AN EXPERIENCED RUNNER'S GUIDE TO

HALF MARATHON TRAINING





















COACH

Nick Anderson

With over 25 years running experience, Nick is a graduate in Science & Management of Health & Fitness, a UKA level 4 endurance coach, a qualified nutritionist and sports therapy practitioner. Nick is currently an England Athletics flying coach & manages GB squads at events such as the World Half Marathon Championships.

Having coached hundreds of athletes from beginners through to Olympians, Nick is one of Europe's most highly respected coaches.

If you are interested in more personalised coaching, visit www.runningwithus.com

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WELCOME

RunningWithUs provide a wide range of coaching and consultancy services to runners, brands and charities. Having been coaching editors for both Runners World and Men's and Women's Running magazines, RunningWithUs coaches are in high demand as fitness experts and writers. We work with runners of all abilities from total beginners through to established GB internationals.

To run a fast half marathon you will need to be in top shape on race day. 13.1 miles is still a long way so endurance is the key. However, the right speed sessions need to be integrated into the plan and crucially these must be at the right time. Over the next 12 weeks, this training plan will work on your endurance but also develop pace and power through tough interval sessions.

HOW SHOULD EACH RUN FEEL?

There are a number of different paces that you should aim to master that will make up your training:

EASY/RECOVERY RUN:

Fully conversational at the speed of chat and about 6/10 effort

STEADY RUN:

Conversational, controlled but working at about 7/10 effort

THRESHOLD RUNNING:

Controlled discomfort, 3-4 word answer pace 8/10 effort

INTERVAL RUNNING:

5-10k - 9/10 effort and working hard

EACH RUN PACE IN DETAIL:

The feeling of not being sure how fast you should be running for any particular session is common from beginners to elite international athletes. For beginners, it never feels as though running is easy but we can assure you that running doesn't need to be hard all the time.

At the beginning, all you are trying to do is get out and run. That should be at **easy run** pace or 'the speed of chat' - if you can't talk as you are running, you're going too fast, simple as that. For the experienced runner, 'the speed of chat' is how easy and recovery runs should feel - totally in control, relaxed and slow enough to talk.

NB: If you are combining walking and running, the effort level remains the same - you should be able to hold a conversation on both the walking and running segments.

Faster than easy, conversational running is **steady running**. This is the backbone of training for more experienced runners. This is where you must be honest and not push too hard or you might ruin your faster sessions, **so conversation should be possible**, but a little strained.

Incorporating **threshold running** is how the elites train and you can train like this too. This is where you are running at a controlled discomfort level; you can still talk between breaths, **but only 3 or 4 word phrases** - this is not running to exhaustion or sprinting. You may already feel able to include some 3 minute blocks into a run each week which will grow in volume through your training.

Interval running and 3k / 5k / 10k pace is top-end training. This is often called the 'hurt locker' and is used in training to replicate the feeling at the end of a hard race. The effort levels here should be almost at maximum.



HOW HARD SHOULD I RUN?

Lets make it simple. Your heart and energy stores don't work to miles. They work to effort and time. So lets move away from tradition and work to time and effort. Don't worry about if you ran 7 miles or not on a run. If you went out to run 60 mins at an easy pace and the run felt easy and controlled, that's all that matters. It was a good run with objective achieved. If it felt hard you were running too fast or are tired for it to be an easy run.

We think you can base your effort on perceived exertion. We can also relate this to heart rate. Look at the perceived efforts shown:-

6/10 – (or 60% max heart rate) – **recovery running**. No more than 30-45 mins at a time with the objective of feeling better at the end, flushing the system through, working totally with oxygen and being able to chat easily at any time.

7/10 – (or 70% max heart rate) – This is **steady running**. It is probably the average pace of most runs and totally aerobic and conversational. This is only a little harder than recovery running.



7-8/10 – (or 70-80% max heart rate). This, for the more experienced, is near your marathon pace if you train well and are realistic. This is still conversational but probably only a shorter sentence at a time. Totally controlled but you need to focus and remind yourself in case you drift into a slower zone. This needs to be practiced in your weekly long runs with segments that increase in frequency and time length the nearer you get to marathon race day. See our plans for more info.

8-8.5/10 – (or 80-85% max heart rate). This is threshold running and the most important fitness element in your training. It is the key to better running economy and your best friend when building your aerobic base. You are working aerobically, but only just. Your conversation would be only 3-4 words long. It hurts but you are in control if you remain focused. Lose control and push to hard and this becomes destructive. We recommend this for all levels of runner each week.

