

RUNNER'S WORLD

TRAINING PLAN

Marathon · Break 4:00

Want to break 4:00 in the marathon? This plan will help you do it. The program starts with 26 miles a week and a 10-mile long run, and peaks three weeks before the race with 48 miles and a long run that's 22 miles. Most weeks feature one day of rest and six days of running, and include workouts like intervals, Yasso 800s and tempo runs to help you get fitter and faster. Each daily workout includes detailed instructions on pace and distance, plus Runner's World's best tips on nutrition, gear, racing, and staying motivated and injury-free.

WEEK	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
1	Day 1 Rest	Day 2 3 Miles Easy	Day 3 6–7 Miles with Intervals	Day 4 0–3 Miles Easy	Day 5 3–4 Miles Easy	Day 6 Rest	Day 7 10 Miles LSD
2	Day 8 Rest	Day 9 3 Miles Easy	Day 10 7 Miles with Intervals	Day 11 0–3 Miles Easy	Day 12 3–4 Miles Easy	Day 13 Rest	Day 14 8 Miles LSD
3	Day 15 Rest	Day 16 3 Miles Easy	Day 17 8 Miles with Intervals	Day 18 0–3 Miles Easy	Day 19 3–4 Miles Easy	Day 20 Rest	Day 21 12 Miles LSD
4	Day 22 Rest	Day 23 3 Miles Easy	Day 24 7–8 Miles with Intervals	Day 25 0–3 Miles Easy	Day 26 3–4 Miles Hills	Day 27 Rest	Day 28 10 Miles LSD
5	Day 29 Rest	Day 30 3–4 Miles Easy	Day 31 8–9 Miles with Intervals	Day 32 0–3 Miles Easy	Day 33 4 Miles Easy	Day 34 Rest	Day 35 14 Miles LSD
6	Day 36 Rest	Day 37 3–4 Miles Easy	Day 38 8–9 Miles with 4 x Yasso 800s	Day 39 0–3 Miles Easy	Day 40 4 Miles Hills	Day 41 Rest	Day 42 9 Miles with 2 Miles at Tempo

7	Day 43 <input type="checkbox"/>	Day 44 <input type="checkbox"/>	Day 45 <input type="checkbox"/>	Day 46 <input type="checkbox"/>	Day 47 <input type="checkbox"/>	Day 48 <input type="checkbox"/>	Day 49 <input type="checkbox"/>
	Rest or Cross-Train	6 Miles Easy	9 Miles with Intervals	4–6 Miles Easy	5 Miles Easy	Rest Day	16 Miles LSD
8	Day 50 <input type="checkbox"/>	Day 51 <input type="checkbox"/>	Day 52 <input type="checkbox"/>	Day 53 <input type="checkbox"/>	Day 54 <input type="checkbox"/>	Day 55 <input type="checkbox"/>	Day 56 <input type="checkbox"/>
	Rest or Cross-Train	4–6 Miles Easy	7–8 Miles with Intervals	4–6 Miles Easy	5 Miles Easy	Rest	10 Miles with 4 Miles at Tempo
9	Day 57 <input type="checkbox"/>	Day 58 <input type="checkbox"/>	Day 59 <input type="checkbox"/>	Day 60 <input type="checkbox"/>	Day 61 <input type="checkbox"/>	Day 62 <input type="checkbox"/>	Day 63 <input type="checkbox"/>
	Rest	4 Miles Easy	8–9 Miles with Intervals	0–3 Miles Easy	4 Miles Easy	Rest	18–20 Miles LSD
10	Day 64 <input type="checkbox"/>	Day 65 <input type="checkbox"/>	Day 66 <input type="checkbox"/>	Day 67 <input type="checkbox"/>	Day 68 <input type="checkbox"/>	Day 69 <input type="checkbox"/>	Day 70 <input type="checkbox"/>
	0–3 Miles Easy	4 Miles Easy	9–10 Miles with 6 x Yasso 800s	0–3 Miles Easy	4 Miles Hills	Rest	12 Miles with 6 miles at Tempo
11	Day 71 <input type="checkbox"/>	Day 72 <input type="checkbox"/>	Day 73 <input type="checkbox"/>	Day 74 <input type="checkbox"/>	Day 75 <input type="checkbox"/>	Day 76 <input type="checkbox"/>	Day 77 <input type="checkbox"/>
	0–3 Miles Easy	4–6 Miles Easy	7–8 Miles with Intervals	0–3 Miles Easy	4 Miles Easy	Rest	18–20 Miles LSD
12	Day 78 <input type="checkbox"/>	Day 79 <input type="checkbox"/>	Day 80 <input type="checkbox"/>	Day 81 <input type="checkbox"/>	Day 82 <input type="checkbox"/>	Day 83 <input type="checkbox"/>	Day 84 <input type="checkbox"/>
	0–3 Miles Easy	4 Miles Easy	10–11 with Intervals	0–3 Miles Easy	4 Miles Easy or Hills	Rest	12 Miles with 6 miles at Tempo
13	Day 85 <input type="checkbox"/>	Day 86 <input type="checkbox"/>	Day 87 <input type="checkbox"/>	Day 88 <input type="checkbox"/>	Day 89 <input type="checkbox"/>	Day 90 <input type="checkbox"/>	Day 91 <input type="checkbox"/>
	0–3 Miles Easy	4 Miles Easy	10–12 Miles with Mile Repeats	0–3 Miles Easy	4 Miles Easy	Rest	20–22 Miles LSD
14	Day 92 <input type="checkbox"/>	Day 93 <input type="checkbox"/>	Day 94 <input type="checkbox"/>	Day 95 <input type="checkbox"/>	Day 96 <input type="checkbox"/>	Day 97 <input type="checkbox"/>	Day 98 <input type="checkbox"/>
	0–3 Miles Easy	4 Miles Easy	10–11 Miles with Intervals	0–3 Miles Easy	4 Miles Easy	Rest	16 Miles LSD or 5K Race
15	Day 99 <input type="checkbox"/>	Day 100 <input type="checkbox"/>	Day 101 <input type="checkbox"/>	Day 102 <input type="checkbox"/>	Day 103 <input type="checkbox"/>	Day 104 <input type="checkbox"/>	Day 105 <input type="checkbox"/>
	3 Miles Easy	3 Miles Easy	10–11 Miles with 8 x Yasso 800s	0–3 Miles Easy	4 Miles Easy	Rest	8 Miles LSD
16	Day 106 <input type="checkbox"/>	Day 107 <input type="checkbox"/>	Day 108 <input type="checkbox"/>	Day 109 <input type="checkbox"/>	Day 110 <input type="checkbox"/>	Day 111 <input type="checkbox"/>	Day 112 <input type="checkbox"/>
	Rest	0–3 Miles Easy	6–7 Miles with Intervals	3 Miles Easy	Rest	3 Miles Easy	Race Day

Day 1, Monday · Rest

Welcome to the Break 4:00 Marathon Training Plan. This plan will prepare you to finish a marathon in 4:00 (or faster), with an average pace of 9:09 per mile. Each week will have 6 days of running and 1 day of rest, with a long run each weekend.

