have a chance to challenge yourself with a workout that calls for three miles at half marathon pace (HMP). You'll have these workouts throughout the program so you can get used to running a little faster. They'll help you improve lung power, biomechanical efficiency, running economy, and the mental toughness that racing demands.

## Day 16, Tuesday • 2 Miles Easy

At some point during your training, you're bound to experience chafing, a red, raw rash that can bleed, sting, and be painful to the touch. To prevent chafing, wear wick-away, seamless, tagless gear. And make sure it fits right. Extra material in a baggy shirt can cause irritation; a too-snug sports bra can dig into the skin. Apply sports lube or a bandage to trouble spots before you run. Moisturize the area after you shower. To treat chafing, wash the area with soap and water, apply an antibacterial ointment, and cover it with a bandage.

## Day 17, Wednesday • 5 Miles with 3 Miles at HMP

1 mile easy running
3 miles at half marathon pace (HMP)
1 mile easy running
Today you'll practice running at half marathon pace (HMP). These workouts are designed to help you learn to run at an even effort, which you'll want to do on race day. If you're training for your first half marathon, don't worry about determining your HMP; just keep it simple. After a one-mile warmup, try to pick up the pace by 10 to 15 seconds per mile for three miles, then cool down with one mile of easy running. You shouldn't feel as if you're racing. It should feel like a challenging pace, but one you can sustain.

## Day 18, Thursday • Rest or Cross-Train

It's a good idea to include some abdominal work in your training program, in order to safeguard your hips, core, and lower back, which can take a beating on the downhills.

## Day 19, Friday • 2 Miles Easy

It's best to deal with a blister before it becomes painful enough to throw off your gait. Covering it with a Band-Aid or moleskin is ideal. But if home or an aid station is miles away, adjust your laces. Tightening them could stop heel slippage (a common cause of blisters); loosening them could take pressure off a hot spot.

## Day 20, Saturday • Rest or Cross-Train

If you have to switch around your workout routine because of schedule conflicts, be patient as you make the transition. It takes a few weeks to fully adjust to a time change. Don't be surprised if you feel tired or jet-lagged when you're running at your new time. Stick with it. Your body will adjust.

## Day 21, Sunday • 7 Miles LSD

Even if you're a confirmed solo runner, it's a good idea to explore running with others. When you know someone is waiting for you, you're not as likely to skip that day's run at the last minute. Plus, you can venture farther afield and at odder hours than you'd feel comfortable doing alone. You can challenge yourself with your faster friends on days when you want a harder workout, and hook up with your slower friends on your easy recovery days. Don't know other runners? Contact a running shop in your area. Many shops organize group long runs in the spring and fall.

## WEEK 4

## Day 22, Monday • Rest or Cross-Train

This is week four of training. You'll maintain the same routine as last week, with two short runs of two miles, a seven-mile long run, and three days of rest or cross-training. On Wednesday, you'll run six miles, with four miles at half marathon pace.

This program is designed to build gradually. It might feel as if it builds too slowly at times, but it's designed to help you avoid making the classic mistake of doing too much too soon, getting injured, and not reaching the starting line. The body needs to have a foundation. Avoid running too hard on your easy days; it's counterproductive. You'll only tire yourself for the quality days that really matter.

## Day 23, Tuesday • 2 Miles Easy

When you're running downhill, be sure to watch your form. Shorten your stride, and focus on keeping your shoulders, hips, and feet aligned. It should almost feel like controlled falling.

Day 24, Wednesday • 6 Miles with 4 Miles at HMP
1 mile easy running
4 miles at half marathon pace
1 mile easy running
Today you'll have another chance to practice your half marathon pace (HMP). Follow the same pattern as last week. Warm up with easy running for 10 to 15 minutes, or about one mile. Try to pick up your pace by 10 to 15 seconds per mile and hold it for four miles. Cool down with one mile of easy running.

## Day 25, Thursday • Rest or Cross-Train

When you hit the gym, try strength-training one limb at a time. This can clue you in to muscle imbalances and help you improve your stability. Go for lunges and single-leg toe and heel raises, and single-arm biceps curls, shoulder presses, and triceps extensions.

## Day 26, Friday • 2 Miles Easy

If you want to fend off sniffles and sneezes, be sure to get your z's. Studies have shown that runners who sleep an average of less than seven hours a night are more likely to get sick than those who average at least eight hours. This is especially important when you're stepping up your training, as that can take a toll on the immune system.

## Day 27, Saturday • Rest or Cross-Train

Try to stay hydrated throughout each day, not just while you're out on the run. A good rule of thumb is to drink half your body weight in ounces of fluids. So if you weigh 150 pounds, aim for 75 ounces of water or sports drink per day. If you weigh 100 pounds, aim for 50 ounces.