8.5 & more – (+ 85% effort at max 'heart rate). This is often in the form of interval training or races at or quicker than 10k pace in effort. You will certainly work anaerobically in this zone. This type of training can be destructive and very tough. You will be able to hold little or no conversation and the body takes days to really recover. It can be the icing on the cake near the end of your plan in the last 4-6 weeks before you race.

We recommend this training only for the experienced athlete who is already very fit.



WEEK 1

MONDAY

Rest or 30-45 min recovery run and conditioning session

TUESDAY

5 min threshold run followed by 2 min recovery before 2 sets of 5 x 400m with 60 sec jog recovery between efforts

WEDNESDAY

45 min steady run

THURSDAY

Progression run: 10 min easy, 10 min steady, 10 min threshold

FRIDAY

Rest

SATURDAY

3 x 8 mins of continuous hills. Warm up and cool down well

SUNDAY

80 mins easy conversational pace

NUTRITION TIP:

Keep well hydrated with ZERO. a zero calorie electrolyte drink

WEEKLY PROGRESS







WEEK 2

MONDAY

Rest or 30-45 min recovery run and conditioning session

TUESDAY

AM: 30 min easy pace PM: 6 min threshold run followed by 2 min recovery before 2 sets of 5 x 400m with 45 sec jog recovery between efforts

WEDNESDAY

45 min steady run

THURSDAY

Progression run: 15 min easy, 15 min steady, 15 min threshold

FRIDAY

Rest

SATURDAY

3 x 10 mins of continuous hills. Warm up and cool down well

SUNDAY

90 mins all easy

NUTRITION TIP:

For runs longer than 60 minutes, take an EnergyGel or IsoGel with you for an instant energy boost

WEEKLY PROGRESS







WEEK 3

MONDAY

Rest or 30-45 min recovery run and conditioning session

TUESDAY

AM: 30 min easy pace PM: 6 min threshold run followed by 2 min recovery before 3 sets of 4 x 400m with 60 sec jog recovery between efforts

WEDNESDAY

45 min steady run

THURSDAY

60 min relaxed run

FRIDAY

45 min easy run or rest

SATURDAY

3 x 10 mins of continuous hills. Warm up and cool down well

SUNDAY

90 mins with last 15 @ Half Marathon pace if you feel good

NUTRITION TIP:

After a tough session drink 400ml Protein Recovery to repair your muscles

WEEKLY PROGRESS







WEEK 4

MONDAY

Rest & conditioning session

TUESDAY

45 min easy

WEDNESDAY

60 min steady run

THURSDAY

45 mins easy

FRIDAY

Rest

SATURDAY

45 mins run with middle 20-25 mins at threshold

SUNDAY

80 mins easy conversational pace

NUTRITION TIP:

If you're running after work and struggle with energy for training, have an EnergyBar 2 hours before your session

WEEKLY PROGRESS











WEEK 5

MONDAY

Rest or 30-45 min recovery run and conditioning session

TUESDAY

AM: 30 min easy pace PM: 10 min threshold, 4 x 3 mins @ 10k pace, 10 min threshold. 2 min recovery jog between sets

WEDNESDAY

60 min steady run

THURSDAY

45-60 mins easy

FRIDAY

Rest

SATURDAY

45 min recovery run

SUNDAY

1h 45 min with 3 x 12 mins @ Half Marathon pace built into the last 60 mins, 3-5 min easy run recovery inbetween

NUTRITION TIP:

During an easier week like this one, focus on good quality meals

WEEKLY PROGRESS







WEEK 6

MONDAY

Rest or 30-45 min recovery run and conditioning session

TUESDAY

AM: 40 min easy pace PM: 40 min steady

WEDNESDAY

60-70 min easy pace run

THURSDAY

AM: 30 min easy pace PM: 60 min progression run of 20 easy, 20 steady and 20 @ threshold pace

FRIDAY

Rest

SATURDAY

12 mins threshold followed by 4 x 3 mins at 5k pace. Finish with 12 mins threshold, 2 mins recovery jog between each effort

SUNDAY

80 - 90 mins easy conversational pace

NUTRITION TIP:

If you're taking gels on your run, use a gel belt to carry your gels

WEEKLY PROGRESS







WEEK 7

MONDAY

Rest or 30-45 min recovery run and conditioning session

TUESDAY

AM: 40 min easy pace PM: 6-8 x 800m: even numbers at threshold and odd numbers at 5k pace. 75 - 90 secs recovery jog between each efforts

WEDNESDAY

45-60 mins relaxed

THURSDAY

30-45 mins recovery run

FRIDAY

Rest

SATURDAY

30 mins easy pace

SUNDAY

Ideally 10k or shorter race day + 30 min easy run straight afterwards. If not racing run 90 minutes with the last 30 @ target half marathon pace. Good luck!