Before you begin the plan, it's a good idea to make sure that 4:00 is a realistic marathon goal, based on your current level of fitness (and assuming that you're injury-free on race day, and weather conditions are favorable). Plug a recent race time into the training calculator at runnersworld.com/tools. (If you don't have a recent race time, go run a 5K.) The marathon equivalent should be between 4:00 and 4:02:35. If it's not, then it doesn't mean that 4:00 is out of reach, but another plan, like the Break 4:15 plan, might be a better fit for where you are now.

This week you'll have 1 rest day, four short runs, and an interval day. On Sunday, your first long, slow distance run (or LSD) will be 10 miles. Initially, Mondays will be reserved for a rest day so you can recover from your Sunday run. Your first run of the week will be an easy run at close to 10:35 minute/mile pace. It's also okay to cross-train on your rest days with a no-impact activity like stretching, yoga, or swimming.

Day 2, Tuesday · 3 Miles Easy

This pace should feel comfortable and conversational. If you are huffing and puffing, then you're running too hard, and it's best to back off to a pace that feels more sustainable. (Pace: 10:35/mile)

Day 3, Wednesday · 6–7 Miles with Intervals

Your marathon plan includes "Interval Wednesday" and these workouts will assist you in becoming a bit faster and stronger. You may choose to opt out on the intervals (and that's okay) and cover the total distance of the day in one continuous run. The one most important goal of this plan is to keep you healthy and build your fitness through race day. If you do choose to perform the intervals, the first bout follows:

2 miles of easy running
6x400 at 1:56 pace with 200 easy run recovery
2 miles of easy running

KEY: Wednesday will be interval day and here's how it works. You begin with an easy warmup run (in this instance, 2 miles). You then want to use a track or path that is measured with 1/8 mile (200 meters), 1/4 mile (400 meters), 1/2 mile (800 meters), 3/4 mile (1200 meters), and 1 mile (1600 meters). In today's workout, you will run 1/4 mile in 1 minute and 56 seconds, and then run easy (jog) 1/8 mile. You will repeat that 1/4 to 1/8 sequence for a total of 6 intervals. Follow that with 2 miles of easy running as your cooldown and you are done.

Day 4, Thursday · 0–3 Miles Easy

At the end of each easy run, you should feel like you have the energy to run one more mile. (Pace: 10:35/mile)

Day 5, Friday · 3–4 Miles Easy

Sunday is your first long run, and it's best to prepare for it. For any run of 75 minutes or more, you may need to refuel while you're on the road. You'll need 30 to 60 grams of carbs per hour, and you can get that from a variety of energy gels, chews, or sports drinks. Test out different brands and flavors to figure out which products give you a boost without leaving you with an upset stomach. (Pace: 10:35/mile)

Day 6, Saturday · Rest

Rest today to recover from this week's runs. The most important piece of gear you'll need is a pair of running shoes that fit you well and provide the support that your feet need. Worn-out or ill-fitting shoes are a leading cause of injury. Be sure to go to a specialty running shop where you can get help finding the pair that's right for you. Keep track of how many miles you put on your shoes. Replace them every 300 to 500 miles.

Day 7, Sunday · 10 Miles LSD

Your first long run is 10 miles. Long runs build endurance and help you get comfortable spending more time on your feet, as you'll have to do on race day. Each week, you'll add 1 to 2 miles to your long run. Maintain a pace that is between 10:35 and 10:50 per mile. You should expect to do these longer runs at the slower range of your easy pace. Naturally, as you run longer, you'll fatigue and your pace will slow. Don't worry too much about long-run pace. Just focus on covering the distance for the day feeling strong. To stay energized throughout the run, be sure to refuel at regular intervals, say every 45 minutes. Don't wait until you get hungry or fatigued. (Pace:10:35-10:50 /mile)

WEEK 2

Day 8, Monday · Rest

This is week two of marathon training; after this week there will be 14 weeks until race day.

Your schedule will be similar to last week's. You'll have 1 to 2 rest days, 3 short runs, and one interval workout. Your long run (LSD) on Sunday will relax to 8 miles.

If you need to move your long run to another day, that's okay. Just be sure not to do two quality workouts—including long runs, hill runs, speedwork, or marathon-pace runs—back to back. It's best to follow any quality workout with a day of rest or easy running.

Day 9, Tuesday · 3 Miles Easy

Now is the time to invest in high-quality running gear. These items may seem like extravagant expenses, but the investment you make now will pay off for hundreds of miles. Shirts, shorts, and pants that wick away moisture will help protect you from chafing and keep you comfortable no matter what the weather conditions are. (Pace: 10:35/mile)

Day 10, Wednesday · 7 Miles with Intervals

Once again, you may choose the total distance for today in one run or perform the interval session.

2 miles of easy running
3x400 at 1:56 pace with 200 easy run recovery
2x600 at 2:54 pace with 400 easy run recovery
2x400 at 1:56 pace with 200 easy run recovery
2 miles of easy running

In this early stage, you'll want to establish a routine that blends well with everything else in your daily life. Figure out what times of day are most convenient to run, and scout out some safe routes that you can regularly take. If possible, get into the habit of heading out at the same time each day. If it's built into your schedule, you're less likely to skip a run and more likely to look forward to the next day's workout if you do miss a day. Wednesday will be used to work on your leg strength and turnover by completing a series of progressive interval workouts.

