

NOTFAST Running Club

How to train for a half marathon

(Notes from talk at club in April 2017)

These guidelines are intended for members running their first half marathon, or those who have run a couple and want to improve their times. It can (and should!) be adapted to what you feel comfortable with. The plan assumes that you can already run 10K.

The plan is based on two principles of why we need to train:

- To get our energy and muscular systems fitter, more efficient and more able to cope with the distance and required speed*
- To benefit our psychological systems, so that we can cope mentally with running a half marathon*

Golden rules:

- 1. Rest and recover well – this is when you will get fitter – **this is the key to improving, and includes easy activity / cross training, sleep, nutrition, stretching, massage and so on – all things that can reduce risk of injury and illness, and help maximise the impact of your training. If you are ill, injured or have other lifestyle factors that are preventing you from running, then more rest and recovery may be needed and this is fine!***
- 2. Give every run a reason – longer, faster or longer and faster – **make sure you know why you are doing each run***
- 3. Live by the talk test – run the easy, easy and the hard, hard – **see below***

The talk test (or how to pace yourself): *all 3 of these types of running are needed within each week and each block of 4 weeks*

Easy – run at a pace where you can talk in full sentences – these runs will help you run longer – *they are the base upon which all other running sits, and should make up around 80% of your training (80% within a week, 80% of a 4 week block and 80% of an overall plan)*

Tempo – run at a pace where you can speak just one or two words – these runs will help you run faster – *they get your heart, lungs and muscles working harder*

Steady – run at a pace where you can talk in short sentences – these runs will help you run faster for longer – *they bring your speed and distance together*

A typical week: based on 3 runs per week, but you could add a 4th if you wish. The days the runs are done on can be swapped around, but it's best not to run hard sessions on consecutive days, so avoid, for example, doing your long run on the day before or after a speed session

Monday:	Tuesday:	Wednesday:	Thursday:	Friday:	Saturday:	Sunday:
Rest	<p>Speed run or hill session: <i>this could be a club session</i></p> <p>6K: 1K @ easy pace 4 x 1K @ tempo pace 1K @ easy pace</p> <p><i>If you just want to get round the half marathon, you could make this a 6K run @easy pace</i></p>	Rest	<p>Other run:</p> <p>7K @ steady pace – <i>this could be a club session</i></p>	<p>Cross training: Swimming Pilates Yoga Cycling Strength training</p> <p><i>Anything that builds strength and helps improve / maintain your energy systems but is lower impact than running is good</i></p>	<p>Rest</p> <p>(or optional 5K @ easy pace)</p> <p><i>This could be parkrun but be careful! If you are a relatively new runner, doing a speed session every week and going for a parkrun PB every week may be too much, so think carefully how to fit it in</i></p>	<p>Long run: <i>this could be the club Sunday run</i></p> <p>14K @ easy pace</p>

Whichever run you are doing, but especially if you are doing a speed or hill session, it is a very good idea to get into the habit of warming up first and cooling down afterwards.

Club sessions may not match the sessions on the plan exactly but this does not matter too much, as the body will still be challenged in new ways to run faster and harder.

A typical 4 week block: *this has a variety of paces/types of running overall, with the 80% / 20% rule still applying, the total distance run each week increases by around 10%, and in the 4th week, the overall volume of training reduces to allow the body to recover from the previous 3 weeks training.*

Monday:	Tuesday:	Wednesday:	Thursday:	Friday:	Saturday:	Sunday:
Rest	Speed run or hill session: 6K: 2K @ easy pace 1K @ tempo pace 1K @ easy pace 1K @ tempo pace 1K @ easy pace	Rest	Other run: 6K @easy pace	Cross training:	Rest (or optional 5K @ easy pace)	Long run: 12K @ easy pace
Rest	Speed run or hill session: 6K: 2K @ easy pace 2K @ tempo pace 2K @ easy pace	Rest	Other run: 7K @easy pace	Cross training:	Rest (or optional 5K @ easy pace)	Long run: 14K @ easy pace
Rest	Speed run or hill session: 6K: 2K @ easy pace 3K @ tempo pace 1K @ easy pace	Rest	Other run: 7K @easy pace	Cross training:	Rest (or optional 5K @ easy pace)	Long run: 16K @ easy pace
Rest	Speed run or hill session: 4K: 1K @ easy pace 2K @ tempo pace 1K @ easy pace	Rest	Other run: 6K @easy pace	Cross training:	Rest	Long run: 12K @ easy pace

The 'long run' increases by no more than 10% each week. For those wanting to do more than 'just get round', including at least one 'over distance' run (of say 22 to 24K) will give a psychological and physical boost.

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