## Day 28, Sunday • 7 Miles LSD

Work, family, stress, nutrition, and sleep all factor into the amount of energy you bring to a run. If you need to, you can cut a run short or miss a run or two without compromising your training.

## WEEK 5

## Day 29, Monday •Rest or Cross-Train

This is week five of training. After this week, you'll be halfway through the program.
This week you'll have a cutback week so you can recover from the training you've done so far and stay fresh for the workouts in the week ahead. You'll run fewer miles overall, and instead of a long run this weekend, you'll run just five miles. You'll also get a break from your race-pace workout.

You may feel that you can run farther or go faster than the program prescribes this week, but it's best to stick with the plan. These breaks are necessary to keep you mentally fresh and physically healthy so you can make it all the way to the starting line excited to cover 13.1 miles.

## Day 30, Tuesday • 4 Miles Easy

You can't do much to keep distracted drivers off the road, but you can prevent your own gadgets from contributing to an accident. If you do run with headphones, put only one earbud in; you want to make sure that you can still hear outside noises, such as the sound of an approaching vehicle.

## Day 31, Wednesday• 3 Miles Easy

When you're powering up hills, watch your form. Accentuate your arm swing. Don't make fists. Keep your hands loose, to help your whole body stay relaxed.

## Day 32, Thursday • Rest or Cross-Train

Make sure you're getting enough calcium and vitamin $D$, which are critical to preventing sports injuries like stress fractures and can boost your performance. Experts recommend getting between 200 and 400 IU of vitamin D every day, plus 1,200 to $1,500 \mathrm{mg}$ of calcium.

## Day 33, Friday • 3 Miles Easy

Even when it's cloudy outside, use a sunscreen that has an SPF of at least 30 and protects against UVA and UVB rays, the two most damaging forms of ultraviolet light. Rub on the product at least 20 minutes before you go out, and reapply every two hours while you're out-even if it's a sweat-proof formula.

## Day 34, Saturday • Rest or Cross-Train

If you're looking for a good activity to do on a rest day, consider heading to the pool. Swimming builds strength in often-neglected muscles in the upper body and core, which will help you maintain strong running form when you're fatigued.

## Day 35, Sunday • 5 Miles LSD

If you're having trouble getting motivated, start taking notes on your training. This will help you maintain perspective on how much progress you've made and what's working and what's not, and will keep you on track to meet your goals. In your log, record your mileage; your pace; what the weather conditions were; what you ate and drank before, during, and after your run; and how you felt.

## WEEK 6

## Day 36, Monday • Rest or Cross-Train

This is week six of training. After this week, your race will be four weeks away.
This week you'll resume your routine, with two short runs and three days of rest or cross-training. On Wednesday, you'll have a seven-mile run with three miles at half marathon pace, and Sunday's long run will build up to eight miles.

This week, instead of a typical long run, you might consider incorporating a 5 K or 10 K race into your long run or substituting the race for the entire eight-miler, especially if you've never raced before. Participating in an event before your big day will help you rehearse critical race-day logistics, such as fueling and gear, and help you get accustomed to running with the pack.

You can integrate a shorter race into any long run. Just try to run the event at your usual long-run pace, and try to maintain a steady, even effort. Don't get caught up in the competitive vibe and go all out, or you could risk injury. If you think you might have trouble holding back, try doing the race with a friend.

## Day 37, Tuesday • 2 Miles Easy

Day 38, Wednesday • 7 Miles with 3 Miles at HMP
2 miles easy running
3 miles at half marathon pace
2 miles easy running
Run two miles easy to warm up. Then try to pick up the pace and hold it for three miles. Cool down with two miles of easy running.

## Day 39, Thursday • Rest or Cross-Train

If you're heading out and it's pitch black, make sure to run with a headlamp or handheld light so you're visible to passing cars. Since your motion causes the light to move, a driver will recognize you as a runner. If you don't feel comfortable with a light, at least run with a reflective vest or a blinking red light with a bright LED.

## Day 40, Friday • 3 Miles Easy

If it's hot on the day you plan to run long, it will be especially important to plan your route carefully so that you get plenty of shade and opportunities to rehydrate. Try doing loops through a park with water fountains. Or map out your run so that you'll pass places where you can buy drinks, or stash and refill your water bottles. Run through residential areas, where there's more shade, and more opportunities to run through sprinklers.

## Day 41, Saturday • Rest or Cross-Train

Days off are an important part of training. Rest builds strength, reduces fatigue, and helps prevent injuries. Since most injuries come from overuse, a day of rest or easy cross-training can prevent a three- or four-week forced layoff down the line, due to a strain or a stress fracture.

