

20-Week Half Marathon Training Schedule

For some runners, the prospect of preparing to run a half marathon in three months is a bit daunting, so we've prepared this five-month training plan to offer a more gradual buildup to race day – both physical and mental – than our 12-week beginner and 16-week intermediate training plans offer.

This plan starts slowly with four days of running each week over the first six weeks, later transitioning to five days of running each week as the calendar proceeds further into the training:

20-Week Training Plan							
Week	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
1	off	3 miles	off	3 miles	off	4 miles	3 miles
2	off	3 miles	off	3 miles	off	4 miles	3 miles
3	off	4 miles	off	4 miles	off	5 miles	3 miles
4	off	4 miles	off	4 miles	off	5 miles	3 miles
5	off	5 miles	off	5 miles	off	6 miles	2-3 miles
6	off	5 miles	off	5 miles	off	6 miles	2-3 miles
7	off	3 miles	5 miles	3 miles	off	7 miles	2-3 miles
8	off	3 miles	5 miles	3 miles	off	7 miles	2-3 miles
9	off	4 miles	5 miles	4 miles	off	8 miles	2-3 miles
10	off	4 miles	5 miles	4 miles	off	8 miles	2-3 miles
11	off	4 miles	6 miles	4 miles	off	9 miles	2 miles
12	off	4 miles	6 miles	4 miles	off	9 miles	2 miles
13	off	5 miles	6 miles	5 miles	off	10 miles	2 miles
14	off	5 miles	6 miles	5 miles	off	10 miles	2 miles
15	off	5 miles	6 miles	4 miles	off	11 miles	2 miles
16	off	5 miles	6 miles	4 miles	off	11 miles	2 miles
17	off	4 miles	6 miles	4 miles	off	12 miles	off
18	off	4 miles	6 miles	4 miles	off	12 miles	off
19	off	4 miles	5 miles	4 miles	off	6 miles	off
20	off	4-5 miles	off	4-5 miles	off	13.1 miles!	off

For Beginning & Experienced Runners

Because this training plan spreads out the weekly and long runs over five months, it can be used by runners who are attempting their first half marathon as well as by someone who's run several halves already and wants a structured approach to their training.

The plan is designed to gradually ease the runner into the process with light, easy runs in the opening weeks, followed by longer, more demanding runs in the middle and later weeks, to help build your fitness level.

Slow Mileage Escalation

The 20-week plan is designed to escalate the mileage you'll run each week more slowly than the other two plans, by bumping up the mileage one week and repeating it the next, and then bumping it up again the following week, and so on.

This will help you develop both the physical stamina and the mental confidence that you'll be able to complete 13.1 miles by showing you, very slowly (which is designed to [prevent injury](#)), that you really can do it – the mileage doesn't increase dramatically from week to week, we just add one mile onto the weekly long runs each week.

Remember also to get plenty of rest on the days you don't run, or consider cross-training such as strength exercises, to give your legs ample time to rest and replenish, especially after your long runs.

Time Your Long Runs With Your Race

The schedule above places the weekly long run on Saturday, followed by a usually much shorter quick run (or walk) on Sunday. Feel free to swap these if the race you've signed up for falls on a Sunday; I've always found that it's best to do your long runs on the day you'll actually run your race, to allow your body to get used to the rhythm of the short run/long run each week.