



Use this adaptable  
training guide to  
run *26.2* miles while  
still balancing family,  
work, and...life.

RUNNER'S **WORLD** × *26.2* YOU'RE GONNA NEED MILK FOR THAT.

# **A FLEXIBLE MARATHON TRAINING GUIDE FOR WOMEN BY WOMEN**





# WELCOME TO YOUR FLEXIBLE TRAINING PLAN



Welcome to the sisterhood of runners who have decided to take the 26.2-mile challenge. This 12-week training plan will help you prepare for a race no matter your starting point, schedule, or running style.

Runner's World partnered with Milk to create this marathon training plan, which allows women to train for the distance while navigating all the barriers that can get in the way—from work day commitments to family schedules. With the help of our coaches, we created a unique training and nutrition plan that can adapt to your schedule while making sure you're prepared to run 26.2 miles on race day.

## MEET YOUR COACHES:

These three women have joined forces to create this training plan that will get you over the finish line.



**Vanessa Peralta-Mitchell** is a certified running coach, mom, and founder of Game Changers, an organization that promotes diversity among certified running coaches.



**Jess Movold**, aka Coach Jess, is a certified running coach who assists athletes by helping them get out of their heads and overcome the perceived barriers in their way.



**Starla Garcia, R.D.**, is a dietitian and Olympic-trials marathoner who helps runners fuel their bodies with proper nutrition for all aspects of marathon training and performance.

## EACH WEEK WILL FEATURE A COMBINATION OF WORKOUTS WITH THESE PURPOSES:

- > AEROBIC WORK AND SPEED DEVELOPMENT
- > INTERVALS AND BROKEN TEMPOS, EXPLORING PACE PROGRESSIONS, SPEED DEVELOPMENT
- > RECOVERY MILES
- > PROGRESSIVE RECOVERY
- > RUNNING WITH INTERCHANGEABLE MILES AT GOAL RACE PACE
- > BUILD AEROBIC BASE, TIME ON FEET, LONG RUN PROGRESSION
- > NUTRITION ADVICE
- > MENTAL PREPARATION

# TRAINING CALENDAR

## Your 12-Week Plan

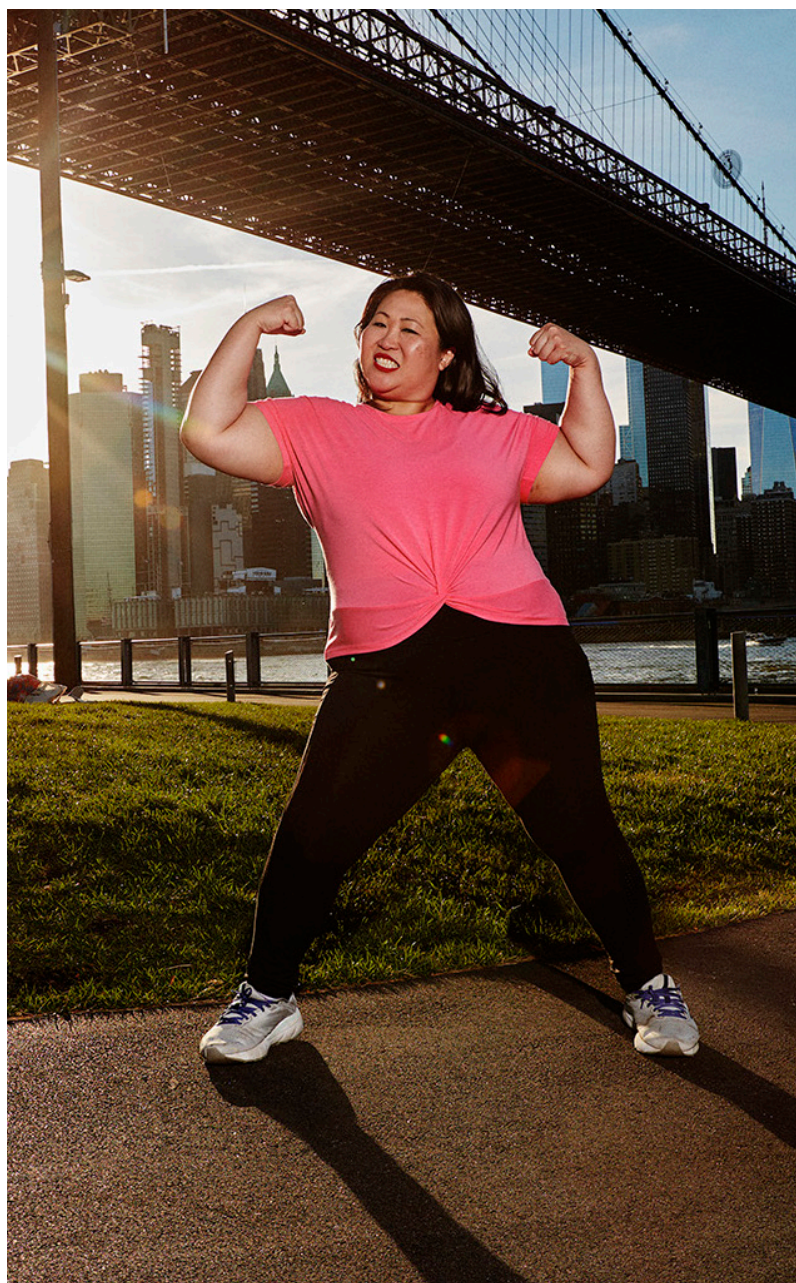
This training calendar isn't a rigid day-by-day calendar, but one that has adaptations and flex days. This means you can adjust your training when the weather rains you out or your body needs more recovery. In addition, we provide weekly mileage goals instead of daily mileage goals, so you have a target as your workouts progress.

