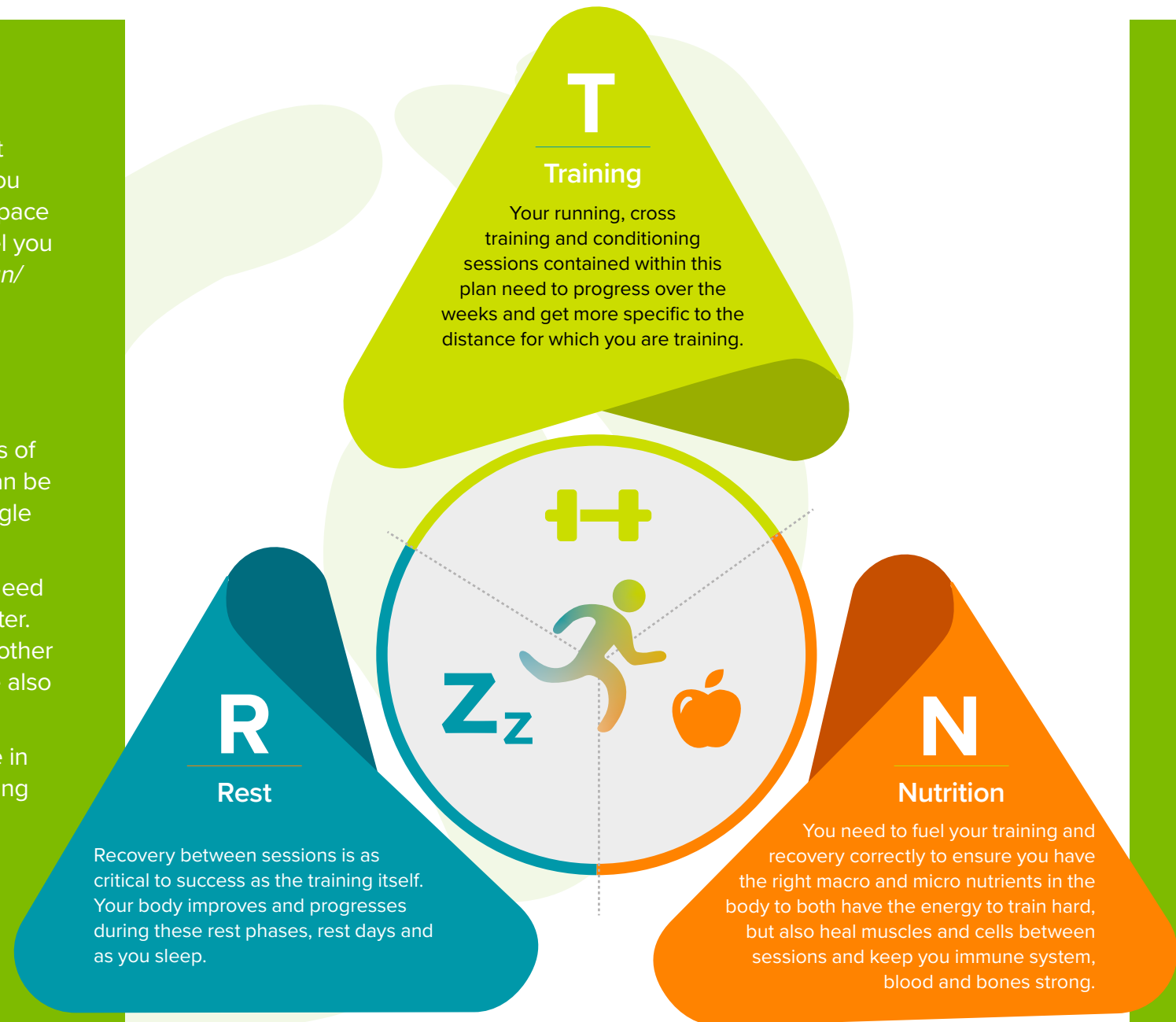# Marathon Beginners Training Plan

This plan

This beginner marathon plan is designed to get you ready to run your first marathon or first marathon after a long period out of running. You should be able to run continuously at an easy pace for 20minutes before you start. If you don't feel you are ready you can check out our *'Marathon Run/ Walk Training Plan'* and build up gradually.