NUTRITION TIP:

Check out our race day nutrition auide on page 11. Practise this on your long run

WEEKLY PROGRESS







WEEK 8

MONDAY

45-60 min easy

TUESDAY

AM: 40 min easy pace

PM: 40 min steady

WEDNESDAY

60-70 min easy pace run with the last 15-20 min @ threshold

THURSDAY

AM: 40 min easy pace **PM**: Interval session of 5 x 1600/400: Run 1600m at HM pace then 60 seconds recovery followed by 400m at 5k pace. 90 secs recovery before the next set

FRIDAY

Rest or 30-45 min recovery run

SATURDAY

45-60 mins hilly run. Run easy on the flat but attack each hill hard

SUNDAY

2 hours with last 20 min @ threshold if you feel good

NUTRITION TIP:

Caffeine can help vou focus durina a tough training session

WEEKLY PROGRESS











WEEK 9

MONDAY

Rest or 30-45 min recovery run and conditioning session

TUESDAY

45 - 50 mins easy pace

WEDNESDAY

60 min steady run

THURSDAY

AM: 40 min easy pace PM: 45 min progression run of 15 min easy, 15 min steady and 15 min @ threshold

FRIDAY

Rest

SATURDAY

45 min recovery run

SUNDAY

90 minutes with 3 x 15 mins @ threshold built in. 5 min jog inbetween set

NUTRITION TIP:

Keep practising your race day nutrition strategy on long runs. You'll find it easier to follow on race day

WEEKLY PROGRESS







WEEK 10

MONDAY

Rest or 30-45 min recovery run and conditioning session

TUESDAY

AM: 30 min easy pace PM: 6 min threshold run followed by 2 min recovery before 3 sets of 4 x 400m with 60, 40 then 20 sec jog recovery between efforts,

WEDNESDAY

50 - 60 mins easy

THURSDAY

AM: 30 min easy pace PM: 30 min easy with strides (60-80m stride outs at a good pace focusing on good technique, job back recovery)

FRIDAY

Rest

SATURDAY

5k Park run or 45 mins with the last 5k fast. Add on an easy 20 - 30 min warm down afterwards

SUNDAY

2 hours with last 20 min @ threshold if you feel good

NUTRITION TIP:

Keep practising your race day nutrition strategy on long runs. You'll find it easier to follow on race day

WEEKLY PROGRESS







WEEK 11

MONDAY

Rest or 30 min recovery run and conditioning session

TUESDAY

AM: 40 min easy pace PM: 40 min steady

WEDNESDAY

45 min steady run

THURSDAY

30-45 mins recovery run

FRIDAY

Rest

SATURDAY

Threshold session of 5 x 5 mins with 90 sec jog recovery

SUNDAY

60 mins relaxed

NUTRITION TIP:

Keep practising your race day nutrition strategy on long runs. You'll find it easier to follow on race day

WEEKLY PROGRESS







WEEK 12

MONDAY

Rest or 30 min recovery run and easy conditioning session

TUESDAY

AM: 30 min easy pace **PM**: 30 mins to include 4 x 3 mins @ half marathon pace

WEDNESDAY

45 min relaxed

THURSDAY

30 min easy run

FRIDAY

Rest

SATURDAY

20-25 mins easy pace & stretch

SUNDAY

Half Marathon Good luck and enjoy!

NUTRITION TIP:

Carbo load in the days before the race. Read our race day nutrition guide for more info

WEEKLY PROGRESS









NOTES FOR BEGINNER PLAN

- Please do a 15 minute warm up and cool down before Threshold, Continuous Hills or Interval sessions
- If your are feeling OK you may wish to consider a 20-30 minute recovery run in the morning before any of the quality sessions above
- Always substitute cross training for running if you are injured, very sore or it is not safe to run

- Please add a Core conditioning, Pilates or Yoga classes once or twice a week if you have time
- Try to stretch every day for at least 10 mins
- Always eat within 20-30 mins of finishing a run
- Always train at your target pace, don't compromise or run too hard. Tiredness always catches up and take extra rest if required...



GLOSSARY

The Key Elements for Endurance Running:

Rest (R) – To help your body cope with the workload, rest is going to be as important a part of your training schedule as the running. Listen to your body and take heed of any warning signs. If you feel fatigued even before you've run a step, find yourself thinking up excuses not to run or start suffering a series of minor injuries; you probably need more time off. Taking enough rest allows physical and mental recovery and gives your body the time to adapt to your workload. Remember: on rest days, that is exactly what you should be doing!