	<b>DAY 1</b> Monday/Tuesday	<b>DAY 2</b> Wednesday/Thursday	<b>DAY 3</b> Friday	<b>DAY 4</b> Saturday/Sunday	Estimated Weekly Mileage	
	EASY TIME ON FEET	QUALITY SESSION	EASY TIME ON FEET	LONG RUN	LOW	HIGH
<b>WEEK 1</b>	☐ 40 to 50 minutes	☐ 8 x 1 minute @10K pace with 1-minute recovery between each	☐ 30 to 35 minutes	☐ 8 to 12 miles	18	25
<b>WEEK 2</b>	☐ 40 to 50 minutes	☐ 2 x 15 minutes half marathon pace (MP) with 5-minute recovery between each	☐ 30 to 35 minutes	☐ 10 to 12 miles	23	28
<b>WEEK 3</b>	☐ 50 to 70 minutes	☐ 2 x 10 minutes faster effort with 5-minute recovery between each	☐ 40 to 45 minutes	☐ 10 to 12 miles	24	30
<b>WEEK 4</b>	☐ 50 to 60 minutes	☐ 10 x 45-second hill sprints with 90-second recovery between each	☐ 40 to 45 minutes	☐ 12 to 14 miles	25	30
<b>WEEK 5</b>	☐ 60 to 70 minutes	☐ 10 x 2 minutes at 5K pace with 90-second recovery between each	☐ 50 to 55 minutes	☐ 14 to 16 miles	30	34.5
<b>WEEK 6</b>	☐ 60 to 70 minutes	☐ 2 x 15 minutes at half MP with 2-minute recovery between each	☐ 50 to 55 minutes	☐ 14 to 16 miles	30	34.5
<b>WEEK 7</b>	☐ 70 to 80 minutes	☐ 35 minutes at a progressive tempo from MP to 10K pace	☐ 50 to 60 minutes	☐ 18 to 20 miles	35	40
<b>WEEK 8</b>	☐ 70 to 80 minutes	☐ 5 x 5 minutes at 10K pace with 2-minute jog recovery between each	☐ 55 to 60 minutes	☐ 16 to 18 miles	33.5	38
<b>WEEK 9</b>	☐ 80 to 90 minutes	☐ 40 minutes at MP on a hilly route	☐ 40 to 50 minutes	☐ 20 to 22 miles	38	43
<b>WEEK 10</b>	☐ 70 to 80 minutes	☐ 10 x 2 minutes at half MP with 1-minute jog recovery between each	☐ 40 to 50 minutes	☐ 14 to 16 miles	30	35
<b>WEEK 11</b>	☐ 50 to 60 minutes	☐ 2 x 15 minutes at marathon peak pace (MPP) = roughly MP-15 with 1-minute recovery between each	☐ 30 to 35 minutes	☐ 10 to 12 miles	23	28
<b>WEEK 12</b>	☐ 40 to 45 minutes	☐ 4 x 2 minutes at 10K pace with 90-second recovery between each	☐ 10 to 20 minutes	<b>RACE DAY!</b>	34.2	37.2



# WORKOUT GLOSSARY

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## » EASY TIME ON FEET, AKA EASY RUN

During these workouts, you will want to run at a comfortable and conversational pace. They should not feel strenuous, and should never have forced paces, nor should they leave you feeling breathless. These runs help build your running endurance and efficiency while expending as little effort as possible. **These runs should feel like a 6 on a perceived-exertion scale (RPE) from 1 to 10.**

## » QUALITY SESSION

Your focus during these workouts is not how fast you can run, but the prescribed efforts and being able to hit them consistently. Because of the intensity of these runs, it is important to warm up and cool down in order to stay injury-free. **Be sure to jog for 20 minutes or 2 miles before and after these sessions.** The purpose of these workouts is to get some speed and turnover in your legs.