Day 11, Thursday · 0–3 Miles Easy

Run at your easy pace today. At the end of each easy run, you should feel like you have enough energy to run another mile. If you feel exhausted, drained, or achy, then it's best to back off your pace. Many runners make the mistake of getting stuck in the "medium hard" zone. They do their easy runs too fast, then they don't have the energy to put their all into quality workouts like speedwork and long runs. By keeping the easy runs truly easy, you can really focus on those quality workouts and take your endurance, speed, and fitness to the next level. (Pace: 10:35/mile)

Day 12, Friday · 3–4 Miles Easy

Be sure to stay hydrated throughout the day, not just while you're out on the run. A good rule of thumb is to drink half your body weight in ounces. 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. (Pace: 10:35/mile)

Day 13, Saturday · Rest

In these first few weeks, scout out a few different convenient, safe, traffic-free routes that you can regularly run. It's also a good idea to locate a track that you can use for speedwork, and find a gym where you can cross-train or use the treadmill when necessary.

Day 14, Sunday · 8 Miles LSD

Even if you're a confirmed solo runner, it's a good idea to hook up with a group or a buddy for your long run. Running with others can make the miles more fun, keep you on track, and insert a little variety in your routine. Contact a local specialty running store to find out about running groups; often they have marathon training programs. (Pace: 10:35-10:50/mile)

WEEK 3

Day 15, Monday · Rest

This is week three of training. After this week, race day will be 13 weeks away.

Most of your runs will be similar to last week, though your long run will inch up to 12 miles.

Day 16, Tuesday · 3 Miles Easy

The purpose of easy days is to develop the endurance, strength, and cardiovascular fitness you'll need for the race. You don't want to take them so fast that you're sore the next day. At the end of the run, you want to feel like you have the energy to run longer. (Pace: 10:35/mile)

Day 17, Wednesday · 8 Miles with Intervals

2-mile warmup
3x400 at 1:56 pace with 200 easy run recovery
3 x Yasso 800s at 4:00 with 400 easy run recovery
1x400 at 1:56 pace with 200 easy run recovery
2-mile cooldown

Run 2 miles easy to warm up. Then run 400 meters in 1 minute and 56 seconds, and then run easy for 200 meters. Repeat that 2 more times. Now run 800 meters (or a half-mile on the road) in 4 minutes. Run easy for 400 meters, or one-quarter of a mile. Repeat the cycle 2 more times. Follow that with one more 400 meters in 1 minute, 56 seconds. Cool down with 2 miles of easy running.

Day 18, Thursday · 0–3 Miles Easy

You should feel a bit tired from yesterday's interval session, but an easy run should be just what you need to "loosen up." If you feel overtired or it was rather difficult to hold yesterday's times, slow down 4-5 seconds per 400 for next Wednesday's workout. (Pace: 10:35/mile)

Day 19, Friday · 3–4 Miles Easy

In these first few weeks, scout out a few different convenient, safe, traffic-free routes that you can regularly run. It's also a good idea to locate a track that you can use for speedwork, and find a gym where you can cross-train or use the treadmill when necessary. (Pace: 10:35/mile)

Day 20, Saturday · Rest

If you're new to running in the morning, a few steps can make getting out of bed easier. The night before, eat slow-digesting carbs like broccoli, beans, and lentils. Set your automatic coffeemaker to brew before you wake. Shut-eye is important, too. If you're constantly waking up feeling exhausted, it's a sign you aren't getting enough z's. Turn off the computer and TV at least 30 minutes before you hit the sack. Lay out your clothes for your run, and if you use a music player and GPS, make sure that they're all charged up the day before. As soon as you get up, go into a lit room. The bright light on your eyes signals the body to stop making melatonin, the hormone that makes you sleepy.

Day 21, Sunday · 12 Miles LSD

After a tough workout, like a hill session, a tempo run, or a long run, be sure to refuel within 30 minutes of finishing your run. Have a snack with a carbs-to-protein ratio of 4:1. This will help restock your glycogen stores and help you bounce back quickly for your next run. A glass of chocolate milk makes for the perfect postrun treat. It has bone-building vitamin D and calcium, and the ideal carb-to-protein ratio that tired muscles need for recovery. And research has proven that milk beats water and sports drinks at restoring fluid levels after bouts of exercise in the heat. (Pace: 10:35-10:50/mile)

WEEK 4

Day 22, Monday · Rest

This is week four of training. After this week, your race will be three months away.

This week will follow a similar pattern as last week, with 2 to 3 easy runs and 2 days of rest. Your long run will drop back to 10 miles to give you a chance to recover from the mileage buildup so far.

Day 23, Tuesday · 3 Miles Easy

This weekend your long run will be 10 miles. These “in-between” long runs will begin to include tempo runs in future weeks. Tempo runs are sustained runs at slightly faster than marathon pace. (Pace: 10:35/mile)

Day 24, Wednesday · 7–8 Miles with Intervals

2 miles of easy running
2x400 at 1:56 pace with 200 easy run recovery
1x800 at 3:55 pace with 400 easy run recovery
1x1200 at 5:52 pace with 400 easy run recovery
1x800 at 3:55 pace with 400 easy run recovery
1x400 at 1:56 pace with 200 easy run recovery
1-2 miles easy running

Continuing with the theme of “Wednesday is interval day,” you’ll start to extend the distance that you run at pace. The pace suggested is relative to your goal marathon time, so please resist running any faster. You want to finish each of these workouts STRONG, and you must realize that future Wednesday workouts will add more and more distance.

Day 25, Thursday · 0–3 Miles Easy

Science has proven it: Listening to music while you run can reduce your perception of effort and elevate your mood. Runner’s World has collected the favorite tunes of the nation’s top runners, along with songs that scientists have proven will help you pick up the tempo. You can find the perfect soundtrack for your next run on the playlists page at runnersworld.com/music. (Pace: 10:35/mile)

Day 26, Friday · 3–4 Miles Hills

Run the mileage for the day on the hilliest route you can find. Don’t worry about the grade or the length of the hills. Incorporate a variety of hills into your training. On the short, steep climbs, you’ll feel a quick cardiovascular boost. On the long, gradual inclines, you’ll get more endurance training. Any incline will recruit different muscles than running on flat stretches will. Your pace will slow when you’re running uphill, but try to maintain the same level of effort—the same breathing rate and leg turnover—as when you’ve been running on flat ground. If you try to charge up the hill, you’ll end up spending all your energy and be zapped by the time you get to the top. You want to have something left at the end because there are likely to be plenty more hills where the one you just climbed came from.