Keeping it all in balance

Performance training, and developing your fitness can seem complicated at times with lots of information and conflicting advice. In truth it can be kept pretty simple. The key is the training triangle you see to the right.

Most of us think about training sessions as a 'need to do' in order to become stronger, fitter or faster. In reality you won't really make gains until the other two sides of the triangle, nutrition and rest, are also considered with equal focus and attention.

As you increase your training keep the triangle in balance by improving your nutrition and ensuring you listen to you body and respect its need to rest in order to improve.

T
Training

Your running, cross training and conditioning sessions contained within this plan need to progress over the weeks and get more specific to the distance for which you are training.

R
Rest

Recovery between sessions is as critical to success as the training itself. Your body improves and progresses during these rest phases, rest days and as you sleep.

N
Nutrition

You need to fuel your training and recovery correctly to ensure you have the right macro and micro nutrients in the body to both have the energy to train hard, but also heal muscles and cells between sessions and keep you immune system, blood and bones strong.

WEEK	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT	SUN
1	Rest	**Easy 20-30min run**	Core	**30min threshold run including** 3 x (5mins @threshold and 2mins jog/walk recovery)	Rest	**Easy 30min run, + core**	**45min long run with** 2 x (20mins @easy effort and 5mins walk recovery)
2	Rest	**Easy 20-30min run**	Core	**30min threshold run including** 3 x (5mins @threshold and 90s jog/walk recovery)	Rest	**Easy 30min run, + core**	**60min long run with** 2 x (25mins @easy effort and 5mins walk recovery)
3	Rest	**40min threshold run including** 3 x (5mins @threshold and 2mins jog recovery)	Core	**40min continuous hills** 2 x (8mins effort and 2mins jog recovery)	Rest	**Easy 30min run, + core**	**75min long run with** 3 x (5mins walking + Easy 20mins run)
4	Rest	**Easy 20min run** continuous running	Core	**30min progression run of** 10mins easy/ 10mins steady/ 10mins @threshold	Rest	**Parkrun** or self timed 5km time trial	**45-60min long run with** a short walking break after 30mins
5	Rest	**45min threshold run including** 4 x (5mins @threshold and 2mins jog recovery)	Core + optional 30-40mins easy cross training	**45min continuous hills** 3 x (7mins effort and 2mins jog recovery)	Rest	**Easy 30-40min run , + core**	**90min long run with** walking breaks for 5mins every 20mins if necessary
6	Rest	**45min threshold run including** 5 x (5mins @threshold and 2mins jog recovery)	Core + optional 30-40mins easy cross training	**50min continuous hills** 2 x (8mins effort and 2mins jog recovery)	Rest	**Easy 30-40min run, + core**	**1hr 45mins long run with** walking breaks for 5mins every 30mins if necessary
7	Rest	**45min threshold run including** 2 x (10mins @threshold and 3mins jog recovery)	Core + optional 30-40mins easy cross training	**50min continuous hills** 3 x (10mins effort and 2mins jog recovery)	Rest	**Easy 40min run, + core**	**Easy 2hr long run with** walking breaks for 5mins every 30mins if necessary
8	Rest	**50min threshold run including** 3 x (8mins @threshold and 2mins jog recovery)	Core + optional 30-40mins easy cross training	**45min run** with last 25mins picking up pace	Rest	**Easy 40min run, + core**	**Easy 2hrs 15min long run with** walking breaks for 5mins every 30mins if necessary