## » LONG RUN

This run will feel moderate to challenging at times, as you train your mind and body to be able to endure greater distances and more time on your feet. Despite this, your effort level should feel manageable. **Your weekly Long Run requires some planning to set you up for success.** And it allows you to test out and improve upon your race-day clothing, fuel, and mental fortitude. Prioritize hydration, nutrition, route preparation, run fuel, and gear beforehand.

## FIGURING OUT YOUR PACE

One way to figure out your pace is to look to past race results for your time in pace. If you've never run a 5K, 10K, or half or full marathon, there is an alternative. Consider using these rate of perceived exertion (RPE) measurements on a range from 1 (binge-watching TV) to 10 (all-out maximum effort).

DISTANCE	RPE	SECONDS SLOWER THAN 5K PACE
5K	8-9	
10K	8	10-20 seconds
HALF MARATHON	7	25-35 seconds
MARATHON (MP)	6	60 seconds



# FUELING YOUR TRAINING

## Performance Plates Make Marathon Nutrition Easier

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» When training for a marathon, the amount of food you'll need each week for energy will change as your distance increases. Over time, your body will need additional amounts (and types) of fuel to complete longer runs and more intense workouts. As you move through your training, your body will have different nutritional needs, so try to assemble plates that replenish the carbohydrates and protein that will help you feel more energized and stronger.

Performance plates are exactly that—plates for each meal and snack that are divided into sections that you fill with the nutrients needed to fuel your body and help promote recovery. Those foods are water-based fibrous carbohydrates (aka fruits and vegetables), protein (dairy foods, plant-based proteins such as tofu, poultry, and red meat), and starches and grains (pasta, potatoes, rice, etc.). Where you are in your training will inform what your performance plate looks like.

### YOUR PERFORMANCE PLATES

#### WEEKS 1-4

##### Basic Performance

**Plate:** Aim for ½ plate of fruits and vegetables, ¼ plate of lean protein, and ¼ plate of starches and grains, plus an 8-oz. serving of low-fat dairy.

#### WEEKS 4-8, 10-12

##### Moderate Performance

**Plate:** Aim for ⅓ plate of fruits and veggies, ⅓ plate of protein, and ⅓ plate of starches and grains. Add an 8-oz serving of low-fat dairy.

#### WEEK 9

##### Peak Week

**Performance Plate:** Aim for ½ plate of starches and grains, ¼ plate of protein, and ¼ plate of fruits and vegetables.

### SET YOURSELF UP FOR SUCCESS

#### How to Meal-Plan for Each Week of Marathon Training

- **Take inventory of what is available in your fridge, pantry, and freezer.** Make a list each week to help you purchase things you need for the week and stick to your budget.
- **Choose a quick cooking method.** Consider each meal option that uses one pan to have an easy cleanup. Rely on recipes that are slow-cooker, sheet-pan, or air-fryer meals.
- **Don't overlook the freezer aisle.** There are plenty of easy options to pull from the freezer section. Frozen vegetables, fruits, smoothies, precooked chicken breasts, turkey burgers or meatballs, and frozen potato or rice dishes are all good choices.
- **Write down at least two different breakfast ideas, two to three lunch and dinner ideas, and two snack ideas you want to try out to prevent being overwhelmed during the week.**
- **Batch-cook proteins or grains** so that you don't have to re-create a meal and can save yourself some time.
- **Wash down your meals with a fueling beverage.** Pair your meals with a beverage that adds nutritional value. Dairy milk, for example, is a great source of fuel and protein.
- **Keep easy breakfast items or snacks at your workplace.** Consider food items like smoothies and instant oatmeal, both of which can be prepared with milk to deliver essential nutrients, such as calcium and vitamin D, and high quality protein for training. Fruit sauce pouches, nut mixes, popcorn, tuna pouches, and shelf-stable dairy milk cartons are easy options to prevent hunger and stay on top of your nutrition goals.
- **Purchase hydration bottles:** One for your workplace to help you stay hydrated, and another for running to start building hydration habits for long runs and race days.
- **Don't neglect your recovery nutrition.** Plan what to eat by knowing what is easiest to eat after runs. Consider options to keep on hand like: chocolate milk, milk, Greek yogurt, yogurt pouches, etc., which will help you recover faster and help prevent your body from feeling burnt out before race day. Write down at least two different meal ideas for breakfast, lunch, dinner, as well as snack ideas you prevent being overwhelmed during the week.

#### RECOVERY TIP

When runners can rehydrate after a run with options like **chocolate milk**, they can run longer and build muscle, because it has the needed protein-to-carbohydrate mix for runners.