If your race is hilly but the area where you live is pancake flat, you can improvise. Run on the treadmill and set it on a preset rolling hills course; run up and over bridges, parking structures and highway overpasses. (Pace: 10:35/mile)

Day 27, Saturday · Rest

Most runners hate hitting the gym, but some quality time in the weight room can lead to fast times on the road. Just a few days of strength training each week can help you burn more calories, run more efficiently, and ward off injuries. Start incorporating strength training into your routine now, and maintain it until race day. It's best to strength train on the same day that you run, and reserve your rest days for complete recovery.

Day 28, 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, drop your arms to your sides and gently shake them out as you exhale. (Pace: 10:35-10:50/mile)

WEEK 5

Day 29, Monday · Rest

Welcome to week five of training. At the end of this week, your race will be 11 weeks away. You'll have a slightly longer goal-pace run this week, and your long-run buildup will continue with a 14-mile long run.

If your easy runs don't feel truly easy, it's okay to relax back to 10:50 pace and progress when you're ready. The object of these easy runs is to finish them feeling exhilarated and strong, with enough energy to run another mile. If you feel injured, achy, or like you're struggling to finish the distance for the day, then back off. Remember: The first goal of training is to get to the starting line feeling strong. Before you can attempt to achieve your time goals on race day, you must first achieve this primary goal.

Day 30, Tuesday · 3–4 Miles Easy

If possible, get into the habit of heading out at the same time each day. If it's built into your schedule, you're less likely to skip a run and more likely to look forward to the next day's workout if you do miss a day. (Pace: 10:35/mile)

Day 31, Wednesday · 8–9 Miles with Intervals

2 miles easy run
1x1 mile (1600) at 7:50-8:00 pace with 800 easy run recovery
1x800 at 3:55 pace with 400 easy run recovery
1x400 at 1:56 pace with 200 easy run recovery
1x1 mile at 7:50-8:00 pace with 800 easy run recovery
1x800 at 3:55 pace with 400 easy run recovery
1-2 miles easy running

Day 32, Thursday · 0–3 Miles Easy

Lots of runners find that yoga is the perfect companion to running because it's a great way to develop balance, strength, and mind-body awareness that you need in training and racing. Check out the library of yoga videos designed just for runners at runnersworld.com/video. (Pace: 10:35/mile)

Day 33, Friday · 4 Miles Easy

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

Day 34, Saturday · Rest

When you notice yourself slowing down, shorten your stride and quicken your leg turnover. That will help you regroup and regain your strength so you can resume a quicker pace.

Day 35, Sunday · 14 Miles LSD

Find out what kind of sports drink and energy gel is being served at your race so you can test it out during training and make sure it sits well in your stomach. If you find that you don't digest energy gels, chews, or sports drink well, other foods will work. Any time you're out for more than an hour of running, you'll need 30 to 60 grams of carbs per hour, and you can get that from more traditional foods, like pretzels, gumdrops, packets of honey, or fig bars. You can make your own sports drink by mixing 8 teaspoons of sugar, 2 teaspoons of honey, 1/3 teaspoon of salt, and 1 teaspoon of lime juice in 24 ounces of water. (Pace: 10:35-10:50/mile)

WEEK 6

Day 36, Monday · Rest

This is week six of training. After this week, race day will be 10 weeks away.

This week you'll have 2 days of easy running, and interval workout, some hill work, and a 9-mile run that includes 2 miles of tempo running.

Ease your pre-long run stress by taking care of the logistics early in the week. Firm up your plans with running partners, and make sure you're well stocked with all the fuel, gear, and fluids you'll need. Plan to eat and get to bed early the evening before, and make sure you've cleared your schedule on the day of the run so you can rest afterward. Long runs are dress rehearsals for race day, and taking care of these issues ahead of time can go a long way toward helping you feel and run your best when it matters most.

Day 37, Tuesday · 3–4 Miles Easy

Need a quick energy boost before your run? Aim for 150 calories. Try hummus and carrots, a packet of instant oatmeal, dried dates, an orange, applesauce, pudding, or cereals with less than two grams of fiber per serving. If you can't stomach anything, have 8 to 16 ounces of sports drink. (Pace: 10:35/mile)

Day 38, Wednesday · 8–9 Miles with 4 x Yasso 800s

2 mile warmup
4-6 x Yasso 800s at 4:00 with 400-meter recovery jog
2 mile cooldown

Warm up with 2 miles of easy running. Then run 800 meters, or one-half mile, in 4 minutes. Recover with 400 meters, or one-quarter mile, of easy running. Repeat this cycle 3 to 5 more times. Cool down with 2 miles of easy running.

Day 39, Thursday · 0–3 Miles Easy

Blisters aren't just painful and ugly. They may cause you to adjust your gait to avoid putting pressure on the sore spots, which can lead to injury. They can also get infected. Ignore blisters smaller than the size of a pencil eraser. But if they're bigger, prick the side with a sterile needle and drain it. Don't remove the blister roof—cover it with an antibiotic ointment and a bandage. If you feel a hot spot midrun, address possible causes: Are your socks bunching up? Is your heel slipping? Are your laces too tight? If the blister hurts so badly that you're forced to change your gait, you're better off walking versus risking injury. (Pace: 10:35/mile)

Day 40, Friday · 4 Miles Hills

Run the mileage for the day on the hilliest route you can find. Don't worry about the grade or the length of the hills. Incorporate a variety of hills into your training. On the short, steep climbs, you'll feel a quick cardiovascular boost. On the long, gradual inclines, you'll get more endurance training. Any incline will recruit different muscles than running on flat stretches will. Your pace will slow when you're running uphill, but try to maintain the same level of effort—the same breathing rate and leg turnover—as when you've been running on flat ground. If you try to charge up the hill, you'll end up spending all your energy and be zapped by the time you get to the top. You want to have something left at the end because there are likely to be plenty more hills where the one you just climbed came from. (Pace: 10:35 /mile)

Day 41, Saturday · Rest

If you have chronically sore, tight hamstrings, sitting for long periods of time can make it worse. When you're at the office, stand as much as possible to keep your muscles loose.

Day 42, Sunday · 9 Miles with 2 Miles at Tempo

5-mile warmup
2 miles at tempo (8:33/mile)
2-mile cooldown

Today you'll do your first miles at tempo pace. Warm up with 5 miles of easy running, then ramp up to your tempo pace (8:33/mile) and hold it for 2 miles. Cool down with 2 miles of easy running.