## Day 42, Sunday • 8 Miles LSD

Take your long run slow and easy - walk if you have to - especially if you're covering the distance for the first time. Make sure you've set aside enough time in your schedule so you don't feel rushed to finish the run and you have time to rest afterward. You want to feel revived for the week ahead.

WEEK 7

## Day 43, Monday • Rest or Cross-Train

This is week seven of training. You'll have three short runs and two days of rest or cross-training. Your long run inches up to nine miles, and your half marathon-pace workout stays at seven miles but increases to four miles of tempo.

As race day draws near, there's plenty you can do off the road to build your fitness and stay injury-free. It's especially important that you eat a wholesome diet and limit the junk. Make sure to get extra z's; research has shown that getting more sleep during training improves reaction time and speed. Try to get seven to eight hours per night. And make sure your shoes are in shape; be sure to replace them every 500 miles or so.

## Day 44, Tuesday • 2 Miles Easy

Hit the trails every now and then. The softer, more rugged surfaces require that different muscles in your legs work a little harder on each stride, which helps build power and strength. Getting off the roads also helps minimize impact, reducing your risk of injury.

## Day 45, Wednesday • 7 Miles with 4 Miles at HMP

2 miles easy running
4 miles at half marathon pace
1 mile easy running
Warm up with two miles of easy running. Then try to hit your goal half marathon pace and hold it for four miles. Cool down with one mile of easy running.

## Day 46, Thursday • Rest or Cross-Train

Let your body be boss; don't be a slave to the schedule. When you wake up feeling fatigued or sluggish or just hurting, shorten the run, cross-train, or take a rest day. Taking time off when you need it will help you stay fresh and psyched up throughout training.

## Day 47, Friday • 3 Miles Easy

If you rely heavily on your GPS or other piece of technical gear, try leaving it at home on one easy run each week. You'll be surprised at how liberating it feels. You'll be better able to tune in to how your effort feels while you're running. Plus, having the confidence that you can run gadget-free will help you get out the door or finish a run even when your gadgets break down.

## Day 48, Saturday • 2 Miles Easy

Be sure to stay safe when you're on the road. Never assume that a driver sees you. Run against traffic so you can see and react to any mistake an advancing motorist might make. Run with proper ID, and carry a cell phone with emergency contacts programmed in. Or at least let somebody else know where you are running that day.

## Day 49, Sunday • 9 Miles LSD

After your long run, be sure to put your feet up and relax. Elevation (along with icing and compression) reduces swelling and soreness.

## WEEK 8

## Day 50, Monday • Rest or Cross-Train

This is week eight of training. After this week, your race will be just two weeks away.
You'll have your usual routine of short runs and a run at half marathon pace. This weekend you'll hit a big milestone: a 10 -mile long run, the longest run in the training program.

The big number may feel daunting, but remember that it's just one mile longer than you ran last week. Through the training you've already done, you've developed the endurance you need to complete this run.

Though you won't go the entire race distance before your event, if you've completed the program, you'll be physically prepared to cover 13.1 miles on race day. The excitement, inspiration, and support you'll get from other runners, cheering spectators, and race staff will help keep you mentally tough enough to finish strong.

## Day 51, Tuesday • 2 Miles Easy

Run two miles at an easy pace.
Try to avoid overstriding; it can lead to injuries. To prevent overstriding, count your stride rate. Check your watch for a minute, counting each time your right leg hits the ground. If the count is below 85, practice shortening your stride to get your count up. Eventually this shortened stride should feel more natural.

Day 52, Wednesday • 6 Miles with 4 Miles at HMP
2 miles easy running
4 miles at half marathon pace
2 miles easy running
Warm up with two miles of easy running. Hit your goal half marathon pace and hold it for four miles, then cool down with two miles of easy running.

## Day 53, Thursday • Rest or Cross-Train

Eat nutrient-dense, fiber-rich foods (which fill you up), such as sweet potatoes or beans, in place of pasta and bread. Cut back on discretionary calories by drinking less soda or wine and eating fewer desserts.

## Day 54, Friday • 3 Miles Easy

Running when you're tense or angry can cause injury. When you're under a lot of stress, your energy levels get sapped, and you can't recruit muscles as effectively or react as quickly. To combat stress-induced tightness, start off with a five-minute walk. Gradually pick up the pace.

## Day 55, Saturday • Rest

Running when you have a cold is usually fine, unless you have a fever, in which case you should stay in and rest. There's evidence that running can improve circulation and reduce stress, boosting the immune system. Take extra care to stay hydrated and dress appropriately when you go out. Pay attention to how your symptoms are affected by the run, and take a day off if they worsen.

## Day 56, Sunday • 10 Miles LSD

When you're tired, especially on long runs, the natural tendency is to tighten up in the arms and hunch up the shoulders. When you notice this happening, drop your arms to your sides and gently shake them out as you exhale.