# WEEK-BY-WEEK GUIDE

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WEEK 1	DAY 1 Monday/Tuesday	DAY 2 Wednesday/Thursday	DAY 3 Friday	DAY 4 Saturday/Sunday	Estimated Weekly Mileage	
	EASY TIME ON FEET	QUALITY SESSION	EASY TIME ON FEET	LONG RUN	LOW	HIGH
	☐ 40 to 50 minutes	☐ 8 x 1 minute @10K pace with 1-minute recovery between each	☐ 30 to 35 minutes	☐ 8 to 12 miles	18	25

## » MINDSET PREP

Before you do anything, take 10 minutes to write down your why. Why did you commit to this challenge? What inspired and motivated you to sign up for this marathon? This will be your anchor that you will circle back to when training gets challenging—especially during your Long Runs. **Don't skip this step.**

## » NUTRITION TIPS

- Start trying electrolyte drinks and clothing that you might wear on race day.
- Eat a snack containing 30 to 50 grams of carbohydrate 45 to 60 minutes before your Long Run. Possible options: 4 graham-cracker sheets and applesauce, English muffin with 2 tbsp. nut butter, or a banana with nut butter.
- Rehydrate with low-fat chocolate milk to prevent next-day muscle soreness and get the 3:1 carb-to-protein ratio that helps replenish muscle glycogen (fuel) faster.

## » LIFE BALANCE

Identify barriers to training. What are the things that could prevent you from running? Strategize a plan to overcome them. For instance, if you have children, line up someone to watch them or invest in a running stroller to bring them with, or if they are older, have them join your shorter training sessions and be your training partner.

WEEK 2	DAY 1 Monday/Tuesday	DAY 2 Wednesday/Thursday	DAY 3 Friday	DAY 4 Saturday/Sunday	Estimated Weekly Mileage	
	EASY TIME ON FEET	QUALITY SESSION	EASY TIME ON FEET	LONG RUN	LOW	HIGH
	☐ 40 to 50 minutes	☐ 2 x 15 minutes half marathon pace (MP) with 5-minute recovery between each	☐ 30 to 35 minutes	☐ 10 to 12 miles	23	28

## » MINDSET PREP

One week down. Focus on one day at a time. One run at a time. This week, do your best to get all four runs in, and **don't sweat the small stuff.**

## RECOVERY TIP

If after your runs, you're overheated or have a lack of appetite, refuel with a liquid within one hour post-run. A smoothie will help your body cool down and replenish it with the nutrients needed for recovery.

### TRY THIS SMOOTHIE:

Blend 1 cup chocolate milk, 2 tbsp. peanut butter, and 1 frozen banana together. Add ice as needed.

## » NUTRITION TIPS

- Eat a pre-run snack 30 to 45 minutes before your Quality Session that is a simple, easily digestible carbohydrate, with a cup of water. This will help you avoid feeling sluggish and tired. Try: an applesauce pouch, a banana, or fruit snacks or fruit leathers.
- Start fueling your Long Runs with non-liquid fuel. Options like chews, gummies, or gels every 30 to 45 minutes will help prevent bonking later in the run. Get comfortable with fueling earlier in your run rather than later. This will help you get used to fueling and avoid stomach issues.

## » TRAINING TIPS

- During your Quality Session, you'll work in tempo efforts. This should not feel like max effort, but it requires mental focus, a positive mindset, and self-trust to continue pushing until you reach the 15-minute mark. Celebrate yourself afterward—way to crush a tough workout!
- Build the base. Each week, your Long Run will get slightly longer and more demanding as your distance creeps up. Focus on quality running at a conversational pace. Remember your mindset: one mile at a time. One by one, you will power through this run and get to the other side.

# WEEK-BY-WEEK GUIDE

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WEEK 3	<b>DAY 1</b> Monday/Tuesday	<b>DAY 2</b> Wednesday/Thursday	<b>DAY 3</b> Friday	<b>DAY 4</b> Saturday/Sunday	Estimated Weekly Mileage	
	EASY TIME ON FEET	QUALITY SESSION	EASY TIME ON FEET	LONG RUN	LOW	HIGH
	☐ 50 to 70 minutes	☐ 2 x 10 minutes faster effort with 5-minute recovery between each	☐ 40 to 45 minutes	☐ 10 to 12 miles	24	30

## » MINDSET PREP

This week, focus on gratitude. Instead of viewing running as a chore, approach your runs as an opportunity to better yourself. Find ways to practice gratitude in your runs, especially when they are challenging. Each run will feel a little better with this mental outlook. One way to do this: Start from the bottom of your body and work your way up, finding gratitude for each part of you that's getting through this run.

## » NUTRITION TIPS

- It's time to add a pre-run snack on Easy Run days: A simple, easily digestible carbohydrate with a cup of water. Try: 2 to 4 graham crackers or 1 cup of dry cereal.
- If you feel more hungry as your weekly mileage increases, snack on a combination of protein and carbohydrates, like: cottage cheese with almonds and strawberries, a glass of chocolate milk, or a mandarin orange and trail-mix packet.