It's especially important to sandwich the more challenging workouts with a warmup and cooldown of at least 5 to 10 minutes of walking and easy jogging. Warming up helps you feel more comfortable on the run and prevents injuries such as muscle pulls. Cooling down helps prevent muscle cramps.

WEEK 7

Day 43, Monday · Rest or Cross-Train

This is week seven of training. You'll have 3 short runs and 1 day of rest or cross-training. Your long run will stretch up to 16 miles, and you'll go to the track for intervals.

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. Try to get extra z's; research has shown that getting more sleep during training improves speed and reaction time. And make sure your shoes are in good shape; you should replace them every 300 to 500 miles.

Day 44, Tuesday · 6 Miles Easy

You're almost halfway through your training and your running shoes have been with you for every step. Might be a good time to visit your local specialty running shop to purchase another pair and slowly break them in for race day.

Day 45, Wednesday · 9 Miles with Intervals

2 miles easy running
1x400 at 1:56 pace with 200 easy run recovery
1x 800 at 3:55 pace with 400 easy run recovery
1x 1 mile (1600) at 7:50 pace with 800 easy run recovery
1x 800 at 3:55 pace with 400 easy run recovery
1x 1 mile at 7:50 pace with 800 easy run recovery
1x 800 at 3:56 pace with 400 easy run recovery
1 mile easy run

Day 46, Thursday · 4–6 Miles Easy

If you're having trouble getting out the door, remember that the first few steps are usually the toughest. Commit to a 10-minute run. Chances are, by the time 10 minutes passes, you'll be energized and excited to keep going.

Day 47, Friday · 5 Miles Easy

If you want to shed your watch or heart-rate monitor, you can use the "talk test" to measure your effort. Studies have shown that it's an accurate way to gauge your exercise intensity. If most of your running feels comfortable, and you're able to talk in full sentences without huffing and puffing, you're probably working at the right intensity, a steady aerobic level, which translates to approximately 65 percent of your maximum heart rate. At this level, you can burn calories, improve your cardiovascular fitness, increase your endurance, and get all the other health benefits that go along with training. (Pace: 10:35/mile)

Day 48, Saturday · Rest Day

If you're running and struck with a side stitch, slow down and change your breathing pattern. Take quick, shallow breaths for a minute or two, then switch to taking deep breaths for a minute. Keep running slowly for another quarter- to half-mile. If the pain doesn't subside by then, stop and stretch on the side of the road, bending to the opposite side of the stitch.

Day 49, Sunday · 16 Miles LSD

If possible, do some running on the course before the race. Note the locations of turns, hills, and landmarks. The familiarity will help you feel confident going into your big event. If you can't get on the course, check the topography and try to find similar terrain on your run. (Pace: 10:35/mile)

WEEK 8

Day 50, Monday · Rest or Cross-Train

This is week eight of training. You'll get a short and quick interval workout for Wednesday and your moderately long run will include 6 miles of tempo running.

Day 51, Tuesday · 4–6 Miles Easy

Keep this run comfortable and under control and take advantage of the days to come. If you're feeling a bit tired or stressed out, opt for the shorter 4-mile run.

Day 52, Wednesday · 7–8 Miles with Intervals

2 miles easy running
10x400 at 1:56 pace with 200 easy run recovery
1-2 miles easy running

You began this program with 8 x 400 and today we're returning to those 400s but adding 2. You should find that this workout is actually well within your comfort zone. Stick to the paces. Don't make the mistake of going faster and enjoy.

Day 53, Thursday · 4–6 Miles Easy

Regular massages can be valuable during your heaviest training weeks, because they can help you recover faster and stay injury-free. A good massage therapist will zero in on your tightest muscles. Be sure to see a specialist in sports massage who has experience working with runners. (Pace: 10:35/mile)

Day 54, Friday · 5 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. (Pace: 10:35/mile)

Day 55, Saturday · Rest

Plan to take a few days to a week off from running after the race 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 56, Sunday · 10 Miles with 4 Miles at Tempo

3-mile warmup
4 miles at tempo (8:33/mile)
3-mile cooldown

Mix this run with easy and tempo running by following this pattern. Run 3 easy miles, pick it up to your 8:33 tempo pace for 4 miles, and then slow it down for the last 3 miles. This run may actually feel a bit difficult. You've done some good quality work this week and your legs may still be a bit sluggish from that. No worries—tomorrow's a day off.

WEEK 9

Day 57, Monday · Rest

This is week nine of training. You will have the option of running 18-20 miles on your long run. The fitness you've gained over the last 8 weeks may just surprise you with how strong you are. Plan an 18-mile run with a 2-mile option toward the end. If 18 miles has you a bit tired or if it's a hot, humid day that has you feeling dehydrated, stop there. If on the other hand, you are feeling good, carry on to 20.

Day 58, Tuesday · 4 Miles Easy

You may feel a bit frisky after you rest day, but make sure you keep these Tuesday runs easy. Save a larger effort for your Wednesday interval workout. (Pace: 10:35/mile)

Day 59, Wednesday · 8–9 Miles with Intervals

2 miles easy running
1x400 at 1:56 pace with 200 easy run recovery
1x800 at 3:55 pace with 400 easy run recovery
1x1 mile (1600) at 7:50-8:00 pace with 800 easy run recovery
1x800 at 3:55 pace with 400 easy run recovery
1x1 mile at 7:50-8:00 pace with 800 easy run recovery
1-2 miles easy running

Remember to control your pace on those early intervals.

Day 60, Thursday · 0–3 Miles Easy

Make sure that you're taking your easy days easy enough. Use a heart-rate monitor to make sure you're running slowly enough, run with a slower friend, or head out for a mellow trail run. (Pace: 10:35/mile)

Day 61, Friday · 4 Miles Easy

Athlete's foot, a fungal infection that causes dry, scaly, red skin between the toes that can itch or burn, is common among runners. To prevent it, wear light, moisture-wicking, synthetic (not cotton) socks. After you run, change out of your soggy socks and shoes and slip into dry after-sport shoes before you go for coffee or run errands. Don't stash your sweaty pair inside a dark gym bag or your trunk where they can't air out. You can also sprinkle antifungal powder on your feet before running. (Pace: 10:35/mile)

Day 62, Saturday · Rest

Vitamin A helps repair microtears in your muscles and helps make white blood cells that fight infection. So as you start getting into these tougher workouts, it's especially important to eat plenty of carrots, sweet potatoes, and dried apricots. They're loaded with vitamin A.