Recovery Run (RR) – Training for endurance requires your body to work harder than it has ever done. To see improvement without breaking down, you'll need some recovery runs. These should be nice and easy and you should feel relaxed. Enjoy the scenery. You should be breathing easily and be capable of holding a conversation throughout the run. This will mean that you are running in the 60–65% range of your Maximum Heart Rate (MHR) and it should be no more than 45 minutes in duration. This allows your body to adapt to the training workload and therefore improve. It also helps with the removal of the waste products, which accumulate in your muscles after harder efforts.



GLOSSARY CONTINUED

Threshold Runs (THR) - After the long endurance runs, tempo runs are probably your most valuable workouts. You will find them slightly uncomfortable and they'll require concentration, but they are well worth the effort. As they're run at a controlled brisk pace, about 80-85% of your MHR, you'll only be capable of uttering a couple of words to your training partners. Tempo/ threshold runs improve your lactate threshold (the speed above which your body struggles to cope with the lactic acid created by burning energy without oxygen), your running efficiency and aerobic capacity (your body's ability to utilise oxygen). All this helps to improve your endurance performance.

Long Runs (LR) – Long runs are vital in your plan and key to racing well in long distance races from 5km – marathon. At first, concentrate on increasing the time on your feet rather than worrying about distance. Start off by heading out for at least an hour and run at 65% of MHR (conversational pace). Gradually this will build to 75% of WHR as you start to practice periods of marathon pace (MP) running. These runs

improve your muscular endurance and condition your body to burn fat as its primary fuel source. They also prepare you physically and mentally for the task ahead.

Continuous Hills/Kenyan Hills

(CH) – Hill running develops strength in your muscles and tendons without putting them under the type of stress they are exposed to during faster running. Run up a 5-10% gradient for 45-60 seconds at a steady-threshold effort. Turn immediately at the top and run down the hill at the same effort, then turn at the bottom and repeat without any recovery until the rep time ends. Like a tempo/threshold run, a hill session is time to concentrate, as you should be working at about 80–85% of MHR and be able to utter just a word or two.

Fartlek (F) – This is a Swedish term that literally means "speed play". It involves a number of bursts of effort over a variety of distances with a variable recovery. Originally the length of effort was based on the terrain, for example, pushing harder every time you came to a climb, no matter how long it was. But you can adapt it for your needs.

Interval Training (IT) – Intervals help to boost specific race pace speed and involve running timed efforts with a controlled recovery. The effort level is around 85–100% of MHR, depending on the duration of the event you are training for and the length and volume of intervals used. A typical example might be 6 x 3 minutes @ 5km race pace with a 90 second jog recovery.

Marathon Pace (MP) -

Understanding the pace you are able to run your marathon is very important. Pace judgment is crucial to running your best marathon.

Marathon Pace Practice, at about 75-80% of MHR, allows your body and mind to get used to what will be required on the big day, and builds endurance quickly.

Warming Up/Warmdown (WU) -

When you are going to do any faster running such as Hills, Threshold Runs, Intervals or a race, it is important to warm up gradually. A 10-15 minute jog lets your muscles warm up and improve their range of movement. It also allows your cardiovascular system to prepare. You should also jog easily for 10-15 mins after any hard work out. This reduces muscle soreness, flushes away lactic build up and will make

you feel better over the next few days.

Cross-Training (XT) – It is important that your training is balanced with some non-impact activities such as swimming, cycling, rowing, aerobics, etc, otherwise you are more likely to pick up an annoying injury that will set back your training. But more experienced runners should also add cross training to their regime. Endurance running, especially the marathon, requires whole bodyconditioning. To achieve this you should aim to work a variety of muscle groups and not just your legs. Remember, though, that you are a runner, so just be careful not to make the crosstraining, whether it is lifting weights, using an elliptical trainer or practicing Pilates, so intense that you are left too tired for your running.

HIGH5'S HALF MARATHON ADVANCED NUTRITION GUIDE

Nutrition is often overlooked for a half marathon. You will have put a lot into training, so why not put some effort into a basic nutritional plan that could make your next half the best ever?

CARBOHYDRATE

Carbohydrate is your high energy fuel. Depleting your reserves will mean that your performance drops towards the end of a longer event. You will have noticed this on longer runs. For a PB or to make your event more enjoyable, you should ensure that you 1) start your race with a full fuel tank by carbo-loading and 2) consume carbohydrate as you run to top up your carbohydrate stores.