## » TRAINING TIPS

- Keep your Easy Runs comfortable, as they will continue to improve your endurance for race day.
- Don't forget your Quality Session's cooldown. It allows the body to begin the recovery process at a lower effort while adding to your overall weekly mileage.
- For this week's Long Run, make sure that you complete 12 miles—that's your target. Trust your body and go for it.

WEEK 4	<b>DAY 1</b> Monday/Tuesday	<b>DAY 2</b> Wednesday/Thursday	<b>DAY 3</b> Friday	<b>DAY 4</b> Saturday/Sunday	Estimated Weekly Mileage	
	EASY TIME ON FEET	QUALITY SESSION	EASY TIME ON FEET	LONG RUN	LOW	HIGH
	☐ 50 to 60 minutes	☐ 10 x 45-second hill sprints with 90-second recovery between each	☐ 40 to 45 minutes	☐ 12 to 14 miles	25	30

## » MINDSET PREP

Your power to complete marathons comes from your mind, not your legs. This week, identify an anchor to keep you steady. Think about what calms and motivates you. It could be the cadence of your feet hitting the ground or your elbows swinging front to back or your breathing in and out. Every time you feel yourself drift toward fatigue out on your runs, come back to your anchor.

## » NUTRITION TIPS

- As mileage increases this week, you might also feel more rushed to prep meals or think of more options to cook. Choose easy go-tos for you and your family that fit within your Performance Plate.
- Start taking your preferred fuel option (gels, chews, or gummies) more often. Aim for a fuel source every 30 minutes to help you get to 50 grams of carbohydrate minimum per hour for Long Run days.

## RECOVERY TIP

Rehydrate with chocolate milk after your Long Run. Chocolate milk has carbohydrates, high quality protein, and natural electrolytes, such as calcium, potassium, sodium, and magnesium to help replenish what your body loses in sweat.

## » TRAINING TIPS

- Keep getting in your Easy Runs, even if you're not always able to complete them. Consistency is key.
- This week's Quality Session encourages power and strength with hill repeats. These are an excellent opportunity to practice mental toughness. When it comes to form, shorten your stride, pump your arms, and increase your cadence to promote swift steps up the incline.
- Your Long Run is the most important this week, because you're tackling a new distance. Don't forget to hydrate, and use this run as a chance to practice your bathroom routine. Most of all, have fun with this!

# WEEK-BY-WEEK GUIDE

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WEEK 5	<b>DAY 1</b> Monday/Tuesday	<b>DAY 2</b> Wednesday/Thursday	<b>DAY 3</b> Friday	<b>DAY 4</b> Saturday/Sunday	Estimated Weekly Mileage	
	EASY TIME ON FEET	QUALITY SESSION	EASY TIME ON FEET	LONG RUN	LOW	HIGH
	☐ 60 to 70 minutes	☐ 10 x 2 minutes at 5K pace with 90-second recovery between each	☐ 50 to 55 minutes	☐ 14 to 16 miles	30	34.5

## » MINDSET PREP

Prioritize positive thinking as you enter your second month of training. Negative thoughts can hinder you from reaching your goals and bring you down physically and mentally, so start getting those around you—your family, colleagues, and friends—on Team You. Tell them what you're training for and why. Ask them to understand that you might need to prioritize training over their requests. Knowing that your loved ones have your back will alleviate outside anxieties.

## » NUTRITION TIPS

- Choose easy food items to cut down on prep time. Stock your kitchen with things like: frozen grilled chicken or meatballs, frozen grains and vegetables, boiled eggs, and instant oatmeal.
- For pre-Long Run dinners, incorporate meals that fit within your Performance Plate that won't cause stomach issues. Some ideas are:
  - > Pasta with marinara sauce, turkey meatballs, and low-fat cheese on top
  - > Baked potato with a dollop of low-fat sour cream, chicken, and green beans
  - > Salmon with a side of rice and asparagus
  - > A glass of dairy milk added to your meal is a great source of fuel.

## » TRAINING TIPS

- For your Easy Runs, scale back the effort and practice running at a slow and steady pace to ensure consistency.
- As your mileage builds and your legs begin to accumulate fatigue, shorter, speed-focused intervals, as done in your Quality Session, ensure your ability to achieve faster turnover and efficient speeds. This will help you find strength and speed on race day.
- Use your Long Run as an opportunity to develop a strong mindset and improve your confidence.