Day 63, Sunday · 18–20 Miles LSD

Long runs help you develop the physical endurance you need for the race, but they also help prepare you psychologically for spending hours at a time on your feet. Use these workouts to figure out what strategies help you stay mentally strong. Good music may help you stay psyched up, running with others may make the miles roll by faster. Mantras that are short, inspirational, and meaningful, can help you stay positive, even as your body fatigues. (Pace: 10:35-10:50/mile)

Remember that you have an option on today's total. Keep your pace under control and just do what feels right.

WEEK 10

Day 64, Monday · 0–3 Miles Easy

This is week 10 of training. You'll be moving your tempo running up to 6 miles in a 12-mile run. You'll also head to the track for a session of Yasso 800s. The workout, which involves running half-mile repeats close to 5K pace, was developed by Bart Yasso of Runner's World. It's best to do this workout at a track, but you can also do it on a treadmill or a flat, traffic-free stretch of road.

You now have the option of running on Monday if you feel recovered from last week's work and yesterday's long run.

(Pace: 10:35/mile)

Day 65, Tuesday · 4 Miles Easy

Make sure that you're taking your easy days easy enough. Use a heart-rate monitor to make sure you're running slowly enough, run with a slower friend, or head out for a mellow trail run. (Pace: 10:35/mile)

Day 66, Wednesday · 9–10 Miles with 6 x Yasso 800s

2-mile warmup

6-8 x Yasso 800s at 4:00 with 400-meter recovery

2-mile cooldown

Run 2 miles easy to warm up. Then run 800 meters (or a half-mile on the road) in 4 minutes. Run easy for 400 meters, or one-quarter of a mile. Then repeat the cycle 5-7 more times. Cool down with 2 miles of easy running.

Day 67, Thursday · 0–3 Miles Easy

You teach your body to pull you to a PR on race day, but you have to train your brain to get you there, too. As your workouts get tougher, test out different mantras and mental strategies to find the ones that work best for you so you'll have them on race day, and won't be derailed by doubts or distractions. A well-chosen mantra can keep you calm and on target. Repeating choice words whenever you need to focus helps direct your mind away from negative thoughts and toward a positive experience. A good mantra is short, positive, instructive, conveys energy, and is full of action words. Try "stay strong" or "be fast." (Pace: 10:35/mile)

Day 68, Friday · 4 Miles Hills

Looking for a little motivation? Try connecting with other runners online. Sharing information can keep you psyched up and boost your confidence. You can post the mileage and paces you log, and get instant feedback. You can also get reassurance from runners who are going through similar experiences. (Pace: 10:35/mile)

Day 69, Saturday · Rest

Shin splints are common among beginners and seasoned runners alike, and that soreness and pain along the shinbone tends to come on after ramping up mileage or intensity too much without enough rest. Running on hard or uneven road surfaces, or wearing worn-out shoes, can also contribute to shin splints. If you feel them coming on, take it easy and check your log. You may need to back off a bit.

Day 70, Sunday · 12 Miles with 6 miles at Tempo

3-mile warmup
6 miles at tempo (8:33/mile)
3-mile cooldown

Run easy at about 10:35 pace for 3 miles, then ramp up to 8:33 for 6 miles before backing down to 10:35 pace for the final 3 miles.

Ice baths can reduce soreness and inflammation after a long run. Cold therapy constricts blood vessels, reducing swelling and inflammation so you feel better faster.

Here's how to take an ice bath: Fill a tub with two to three bags of crushed ice. Add enough water so that you will be covered nearly to the waist when you sit in the tub. To reduce your discomfort, before getting in the tub, put on a warm hat and jacket. You might even use neoprene booties or drink some hot tea while you're in there. It's a good idea to have some entertaining reading materials. You should stay in the bath for 10 to 20 minutes.

WEEK 11

Day 71, Monday · 0–3 Miles Easy

This is week 11 in training. After this week, race day will be five weeks away. Make sure you pay attention to your pace for Wednesday's intervals. This week's long run will be 18-20 miles. (Pace: 10:35/mile)

Day 72, Tuesday · 4–6 Miles Easy

It can be tough to know which discomforts to run through and which pains demand surrender. Muscle soreness the day after a hard run is normal. But any pain that persists or worsens as you run, causes you to change your gait, or is located on one side of your body but not the other should send you to the doctor. (Pace: 10:35/mile)

Day 73, Wednesday · 7–8 Miles with Intervals

2 miles easy running
10x400 at 1:56 pace with 200 easy run recovery
1-2 miles easy running

You get another short and quick "break workout" today with a series of 400 meter runs.

Day 74, Thursday · 0–3 Miles Easy

Cramps in the calf are common as you ramp up the mileage, and during a race the pain can stop you dead in your tracks. Here's how to release it when you're on the run. Step to the side of the road and raise the ball of the cramped leg's foot up while keeping the heel on the ground. For a deeper stretch, lean forward, keeping the knee of the leg being stretched straight, the opposite knee bent, and both feet flat on the ground. Hold for two seconds; repeat 10 times or more, as necessary. (Pace: 10:35/mile)

Day 75, Friday · 4 Miles Easy

For many runners, the worst part of a really long run, like a 20-miler, is anticipating it. So before you start making up excuses to get out of this week's long run, get some perspective. You had 11 weeks to build up to this. Just take it at an easy pace and remember the goal is to finish. (Pace: 10:35/mile)

Day 76, Saturday · Rest

In the final weeks before your race, you're likely to feel twinges that you've been able to ignore. Some soreness is inevitable. Try rest, ice, compression, and elevation. If you need to scale back your training time, do it. You'll be fresher for the race. But if you can't walk or run without pain, see a sports-medicine specialist to figure out if your injury is something you should work through, or whether you should reset your racing goals.

Day 77, Sunday · 18–20 Miles LSD

Take it easy on this run—just focus on finishing. It's okay to stop to walk, refuel, get water, and regroup. As long as you cover the distance for the day, you can consider your mission accomplished. Be sure to rest afterward, and celebrate, too. Though once again, you have a choice of between 18 and 20 miles, ideally you'll get through 20. To make that possible, make sure the pace is comfortable, run closer to the 10:50 pace if you need to, and make sure you have fluids and nourishment planned.

