

HALF-MARATHON: FINISH IT

“A half-marathon is perfect for a busy mama: long enough to get into the meat of training, but not so long that the baby needs to be fed halfway into a training run.”

—KATE

Best for: Runners who want to tackle the anthem race for mother runners: a beautifully odd 13.1 miles.

Physical Prereq: The ability to comfortably finish a 6-mile run is preferred, as is experience in some shorter races. (If you don't have the former, build up to it and throw in a race or two while you do so.)

Plan Overview: This plan, a little short of four months long, will comfortably bring you up to half-marathon glory. Most of the runs are at an easy pace, making it perfect for a pair or group of women to take it on together: lots and lots of time to talk. Working your long runs up to race distance gets you ready mentally and physically prepped for the half challenge, but a range is given in later weeks to accommodate all levels (or if it seems overwhelming). From the start, the plan integrates short bits of intensity and start-slow-get-faster race strategy, kind of like how you try to “hide” shredded zucchini in spaghetti sauce.

HALF-MARATHON: Finish It							
Quick Key:							
 = Bail if necessary.		CD = Cool down		LR = Long run			
 = Bailing is not an option.		E = Easy		WU = Warm-up			
		H = Hills		XT = Crosstrain			
		I = Interval		Z = Zone (see page 118 for definitions)			
WEEK	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
1	 E: 3 miles E + 4 strides; or XT ²	E: 4-5 miles ³	XT; or rest ⁴	3-4 miles as 10 minute WU; I: 6 x 30 sec at Z4-5 w/1 min. recovery; 10 min CD ⁵	E: 3 miles; or XT	 ⁶ LR: 6 miles ⁷	Rest ⁸
2	Fun workout ⁹	E: 5 miles	XT; or rest	E: 4 miles	 E: 3 miles; or XT	 LR: 7 miles	Rest
3	 E: 3 miles + 4 strides; or XT	E: 6 miles	Rest	3 miles as 10 min WU; H: 4 x 45 sec in Z4-5; 10 min CD	E: 4 miles; or XT	 LR: 8 miles	Rest
4	Fun workout	E: 7 miles	XT; or rest	3 miles as 10 min WU; I: 6 x 1 min. in Z4 w/2 min recovery; 10 min CD	 E: 4 miles; or XT	 LR: 7 miles	Rest
5	E: 3 miles + 6 strides; or XT	E: 5 miles	XT; or rest	E: 3-5 miles	 E: 3 miles; or XT	 LR: 8 miles	Rest
6	 E: 3 miles + 6 strides; or XT	E: 6 miles	Rest	 3 miles as 10 min WU; H: 6 x 45 sec in Z4-5; 10 min CD	E: 3 miles; or XT	LR: 9 miles	Rest

HALF-MARATHON: Finish It <i>continued</i>							
7	Fun workout	E: 7 miles	XT; or rest	E: 5 miles	E: 4 miles; or XT	LR: 8 miles, 10 min. strong finish ¹⁰	Rest
8	E: 3 miles + 8 strides; or XT	E: 5 miles	XT; or rest	E: 4-6 miles	E: 3 miles; or XT	LR: 10 miles	Rest
9	E: 3 miles + 8 strides; or XT	E: 6 miles	Rest	3 miles as 10 min WU; H: 6 x 1 min. at Z4-5; 10 min CD	E: 4 miles; or XT	LR: 10-12 miles	Rest
10	Fun workout	E: 7 miles	XT; or rest	3-4 miles as 10 min WU; I: 8 x 1 min. in Z4-5 w/2 min recovery; 10 min CD	E: 3 miles; or XT	LR: 8 miles, 10 min. strong finish	Rest
11	E: 3 miles + 10 strides; or XT	E: 4 miles	E: 3 miles	E: 4-6 miles	XT; or rest	LR: 10 miles	Rest
12	E: 3 miles + 10 strides; or XT	E: 6 miles	Rest	E: 5-6 miles	E: 4 miles; or XT	LR: 11-13 miles	Rest
13	Fun workout	E: 4 miles	XT; or rest	3-4 miles as 10 min WU; I: 6 x 2 min. in Z 4 w/2 min. recovery; 10 min CD	E: 3 miles; or XT	LR: 8 miles	Rest
14	E: 3 miles + 6 strides; or XT	E: 3 miles	XT; or rest	E: 4 miles	E: 3 miles; or XT	LR: 6 miles	Rest
15	E: 3 miles + 6 strides; or XT	E: 3 miles, last 10 min. at RP	E: 2-3 miles	Rest	E: 30 min. + 3-4 strides	13.1! ¹¹	Bling! Sport your medal all day.

1 What it says:

What you do: If you need your usual running time to fill your empty fridge or take care of some other task, go for it.

More details: Once a week, we give you a get-out-of-jail-free card. No questions asked. Except maybe by your kids, who notice your low-endorphin mood: “Mom, why are you so crabby today?”

2 What it says: E: 3 miles + 4 strides; or XT

What you do: Pick your poison: a three-mile easy run, followed by four strides (short, steady pick-ups of pace); or a 30-60 minute crosstraining session. Whichever option you choose, keep it light to moderate in effort.

More details: To do a stride, find flat pavement or grass. Keeping your limbs relaxed, run as fast as you can for about 100 meters or 30 seconds. The idea is to teach your muscles to run fast without taxing your cardiovascular system too much. Take as much time as you need between strides.

3 What it says: E: 4-5 miles
What you do: Knock off 4 to 5 miles, preferably with a friend so you can catch up.

4 What it says: XT; or rest
What you do: Flip a coin. Heads: hit the elliptical. Tails: hit the pillow. (Or feel free to listen to your body.)

5 What it says: 3-4 miles as 10 minute WU; I: 6 x 30 sec at Z4-5 w/1 min. recovery; 10 min CD
What you do: Wake up your engine and legs for 10 minutes, then gun it as fast as you can for 30 seconds. Slow down significantly or walk for a minute; do six total of those suckers. Cool down your engine for 10 minutes. Expect to go between three and four miles.
More details: The mileage is simply a guide, so no need to run around your block one more time to reach three miles.

6 What it says: 
What you do: Reschedule your week, hire a babysitter, get up at 5 a.m. Whatever you need to do to get this workout done.
More details: There's a weekly session that simply *must* be done in order to ensure success. There is, unlike what we do with our children on an almost hourly basis, no negotiating.

7 What it says: LR: 6-7 miles
What you do: Tick off six to seven miles.
More details: If you're dragging, aim for six. Motoring? You've got seven, friend.

8 What it says: Rest
What you do: Take the day off, or we'll throw some other (less gentle) four-letter words your way.

9 What it says: Fun workout
What you do: Turn to page 116, close your eyes, swipe your finger across the page, and see what fun you're in for today!

10 What it says: LR: 8 miles, 10 min. strong finish
What you do: At the end of your 12-mile run, pretend your kids are chasing you for 10 minutes.

11 What it says: 13.1!
What you do: No sleep till you've got a medal around your neck. Or should we say until your kid does? They always steal them, right?