WEEK 9

## Day 57, Monday • Rest or Cross-Train

This is week nine of training. After this week, your race will be one week away.
You'll maintain the same routine as last week. You'll have two short runs, and your long run will drop back to eight miles. Your most challenging workout will come midweek: You'll do an eight-mile run with six miles at half marathon pace. Be sure not to push too hard. Just try to pick up the tempo and hit a pace you can sustain over the distance.

## Day 58, Tuesday • 2 Miles Easy

As you're heading into the final weeks of training, it's a good time to review your goals. Set as many goals or as few as you like, but make sure they're yours. Some objectives grow in importance during the course of training; others diminish or disappear altogether. It's important to reconnect with the reasons that are driving you on this final push to the finish line.

Day 59, Wednesday • 8 Miles with 6 Miles at HMP
1 mile easy running
6 miles at half marathon pace
1 mile easy running
Warm up for one mile, and then try to run at your HMP for six miles. Cool down with one mile of easy running.
Training doesn't just build your body, it builds your confidence, and your hardest training will give you the most confidence. So even when you're the most tired, remember that the tough stuff you do now will make you stronger on race day.

## Day 60, Thursday • Rest or Cross-Train

Running your best often means going all out, but certain pains are warning signs you shouldn't ignore. Sharp, sudden foot, shin, or hip pain that worsens as you run could be a sign of a stress fracture. Any pain that causes you to change your form could signal a ligament tear and should make you stop.

## Day 61, Friday • 2 Miles Easy

You don't have to go crazy on the carbs-or any other kind of food-in the last few weeks before the race. You can keep your total daily calorie intake steady, and make sure 60 percent of the calories come from carbs.

## Day 62, Saturday • Rest

Plan to take a week off from running after the race to allow your body to recuperate. But put something on the calendar to stay focused on what's ahead. You may want to take a vacation or give another sport a try.

## Day 63, Sunday • 8 Miles LSD

This is your last long run before tapering for the big event. Use it as a dress rehearsal.
Run at the same time of day that the race is held and on terrain that's similar to the racecourse. Wear the shoes and gear you plan to race in; mimic the eating and drinking plan that you aim to follow. With this little bit of rehearsal, race day will feel less daunting when it finally arrives!

## WEEK 10

## Day 64, Monday • Rest or Cross-Train

This is the final week of training. Your race is this weekend!
Your hard-core work may be done, but there's still plenty you can do to increase your chances of being your best on race day. Follow the schedule and be sure to get plenty of sleep. Check the weather and gather your gear early in the week. You want to show up at the starting line focused and fresh and ready to run your best.

## Day 65, Tuesday • 2 Miles Easy

This is a good time to review your training log. Look at all of the miles you've covered to prepare for the race. Pat yourself on the back for all of the hard work you've accomplished. No matter what the clock says at the finish line, you have already done so much of which you can be proud.

Day 66, Wednesday • 4 Miles with 2 Miles at HMP<br>1 mile easy running<br>2 miles at half marathon pace<br>1 mile easy running

This is your final race-pace run. After a one-mile warmup, hit your goal race pace and maintain it for two miles. Cool down with one mile of easy running.

## Day 67, Thursday • Rest or Cross-Train

You've trained your body for 10 weeks; on race day your mind is in charge. So take steps to get your head ready to go. Review the course map and break it into smaller five-kilometer segments that don't feel as overwhelming as 13.1 miles. Create mantras that will help you stay strong and focused when you hit tough stretches in the race.

## Day 68, Friday • Rest or Cross-Train

Review your training and set one goal time for a good race day, and another as a backup plan in case the weather's bad or you're just not feeling up to par. So many factors that are beyond your control can affect your performance on race day. You need a secondary goal to stay motivated if conditions aren't perfect.

## Day 69, Saturday • 2 Miles Easy

This run is more for your mind than for your body. You may be nervous that you've rested too much, but you have done enough. Just burn off your nervous energy, and shake out the muscles for tomorrow's race. Eat light meals throughout the day, and finish your dinner relatively early. Eating a big meal late can keep you from getting to sleep.

## Day 70, Sunday • Race Day

Good luck!

Start at the back of the pack, and run more slowly than you think you should for the first few miles. Work your way into a rhythm as the race proceeds, and stop at every aid station.

Whatever time the clock says, it's a PR! Be sure to walk and stretch immediately after you finish to reduce soreness and stiffness in the days ahead. Afterward, ice your legs and put your feet up. Be sure to celebrate your big accomplishment!

Thank you for training with Runner's World. Check out our training plans for 5 Ks , 10 Ks , marathons, and the postseason.

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