WEEK 12

Day 78, Monday · 0–3 Miles Easy

This is week 12 of training. After this week, race day will be one month away. This weekend your long run will drop back to 12 miles with 6 miles of tempo once again.

The first challenge of marathon training is to get to the starting line injury-free. Today you'll have the option of resting or running easy. (Pace:10:35/mile)

Day 79, Tuesday · 4 Miles Easy

Now's a good time to make sure you're all set with gear for the race. If your favorite shorts are getting threadbare, replace them now and get plenty of practice running in the new ones before race day. You might also want to check your shoes. They should be replaced every 300 to 500 miles. (Pace: 10:35/mile)

Day 80, Wednesday · 10-11 with Intervals

2 miles easy running
1x800 at 3:55 pace with 400 easy run recovery
1x1 mile (1600) at 7:50-8:00 pace with 800 easy run recovery
1x800 at 3:55 pace with 400 easy run recovery
1x1 mile at 7:50-8:00 pace with 800 easy run recovery
1x400 at 1:56 pace with 200 easy run recovery
1x1200 at 5:52 pace with 400 easy run recovery
1-2 miles easy running

You will be mixing the Yasso 800s with some 1-mile repeats to continue to build your strength.

Day 81, Thursday · 0–3 Miles Easy

Don't know what to do with running shoes that are past their prime? Give them a second life. There are lots of organizations and running stores that collect worn-out pairs and donate them to people in need. You'll find a list at runnersworld.com. (Pace: 10:35/mile)

Day 82, Friday · 4 Miles Easy or Hills

Try not to stress too much about any miles you've missed during training. A few missed miles or runs won't make or break your race. But trying to cram in extra miles to make up for them can lead to injury. If you complete 80 percent of the training plan, you should be 100 percent prepared for the race. (Pace 10:35/mile)

Day 83, Saturday · Rest

Sometimes, when the weather turns ugly, your best bet is to head indoors. We've got lots of boredom-busting strategies for hitting the treadmill, plus fun workouts, in our video library at runnersworld.com/video.

Day 84, Sunday · 12 Miles with 6 miles at Tempo

Today's run is 12 miles with 6 miles of tempo just like 2 weeks ago.

3-mile warmup
6 miles at tempo (8:33/mile)
3-mile cooldown

Run easy at about 10:35 pace for 3 miles, then ramp up to 8:33 for 6 miles before backing down to 10:35 pace for the final 3 miles.

WEEK 13

Day 85, Monday · 0–3 Miles Easy

This is week 13 of training. After this week, race day will be just three weeks away. You will up your Yasso 800s to one-mile repeats and complete your last long run of 20-22 miles. (Pace: 10:35/mile)

Day 86, Tuesday · 4 Miles Easy

You've put in all the hard work of training, but have you made a goal for the race? To avoid getting too attached to a number on the clock, pick three goals: one you're confident you can accomplish, one you think you'll probably reach, and a best-of-all-possible-worlds finishing time that may be a stretch. That will ensure that you walk away from the finish line with a sense of accomplishment. (Pace: 10:35/mile)

Day 87, Wednesday · 10–12 Miles with Mile Repeats

2 miles easy run
4-5 x 1 mile (1600) at 7:50-8:00 pace with 800 easy run recovery
1-2 mile easy run

Today's quality workout will be a series of 1-mile repeats. This is a difficult workout, but you are fit and ready for the task. If you are on pace through 4, add the 5th. If you're starting to slow down, stop at 4.

Day 88, Thursday · 0–3 Miles Easy

No matter what the weather forecast is for race day, it's important to throw sunscreen in your gear bag. You're going to be outside for a long stretch of time, regardless of how fast you are. Use a product with an SPF of 30 that is labeled "broad spectrum" to protect you from UVA and UVB rays and apply it about 20 minutes before you hit the road. (Pace: 10:35/mile)

Day 89, Friday · 4 Miles Easy

Your last extended long run is Sunday, so you may want to make it happen around the same time your race is scheduled to start. Most runners get their long runs done early, but many races don't start until midmorning or even later. The timing will affect your fueling, hydration, and bathroom strategies, all of which could have a big impact on your race performance. (Pace: 10:35/mile)

Day 90, Saturday · Rest

When motivation is waning, try freshening up your routine. Sometimes all it takes is a new playlist, an inspiring audiobook, or a new piece of gear to get you excited about getting out the door.

Day 91, Sunday · 20–22 Miles LSD

Just focus on finishing. Remember, this is your last long run. Try to make it a dress rehearsal for the race. Use the gear and fuel you plan to use for the marathon. When you finish, it's tapering time. Many runners mistakenly take advantage of their well-earned fitness and run this last long run too fast. DO NOT make that mistake. Save that effort for race day. (Pace: 10:35-10:50/mile)

Day 92, Monday · 0–3 Miles Easy

This is week 14 of training. After this week, race day will be two weeks away. Your taper officially begins. You have 3 to 4 easy runs, 1 to 2 days of rest, and the “Mile Breakdown” workout. Your long run will drop back to 16 miles, but you can opt out for a 5K race.

The best approach to tapering is: Rest, don't rust. Strike a balance between resting to let your body adapt to the stresses of training and get stronger, while also logging enough challenging miles to maintain the fitness you've spent the past four months developing. A lot of marathoners make the mistake of running too much during the taper, and get injured in the final miles before the start. Others taper too much and feel sluggish at the starting line. You want to keep your fitness level sharp, but you also want to steer clear of injury. Stick to the plan, and you should get to the starting line feeling fresh, strong, and ready to run your best. (Pace: 10:35/mile)

Day 93, Tuesday · 4 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. (Pace: 10:35/mile)

Day 94, Wednesday · 10–11 Miles with Intervals

2 miles easy running
1x1 mile (1600) at 7:50-8:00 pace with 800 easy run recovery
1x1200 at 5:52 pace with 400 easy run recovery
1x800 at 3:55 pace with 400 easy run recovery
1x400 at 1:56 pace with 400 easy run recovery
1x1200 at 5:52 pace with 400 easy run recovery
1x800 at 3:55 pace with 400 easy run recovery
1x400 at 1:56 pace with 400 easy run recovery
1-2 miles easy running

Today is your Mile Breakdown workout, and you'll need to keep the early intervals under control so that you can finish the workout strong.

