

## Our best training "secret" to making the half marathon a piece of cake!



*Half marathon is the fastest growing race distance in America.*

*Here are some ways to get started.*

Lincoln is once again holding their annual marathon May 3rd. In recent years, the half marathon has become America's fastest-growing race distance, as the number of 13.1-mile races has swelled along with the number of participants.

Why the half? For many runners, setting a 13.1-mile goal whether it's covering the distance for the first time or setting a new personal best is a manageable challenge, offering nearly all the elation involved with finishing a marathon without the wear and tear of going (and training for) twice the distance. Plus, you can bounce back quickly enough, so doing more than one or two a year isn't an

unreasonable undertaking.

This year, whether you're running your first half marathon or your 15th, make the most of your 13.1-mile experience from sign-up to finish line with these top tips.

### **1. Run for a reason**

Training for (and competing in) a long race can be an arduous endeavor, even if you already have a few of them under your belt. Regardless of whether you're a total newbie or a seasoned road warrior, ask yourself one simple question: "Why am I doing this?" The answer to that question gives purpose to your chosen pursuit and will serve as your primary motivation throughout the training cycle as well as on race day.

We all have our own reasons for lacing up our running shoes, from trying something new and dropping a few pounds to running in memory of a loved one, raising money for a cause or setting a personal best. The list is endless.

Whatever your reason or reasons for running, remind yourself of them regularly and never lose sight of what crossing that finish line means to you.

### **2. Train for at least 13 weeks**

While it may seem a bit novel to allow yourself one week of training for every mile of the race, 13 weeks is long enough period of time to safely build up your long run, weekly mileage and key workouts, but not so long that you lose motivation and get stale with your training. For beginners whose longest run might only be 4 or 5 miles at the start, adding as little as a mile to your weekly long run will put you in a position to confidently cover the distance on race day. If you're an experienced runner and covering the distance isn't of concern, a 13-week training block chock full of gradually increasing mileage and challenging race-specific workouts can put you in a good position to go after a new personal best. Once you're in shape to run a half, you can shorten your training program to about 10 weeks for your next one.

### **3. Buy two pairs of shoes**

The miles will add up over the course of three months of half-marathon training, and one pair of shoes likely won't be enough to handle the entire load. Having two fresh pairs of shoes on hand when you start your training helps extend

the life of each pair by giving them ample recovery time between workouts. Just as your body needs to recover after a long run or key workout, so do your kicks. Recent studies suggest that alternating between a couple different pairs of shoes in training can decrease running-related injury risk by varying the load to your musculoskeletal system. Buying two pair of shoes can be an expensive outlay in cash, but the return on your investment can be extraordinary. Consider it an investment in your health and your ultimate race goals for the year.

#### 4. Recruit a training partner

Don't go at it alone training is better with a buddy. A training partner can keep you excited and accountable when the miles rise, workouts get more challenging or if motivation starts to dip. They'll also be there to share every experience, celebrate with you on race day and swap epic stories afterward. It can be very tempting to stay in bed and skip a cold morning run if you're running by yourself, but knowing that you're meeting someone else to put in the work with you can be the catalyst that gets you up and out the door. If you're looking to improve your time, find a training partner who is quicker than you and let them push you to become a faster runner.

Three months out from your big race can seem like an eternity, so give yourself intermediate goals along the way to stay hungry and check your progress. Scheduling a 5K three to four weeks into training and a 10K three to four weeks before your half marathon will keep you motivated and provide a nice boost to your fitness while also serving as an indicator as to how well your training is coming along. These tune-up races also provide the opportunity to practice your race-day routine prior to your half marathon, which is perfect for newer runners, who can oftentimes be caught off guard by the chaotic, nerve-racking nature of a bigger event.

**If you would like to learn the best training techniques specifically for you then sign up for our FREE Stride Clinic on April 18. Go to [pearsonpt.com](http://pearsonpt.com) and click on the Stride tab for more information.**

# Pearson PHYSICAL THERAPY Stride Clinic

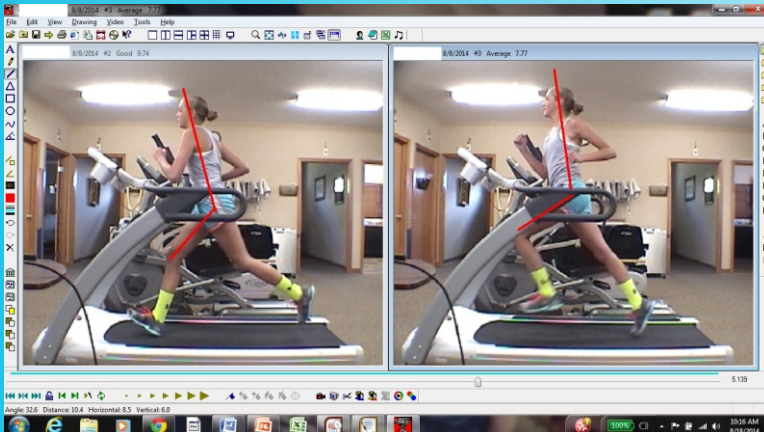


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