Running coach Nick Anderson from Running With Us says: "I often used to run 64-65 minute half marathons and would take a couple of mouthfuls of gel at about 40 minutes to help with the final push, especially caffeine gels. For the recreational runner who is out on course for longer, gels will help make their run more enjoyable".

SIMPLE CARBO-LOADING

Carbo-loading can increase your body's store by 30% or more. Follow this three-step plan to make sure your fuel tank is full to the brim.

- 1. Reduce your mileage 4 to 5 days before your event.
- 2. Two days before your event, increase your carbohydrate intake to 10 grams per kg of body weight. For a 70kg runner that would be 700 grams each day. If that's too much, then try to get as close as you can to that amount.
- 3. Most runners often don't reach the required intake, as carbohydrate-rich foods are normally bulky. To avoid the bulk, drink 500ml of High5 EnergySource every 2 to 3 hours during the day and snack on 2 or 3 EnergyBars. This will provide around 350g of carbohydrate, your normal diet should provide the rest.

RACE DAY BREAKFAST:

Breakfast should be light and high in carbs. Cereals, toast and porridge are good options. Drink 500ml of EnergySource for additional carbs and to stay well hydrated. Take an EnergyBar with you to eat on the way to your race.

BEFORE THE START:

15 minutes before the start take two EnergyGel Plus sachets (with caffeine) and drink 200 to 300ml of water or ZERO.

DURING THE RACE:

Sub 1:20 runners: Take one EnergyGel Plus around the 45-minute mark.

1:20 plus runners: After 40 minutes, start taking EnergyGel Plus. Take another gel every 20 to 30 minutes throughout. Use a High5 GelBelt to carry your gels.



You can use IsoGel instead of EnergyGel depending on personal preference - they perform the same function. Practising using gel during longer training runs makes it easier to use on race day.

FLUIDS:

Your fluid needs will depend on how warm the weather is on race day and how much you sweat. Try to regularly take on water or on-course sports drinks, but if you use the on-course drink, take care not to consume too much additional carbohydrate from the sports drink. In very hot conditions you may need to take on additional electrolytes.

Individual ZERO tabs can be wrapped in Cling Film and carried on your run. Simply put the tab into the on-course water to make a refreshing electrolyte drink. ZERO does not contain carbohydrate.

AT THE FINISH:



Drink 400ml of Protein Recovery as soon as you finish. Eat a balanced meal one to two hours later.

CAFFEINE NOTE:

If you have any medical condition including high blood pressure, if you are pregnant, breast feeding or under 18 years of age, do not use caffeine If you are sensitive to caffeine and suffer any side effect, such as a higher than expected heart rate, discontinue use immediately. If you do not wish to use caffeine for any reason, simply follow the guidelines using gel without caffeine.

KEY PRODUCTS

ENERGYSOURCE (2:1 FRUCTOSE)



Advanced sports drink mix

- Caffeine free
- 2:1 fructose carbohydrate with key electrolytes
- Great light taste

ENERGYGEL



A smooth gel with a dash of real fruit juice for a light taste

- Proven in the World's toughest competitions
- 23g of carbohydrate
- EnergyGel (without Caffeine);
 EnergyGel Plus (with 30mg caffeine)

ISOGEL



23g carbohydrate gel that's more like a drink than a gel. Can be taken without water

- Smooth, light & not too sweet
- A dash of real juice flavours for a light refreshing taste
- Proven in the World's toughest competitions
- IsoGel (without caffeine);
 IsoGel Plus (with 30mg caffeine)



ENERGYBAR



The healthy snack for training and racing

- Simple and complex carbs
- Fruit & grain
- Provides one of your 5-A-Day
- Great for race day breakfast

ZERO



The Uk's leading zero cal electrolyte sports drink tab

- Contains electrolytes including sodium, magnesium & potassium
- Contains Vitamin C. Supporting a healthy immune system and contributing to the reduction of tiredness and fatigue
- Light & refreshing sports drink

PROTEIN RECOVERY



The ultimate post exercise drink mix with whey isolate

- The Pro's choice after exercise
- Contains the highest quality whey protein isolate
- Contains carbohydrate
- Mixes easily into water or milk

GREAT VALUE TRIAL PACK:

The High5 **Marathon Pack** provides you with enough sports nutrition for the full day of your marathon or half marathon and includes products for use before, during and after. It comes with a **FREE run bottle** and **3 FREE gels**.

This pack is intended to demonstrate what can be achieved using the latest generation nutrition products and a scientific strategy for your sport, distance and body weight, **and without the need to spend a lot of money!**

The pack is great value and contains an assortment of best-selling flavours. Available from all good running shops and online.