WEEK 6	<b>DAY 1</b> Monday/Tuesday	<b>DAY 2</b> Wednesday/Thursday	<b>DAY 3</b> Friday	<b>DAY 4</b> Saturday/Sunday	Estimated Weekly Mileage	
	EASY TIME ON FEET	QUALITY SESSION	EASY TIME ON FEET	LONG RUN	LOW	HIGH
	☐ 60 to 70 minutes	☐ 2 x 15 minutes at half MP with 2-minute recovery between each	☐ 50 to 55 minutes	☐ 14 to 16 miles	30	34.5

## » MINDSET PREP

Trust the process: This week marks the halfway point of your journey toward completing 26.2 miles. You're building up strength and stamina, and increasing your time-on-feet to run the full marathon. Focus on accomplishing each workout goal. Be proud of how far you've come. Use this week to free yourself from measurement and just be.

## » NUTRITION TIP

- You can easily assemble a Performance Plate by choosing one food from each category:
  - > Protein: turkey slices, tuna pouch, boiled eggs, edamame
  - > Starch/grain: tortilla wrap, pita pocket, bread slices, crackers, pretzels
  - > Dairy item: Greek yogurt, cheese stick, cottage cheese, glass of milk (white or chocolate)
  - > Fruit: apple slices, mandarin orange, grapes, fruit cup packed in water or juice
  - > Veggie: sugar snap peas, carrots, celery sticks, mini cucumbers
  - > Side: nut-butter packet, trail-mix packet, avocado cup, hummus cup

## RECOVERY TIP

Get into a recovery nutrition habit with chocolate milk. Research has found that drinking chocolate milk, with its mix of carbohydrates and protein, helps to increase the concentration of glycogen in the muscle. Glycogen fuels muscle contraction. This helps repair and build muscle, and reduce muscle breakdown so you can start running longer.

## TRY THIS POST-RUN SMOOTHIE:

Blend 1 cup chocolate milk, 1 banana, 1 tbsp. peanut butter, and ½ cup frozen cherries.

## » TRAINING TIP

This week's run gives you a chance to strengthen your confidence in your ability to run for a greater amount of time. Try a route similar to one you've done before and run without keeping an eye on your time or pace. This gives you a chance to settle in and keep a fierce mindset. Time to crush it!



# WEEK-BY-WEEK GUIDE

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WEEK 7	<b>DAY 1</b> Monday/Tuesday	<b>DAY 2</b> Wednesday/Thursday	<b>DAY 3</b> Friday	<b>DAY 4</b> Saturday/Sunday	Estimated Weekly Mileage	
	EASY TIME ON FEET	QUALITY SESSION	EASY TIME ON FEET	LONG RUN	LOW	HIGH
	☐ 70 to 80 minutes	☐ 35 minutes at a progressive tempo from MP to 10K pace	☐ 50 to 60 minutes	☐ 18 to 20 miles	35	40

## » MINDSET PREP

Now that your runs are longer, balancing them with life's responsibilities may get harder. Revisit your previous roadblock plans and identify any new barriers. This can help eliminate anything that may derail you from training and will enhance your overall confidence in running. Addressing distractions before they happen can help you maintain focus over time.

## » NUTRITION TIPS

- **Maintain your established nutrition routine:** pre-run snacks, hydration and fueling during your run, and post-run recovery snacks.
- **Add more protein to your days,** with whipped cottage cheese with pita chips and crunchy veggies (mini peppers, mini cucumbers, cherry tomatoes, or sugar snap peas). To prepare: Add a container of cottage cheese to a food processor and blend at low speed for 5 to 10 seconds. Serve with a drizzle of honey, your favorite veggies, and an 8-oz glass of white dairy milk on the side. Each 8-oz glass of dairy milk contains 8 grams of high quality protein.

## » TRAINING TIPS

- Your Easy Runs are about increasing weekly mileage without risking overuse or injury. Take it easy.
- Use the Quality Session to practice **patience** at the start and determination at the end. Visualize your effort level beginning at a 7 RPE and finishing at a 9.
- For your Long Run, settle into a **manageable pace**. Practice your race-day wardrobe, pre-race fuel, and hydration and fuel essentials. Complete the distance that makes sense for your current physical and schedule demands; celebrate this accomplishment.

WEEK 8	<b>DAY 1</b> Monday/Tuesday	<b>DAY 2</b> Wednesday/Thursday	<b>DAY 3</b> Friday	<b>DAY 4</b> Saturday/Sunday	Estimated Weekly Mileage	
	EASY TIME ON FEET	QUALITY SESSION	EASY TIME ON FEET	LONG RUN	LOW	HIGH
	☐ 70 to 80 minutes	☐ 5 x 5 minutes at 10K pace with 2-minute jog recovery between each	☐ 55 to 60 minutes	☐ 16 to 18 miles	33.5	38

## » MINDSET PREP

Going into week 8 like \_\_\_\_\_. We'll let you fill in the blank. How you feel is unique to your journey. Take a minute to reflect. You've shown up, week after week after week. You have put in the time, the effort, and the miles amidst balancing all the things.