9	Rest	**30min progression run of** 10mins easy/ 10mins steady/ 10mins @threshold	Core + optional 30-40mins easy cross training	**Easy 30-40min run**	Rest	**Easy 20min run**	**Ideal day for a half marathon** or 2hr 30-45min run with last 60mins @planned marathon pace
10	Rest	**Easy 30-40min run**	Core + optional 30-40mins easy cross training	**60min Marathon pace practice** with last 40mins @target marathon pace (MP)	Rest	**Easy 40-50min run, + core**	**Easy 2hr 30mins long run with** walking breaks for 5mins every 30mins if necessary
11	Rest	**60min threshold run including** 3 x (10mins @threshold and 2mins jog recovery)	Core + optional 30-40mins easy cross training	**Easy 60-70mins** with last 25mins @threshold	Rest	**Easy 40-50min run, + core**	**Easy 2hr 45mins long run with** last 60mins @MP and walking breaks for 5mins every 30mins if necessary
12	Rest	**Easy 45-60min run**	Core + optional 30-40mins easy cross training	**70min threshold run including** 6 x (6mins @threshold and 90-120s brisk walk/jog recovery)	Rest	**Easy 40-50min run, + core**	**3hr 15mins long run** @steady pace with walking breaks for 30-40mins if needed. Practice race kit and fuelling
13	Rest	**40min threshold session of** 6 x (3 minutes with the odd nos @threshold effort and even nos @90s walk recovery)	Core + optional 30-40mins easy cross training	**70 min run** with the last 20-30mins @threshold	Rest	**Easy 40-50min run, + core**	**Easy 3hr 15-30min long run** with last 60-75mins @planned marathon pace (MP) walking breaks for 5mins every 30mins if necessary
14	Rest	**45min threshold session of** 8 x (3 minutes with the odd nos @threshold effort and even nos @90s walk recovery)	Core + optional 30-40mins easy cross training	**75 min run** with 45mins @planned marathon pace	Rest	**Easy 40-50min run, + core**	**2hrs long run** @easy effort, picking up pace with last 30mins @steady pace run
15	Rest	**40min threshold run including** 5, 4, 3, 2, 1min picking up the pace each block to a hard pace with 90s jog recovery	Core	**Easy 45min run**	Rest	**Parkrun** or 30min steady run, + core	**Easy 75min run**
16	Rest	**Easy 30min run with** 3 x (5mins @threshold and 3min jog recovery)	Rest	**Easy 25-30min run**	Rest	**Super easy 25min run!**	**Marathon Race Day! Good Luck!**

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 itself.

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.

Threshold Runs (THR)

After the long run threshold runs are probably your most valuable workouts. They are run at a controlled brisk pace, about 80–85% of your maximum heart rate (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 economy and aerobic capacity.

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 a conversational pace or 6/10 effort. Gradually this will build to 75% of maximum heart rate (MHR) as you start to practice periods of marathon or race pace running. These runs improve your muscular endurance and condition your body to burn fat as its primary fuel source.

Continuous 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 45-90seconds at a 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 maximum heart rate (MHR) and be able to utter just a few words.

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 your maximum heart rate (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 3minutes @5km race pace with a 90 second jog recovery.

Rac Pace (MP)

Understanding the pace and effort you intend on running your marathon at is very important. Pace judgment and patience on the big day will be crucial to running your best marathon. Marathon pace practice allows your body and mind to get used to what will be required on race day, and it builds endurance quickly.

Warming Up/Warm down (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 10-15minute jog lets your muscles warm up and improve their range of movement.

Cross-Training and core conditioning (XT)

It is important that your training is balanced with some non-impact activities such as swimming, cycling, rowing, the cross trainer etc, otherwise you are more likely to pick up an annoying injury that will set back your training.

More experienced runners should also add cross training to their regime. Endurance running, especially the marathon, requires whole body-conditioning. To achieve this you should aim to work a variety of muscle groups and not just your legs. Be careful not to make the cross-training, whether it is core conditioning, lifting weights, using an elliptical trainer or practicing pilates, so intense that you are left too tired for running.