

16-Week Half Marathon Training Schedule

If you've ever found it difficult to stick to an intensive training plan for a race, don't worry, you're not alone. For nearly all runners who have jobs to go to and families to take care of – which of course means nearly all runners – it can be next to impossible to adhere to a training plan that requires you to run multiple days each week, many weeks and months in a row.

That's why we've developed this 16-week training plan specifically for intermediate level runners and people whose schedules don't allow for running five days a week – a variation on our 12-week training plan for beginners, with an additional day off during the week:

16-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	5 miles	3 miles
3	off	4 miles	off	4 miles	off	6 miles	3 miles
4	off	4 miles	off	4 miles	off	6 miles	3 miles
5	off	5 miles	off	5 miles	off	7 miles	2-3 miles
6	off	5 miles	off	5 miles	off	7 miles	2-3 miles
7	off	6 miles	off	4 miles	off	8 miles	2-3 miles
8	off	6 miles	off	4 miles	off	8 miles	2-3 miles
9	off	5-6 miles	off	4-5 miles	off	9 miles	2-3 miles
10	off	5-6 miles	off	4-5 miles	off	9 miles	2-3 miles
11	off	6 miles	off	5 miles	off	10 miles	2 miles
12	off	6 miles	off	5 miles	off	10 miles	2 miles
13	off	5-6 miles	off	4-5 miles	off	11 miles	2 miles
14	off	5-6 miles	off	4-5 miles	off	12 miles	2 miles
15	off	5-6 miles	off	4-5 miles	off	6 miles	3 miles
16	off	4-5 miles	off	4-5 miles	off	13.1 miles!	off

Staying Injury-Free to Race Day

Note also that this training program is spread out over 16 weeks rather than 12 weeks, to give your muscles more time to get ready. Because you'll be running fewer days each week with this training plan, we recommend giving yourself more time to get ready for the race, to allow both your body and your mind to prepare for running 13.1 miles.

Consider cross-training on the days you don't run – anything from strength training to walking a few miles, which will provide the cardiovascular benefits without the pounding impact that running can cause.

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 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 be running your race, to allow your body to get used to the rhythm of the short run/long run each week.

(Also feel free to move around the mid-week runs as your schedule demands – just make sure you get in two runs of 30 to 60 minutes each in the middle of the week before your long run each weekend.)