Day 95, Thursday · 0–3 Miles Easy

Maintaining good form can help you run more comfortably. Lots of new runners tend to lean too far forward and take long strides that cause each footfall to act like a brake against the body's momentum. Run tall, look up, shorten your stride, and your feet will land beneath your center of gravity. This will save energy and reduce the impact forces on your knees and ankles. (Pace: 10:35/mile)

Day 96, Friday · 4 Miles Easy

As you're tapering, make sure to keep up your core work. If your upper-leg and core muscles are underconditioned, your pelvis will wobble as you run, which can stress the knees and lead to pain beneath the kneecap known as runner's knee. (Pace: 10:35/mile)

Day 97, Saturday · Rest

For a lot of runners, the taper is the toughest part of the training cycle. Phantom pains crop up during the final weeks before the race, and it's hard to know whether they're real or just the result of shaky nerves. A massage can help relieve any prerace discomfort and help you relax.

Day 98, Sunday · 16 Miles LSD or 5K Race

You may feel like you can run longer than 16 miles. It's best to stop at 16. This is a good time to review your training log. Add up all the miles you've logged on the way to the starting line, and draw confidence from all that you've accomplished, the fitness you've developed, the friends you've made, and the commitment you've already fulfilled. It amounts to way more than anything that could ever be measured on a finish-line clock!

You can instead, find a local 5K to practice going through your race-day plan. This is recommended, and if you're able to race a 5K, follow this plan:

3 miles easy running
5K race
3 miles easy running

You can expect to be close to 25:12 for your 5K (depending on terrain and weather), so try to stay around 8:07 for your first mile. Don't worry about the difference in total miles, the race and the experience will have you revved up for marathon day. (Pace: 10:35-10:50/mile)

WEEK 15

Day 99, Monday · 3 Miles Easy

This is week 15 of training. After this week, race day will be one week away.

This week you'll really start to feel the effort drop off, as you have 4 easy, short runs, 1 day of rest, and your long run will be only 8 miles. You'll hit the track for one last set of Yasso 800s. As tough as it may be, resist the temptation to do more—you've done all the hard work of training to get fit. Now's the time to let your body adapt to the training stresses so that you can show up to the starting line strong, energized, and ready to run your best. Today you have the option of resting or running easy. (Pace: 10:35/mile)

Day 100, Tuesday · 3 Miles Easy

Feeling antsy? Distract yourself. Catch up with friends, catch up on movies, or finally get to that project around the house. But whatever you do, don't do any new activities. Even if it seems like a harmless activity, like Pilates or yoga, now's the time when you're most vulnerable to injury. Just stay healthy and safe and watch your step! (Pace: 10:35/mile)

Day 101, Wednesday · 10–11 Miles with 8 x Yasso 800s

2-mile warmup
6-8 x Yasso 800s at 4:00 with 400-meter recovery jog
2-mile cooldown

After a 2-mile warmup, run 8 x 800 meters with 400-meter recovery jogs in between. Cool down with 2 miles of easy running. The total distance for the day should add up to about 10 miles.

Day 102, Thursday · 0–3 Miles Easy

This is a good time to review the course and the elevation chart for the race. Watch a video course tour if one is available on the race website. Familiarize yourself with the points in the race where you'll have to push, and mile markers and landmarks where you'll be able to ease off a bit. Log in to online discussion forums or social media outlets to connect with runners who have done the race before. (Pace: 10:35/mile)

Day 103, Friday · 4 Miles Easy

It's a good time to double-check all your race-day logistics. Do you know when you'll get your bib number? Have you figured out when you need to get to the starting line and where you're going to park? These may seem like little details, but if you leave them up in the air, they can cause a lot of unneeded stress in the days just before the race, when you feel least equipped to handle it. (Pace: 10:35/mile)

Day 104, Saturday · Rest

Plan to take 1 to 2 weeks off from running after the marathon to allow your body to recuperate from the 26.2 miles. But you don't want to cross the finish line wondering, "Now what?" So make some postrace plans, running-related or not. You may want to take a vacation, try your local 5K, or finally give cycling a try. Just put something on the calendar so you can stay focused on what's ahead.

Day 105, Sunday · 8 Miles LSD

This is your final long run before the race. Start slowly with the goal of ramping up to your race pace, and finishing feeling strong. Even though you have the energy to do more, save your energy for race day. (Pace: 10:35-10:50/mile)

WEEK 16

Day 106, Monday · Rest

This is the final week of training and you will start it with a rest day and no cross-training. Your race is this weekend! Your hard-core training may be done, but there's still plenty you can do to increase your chances of being your best on race day. Take the days of rest on the schedule. Be sure to eat right—about 60 percent of your daily calories should come from high-quality carbohydrates, like vegetables and whole grains, but don't go overboard. Iron out all your race-day logistics as soon as possible, so you can enjoy your big weekend. Get as much sleep as you can. At least eight hours each night is ideal.

Day 107, Tuesday · 0–3 Miles Easy

Resist the temptation to go longer. Save your energy for after the race. Remember: any miles or intensity you to try to cram in at this point in training can only raise your risk of injury; it will not significantly raise your level of fitness for the race.

You have the option of another rest day or up to 3 easy miles. (Pace: 10:35/mile)

Day 108, Wednesday · 6–7 Miles with Intervals

2 miles easy running
6x400 at 1:56 with 200 easy run recovery
1-2 miles easy running

This is your taper workout. It will get some turnover going in your legs but will end before you start to feel any fatigue.

Day 109, Thursday · 3 Miles Easy

You're close enough to race day to start checking the weather forecast and thinking about what to wear. No matter what the forecast says, it's a good idea to bring gear for all sorts of conditions. You never know when a freak heat wave or snowstorm can hit. It's best to be prepared for anything. (Pace: 10:35/mile)

Day 110, Friday · Rest

Try to get some extra rest tonight. On the eve of your race, you may be too restless and excited to get a good night's sleep.

Day 111, Saturday · 3 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. (Pace: 10:35/mile)

Day 112, Sunday · Race Day

Good luck! When the starting gun goes off, try to hold back for the first few miles before settling in to your goal race pace (9:09/mile). You can use the energy you save early to surge in the final miles.

Be sure to walk and stretch immediately after you finish to reduce soreness and stiffness in the days to come. 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 5Ks, 10Ks, half marathons, and the postseason.

Break 4:00 Marathon Plan
Runner's World · Plan ID #102-5
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