## » NUTRITION TIP

- As your second month wraps up, use these strategies to fuel your recovery using chocolate milk:
  - > Add it to pancake mixes, smoothies, or overnight oats for a nutritious and delicious breakfast.
  - > Drink it with meals to fit more nutrition into your weekly training volume. You can easily get B vitamins, protein, calcium, vitamin D, vitamin A, zinc, and selenium to support your body as you prepare for next week.
  - > Hear your stomach growling? Add a glass to breakfast, lunch, or before bedtime.

## » TRAINING TIPS

- Take a second to make sure you aren't pushing through any aches or pains.
- The focus of your Quality Session is **speed and strength at the same time**. Practice shifting gears between aggressive paces and recovery jogs. This is an important workout to build stamina. Spend time stretching after your run to promote recovery.
- Use your Long Run to practice **consistency, efficiency, and a positive mindset**. You've seen these miles before, so celebrate how far you've come every step of the way.

# WEEK-BY-WEEK GUIDE

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WEEK 9	<b>DAY 1</b> Monday/Tuesday	<b>DAY 2</b> Wednesday/Thursday	<b>DAY 3</b> Friday	<b>DAY 4</b> Saturday/Sunday	Estimated Weekly Mileage	
	EASY TIME ON FEET	QUALITY SESSION	EASY TIME ON FEET	LONG RUN	LOW	HIGH
	☐ 80 to 90 minutes	☐ 40 minutes at MP on a hilly route	☐ 40 to 50 minutes	☐ 20 to 22 miles	38	43

## » MINDSET PREP

Positive vibes only. Surround yourself with a squad of support. This can look different for everyone. Whether it's a text from a friend or community at a group run, lean on the power of others who are like-minded individuals and share the same goals and values as you. This could be support at a water station or a running buddy on the Long Run, connecting with others to be an additional form of strength in your training.

## » NUTRITION TIPS

- Review your pantry, fridge, and freezer and restock anything you need before your peak week of training. Prep at least two proteins, like meatballs and a roasted chicken, to help you cover part of your meals this week.
- Before this week's Long Run, do a nutrition run-through that includes dinner the night before, the pre-run meal, and fueling during. Doing this will prepare you for race day: what you'll be eating, how you'll carry your fuel, and when you'll need to fuel.

## » TRAINING TIPS

- Remember to keep your pace at a low effort with no intensity on your Easy Runs.
- Your Quality Session will simulate your marathon. Find a running route that is comparable to your race terrain. Practice your physical strength and mental composure. Don't overly focus on the pace itself. Listen to your body and go by feel.
- It's your longest run. You've shown up for yourself and put in the work over the last nine weeks. This run is no different. Use this session to practice everything around race day, including the mental and physical strength you have been cultivating. Crush this run!

WEEK 10	<b>DAY 1</b> Monday/Tuesday	<b>DAY 2</b> Wednesday/Thursday	<b>DAY 3</b> Friday	<b>DAY 4</b> Saturday/Sunday	Estimated Weekly Mileage	
	EASY TIME ON FEET	QUALITY SESSION	EASY TIME ON FEET	LONG RUN	LOW	HIGH
	☐ 70 to 80 minutes	☐ 10 x 2 minutes at half MP with 1-minute jog recovery between each	☐ 40 to 50 minutes	☐ 14 to 16 miles	30	35

## » MINDSET PREP

With the decrease in miles, stay focused on smart training. You may find yourself getting excited about the quickly approaching race day, but keep steady and stay the course. Remember that a decrease in miles doesn't mean a decrease in effort. Continue showing up for yourself!

## » NUTRITION TIPS

- This is an important week for recovery. Don't forget to drink your chocolate milk, stick to your bedtime, and eat three meals and two snacks per day.
- Continue fueling this week, especially at dinner with Moderate Performance Plates. The included carbohydrates will help you refuel and get to race week healthy.
- Still hungry after dinner? A glass of chocolate or plain milk with a handful of fresh cherries will help you sleep and recover before your next training session.

### NUTRITION TIP

A glass of dairy milk can help with supporting your immune system at this important stage of your training. You want to avoid getting sick before your race day, and milk—chocolate or white—can help your body get vitamin A, vitamin D, zinc, and selenium, which all support our immune system during training.

## » TRAINING TIPS

- Your Quality Session is another chance to practice and familiarize your mind and body with your goal pace on race day. Practice settling into a consistent effort measured by feel.
- Your Long Run this week is 14 to 16 miles, depending on your energy levels, current fitness, and schedule demands. You have already conquered this distance, so consider this just another training run and a chance to practice positivity and optimism when faced with a challenge.



# WEEK-BY-WEEK GUIDE

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WEEK 11	<b>DAY 1</b> Monday/Tuesday	<b>DAY 2</b> Wednesday/Thursday	<b>DAY 3</b> Friday	<b>DAY 4</b> Saturday/Sunday	Estimated Weekly Mileage	
	<b>EASY TIME ON FEET</b>	<b>QUALITY SESSION</b>	<b>EASY TIME ON FEET</b>	<b>LONG RUN</b>	<b>LOW</b>	<b>HIGH</b>
	☐ 50 to 60 minutes	☐ 2 x 15 minutes at Marathon Peak Pace (MPP) = roughly MP-15 with 1-minute recovery between each	☐ 30 to 35 minutes	☐ 10 to 12 miles	<b>23</b>	<b>28</b>

## » MINDSET PREP

Limit your social-media consumption and try not to compare yourself to others. Prioritize the toolbox of capabilities and strengths you have worked so hard to create over the last 10 weeks. Start incorporating an early bedtime with less screen time to **protect your mental health and ensure a calm and strong peace of mind.**

## » NUTRITION TIPS

- **Reach for recovery-promoting sources of food** to help your body fully recover before race week. Foods like chocolate milk, Greek yogurt, salmon, cherries, lean sources of meat, and fluids help your body feel better faster and prevent bone-related injuries from popping up.
- Naturally, your appetite and hunger will adjust to running fewer miles this week, so don't worry too much about having cut back on your food.

## » TRAINING TIPS

- **Home stretch! Your Quality Session is the last big workout.** Practice physical strength and mental toughness during this run. Visualize success in this workout before you start and practice the mindset you want to have on race day. You got this!
- **This is your final Long Run before race day!** Head out for 10 to 12 comfortable miles so that your body holds on to the fitness you have built over the last 11 weeks.

## WELCOME TO RACE WEEK! YOU'VE MADE IT!

WEEK 12	<b>DAY 1</b> Monday/Tuesday	<b>DAY 2</b> Wednesday/Thursday	<b>DAY 3</b> Friday	<b>DAY 4</b> Saturday/Sunday	Estimated Weekly Mileage	
	<b>EASY TIME ON FEET</b>	<b>QUALITY SESSION</b>	<b>EASY TIME ON FEET</b>	<b>LONG RUN</b>	<b>LOW</b>	<b>HIGH</b>
	☐ 40 to 45 minutes	☐ 4 x 2 minutes at 10K pace with 90-second recovery between each	☐ 10 to 20 minutes	<b>RACE DAY!</b>	<b>34.2</b>	<b>37.2</b>

## » MINDSET PREP

**GOOD VIBES ONLY.** The work is done. You have crushed your training. Your mental focus this week is all about visualizing success on race day. Spend time meditating on that. Practice what you will do on race day and how you will feel when challenges arise. You are physically ready. You should feel that readiness mentally.

## » NUTRITION TIPS

- **Early in the week, plan your race nutrition.** This will help you make reservations (if needed) and figure out what items you need from the grocery store and what fuel you will need for race day.
- **Don't try anything new this week.** Avoid any new meals, supplements, foods, and fuel.
- **Three days before race day, eat your favorite Peak Week Performance Plate,** which should have ½ of the plate filled with simple carbs to reduce fiber that may cause stomach issues, ¼ of the plate filled with protein, and ¼ of the plate filled with fruits and vegetables. Emphasize carbohydrates to load so you store enough energy and glycogen for race day.
- **Remember to grab a chocolate milk at the finish line.** What you refuel with after a marathon is critical for recovery. Chocolate milk can help with ingesting high-quality protein to stimulate muscle repair and rebuilding as soon as possible with the needed electrolytes to replenish those lost in sweat.

## » TRAINING TIPS

- **Don't push the pace on your first Easy Run** of the week. It will feel easy. It should feel easy. Hold back the urge to run hard and fast. Save it for race day.
- **Your Quality Session is your final tune-up.** After an easy warmup, do your intervals at an 8.5 RPE effort with a 90-second walk between efforts. Don't skip the cooldown.
- **Use this week's second Easy Run as a pre-race shake-out,** testing out the legs while keeping the effort extremely manageable. Run for 10 to 20 minutes, depending on how you're feeling.



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**Let running challenge you.  
When things get difficult, take  
a deep breath, and let it be a  
moment that you prove your  
strength to yourself.”**

—JESS MOVOLD

“

**I am here.  
This is now.  
Everything I  
need is already  
within me.”**

—VANESSA-PERALTA  
MITCHELL

**26.2 RACE DAY:  
TIME TO  
CRUSH IT!**

**RUNNER'S WORLD** × **26.2** YOU'RE GONNA NEED MILK FOR THAT.