

# MARATHON TRAINING GUIDE



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# WELCOME TO YOUR MARATHON

Finishing a marathon is something that only 1% of the population have achieved.

For some, it's just another challenge. For others- it's their Everest

It's 26.2 miles of self discovery, self belief and self worth.

From the high achieving athlete, to those who simply want to tick the marathon off their "bucket list," training for a marathon presents many physical and mental challenges.

Your body is your temple and when you subject it to the rigours of long distance running, you have to make sure your physical and nutritional preparation is carefully planned.

If you cut corners or fail to respect the demands of the training, the pillars of that temple will start to crumble pretty fast.

Here's the proof.

Take a look at the table below, with details of the 2015 Virgin London Marathon:



Number of runners accepted	(Approx) number of runners started	Number of runners finished
50,000	38,000	37,675

Over 30% of the runners who sign up for the London Marathon don't even make the start line - yet only 1% of those who do start fail to finish. Now there's a stat.

So why do so many fail to make it through the training?

Poor nutritional and physical preparation resulting in injury are to blame in the overwhelming majority of cases.

**Don't be a statistic.** Your first goal is to make the start line - then you can dream of your ultimate goal of smashing out a PB.

**This guide is here to help you achieve that dream. Let's do it together.**

# GEAR UP - APPAREL

Although it's well documented that tribes in the lost valleys of Mexico can up sticks and run double marathons in nothing more than a loin cloth, it's regarded as standard etiquette in the UK to wear appropriate running apparel and shoes when training and racing.

The question as to what is essential and what is supplementary is often up for debate but the following list are items that every serious marathon runner should have in their wardrobe.

## Running tights

Seamless, moisture wicking, lightweight and incredibly comfortable, running tights are a must for winter / autumn training. Cotton tracksuit trousers should **never** be worn.

## Running top

You should have at least 3 or 4 different types of running top:

- **Base layer** - Ideal to wear as a "second skin" in cold conditions, a base layer will take sweat away from the body and avoid chaffing.
- **Semi fitted tops** - Standard for cool conditions, a semi-fitted top will keep you warm as well as manage moisture by taking it away from the body.
- **Waterproof** - You can't train for a marathon in the UK and not experience heavy rain at some point when out training. These are often wind-proof as well and useful for all seasons.
- **T-shirt / vest** - In warmer conditions, wear a T-shirt or vest top to keep you cool. Avoid cotton tops at all costs and choose a performance material, which manages moisture and odour control.

## Running bra

Often overlooked, a good quality running bra for women is essential. If possible, it's advisable to get professionally fitted. A sports bra is as important, if not more so, than your shoes.

## Heart rate monitor

If you are serious about your training and want the best chance to fulfil your potential, training and racing with a heart rate monitor is strongly recommended.

Training **quality** is far more important than training **quantity** and that's just what a heart rate monitor will help you achieve.



# GEAR UP - SHOES

Injuries are part and parcel of any sport, but running has a reputation for inflicting more than it's fair share of niggles on its participants.

Although any number of biomechanical reasons can be to blame for injuries, wearing the wrong running shoes for your "gait" is a key contributor to easily preventable injuries.

## Which shoe is right for you?

No matter if your goal is to run a sub 3 hour marathon or break under 5 hours, every runner should invest some time in choosing the right shoe.

When choosing, follow these three simple rules:

- 1. Avoid cheap shoes** - Like many things in life, you get what you pay for. Cheap shoes mean poor quality - they won't last as long and won't support your feet as well as they should. Likely outcome - injury.
- 2. Seek advice** - If you are buying the first pair of running shoes for several years, go to a specialist running store and seek advice from an expert. This advice is free and following a "gait analysis," you can guarantee they'll find the most suitable shoes for you and your specific running gait.
- 3. Quality brand** - Different brands of running shoes offer very different products, so choose a brand which specialise in running.



**! Your choice of running shoe can mean the difference between  
■ injury free running and regular trips to the physio.**

# STRETCHING



# THE RUNNING MUSCLES



# PREPARING FOR A RUN

Run preparation is an area many runners either neglect, or fail to do properly. This may not be a big deal for recreational runners with no specific goal, but it's criminal if you're training for a marathon.

Stretching and warm up protocols vary from one person to another but it's important that before every training run you follow these three steps:

## Mobilise

Particularly important for early morning training, mobilising the joints before activity is essential.

Moving joints through a progressive range of movement (ROM) encourages the secretion of synovial fluid, which act like a lubricating oil for your joints. Focus on ankle, knee and hip movement in particular.

## Warm up

Encouraging blood flow to the muscles is the next step after joint mobilisation and vital to do before you begin stretching.

Muscles are far more pliable when warm and filled with blood. This makes them more responsive and far safer to stretch without risking injury. A brisk walk or very light jog for 5 minutes is the ideal intensity and time to encourage blood flow.

## Stretch

Once mobilised and warmed up, only then can you begin stretching. Every runner has very different stretching needs, so it's important to focus on the muscles that you feel are especially tight.







The stretches on the next few pages focus on the key stretches that every runners should base their stretching regime around and although there may well be others you need to do, the following **STATIC** and **DYNAMIC** stretches are fundamental to any runner.









**STATIC STRETCHING** - Best performed post run and in-between sessions. Static stretches also be the first stretch you do after you have mobilised and warmed up.

**DYNAMIC STRETCHING** - An excellent, progressive stretch to perform before a training run. It raises heart rate, blood flow to muscles and stimulates the nervous system.



Muscle	Static Stretch	Dynamic stretch - Start	Dynamic stretch - Finish	Description	Injuries Prevented
Quadriceps				<p>10-15 secs</p> <p>At a good tempo, kick your glutes with your heels - repeat.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Thigh strain</li> <li>• Hip injury</li> <li>• Knee injury</li> </ul>
Hamstrings				<p>20-30 secs</p> <p>Swing leg back and forwards in a pendulum motion - repeat.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hamstring strain</li> <li>• Back pain</li> <li>• Knee injury</li> </ul>

Muscle	Static stretch	Dynamic stretch - Start	Dynamic stretch - Finish	Description	Injuries Prevented
Inner Thigh (Groin)				10-15 secs  Swing leg across the body in a pendulum motion - repeat.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Groin strain</li> <li>Some knee injuries</li> </ul>
Calves				20-30 secs  Raise right heel off floor, then the left in quick succession - repeat.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hamstring strain</li> <li>Back pain</li> <li>Knee injury.</li> </ul>

Muscle	Static stretch	Dynamic stretch - Start	Dynamic stretch - Finish	Description	Injuries Prevented
Hip Flexors				<p>10-15 secs</p> <p>Raise right heel off floor, then the left in quick succession - repeat.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Back Injury</li> <li>• Hip injury</li> <li>• I.T.B injury</li> </ul>
Glutes				<p>20-30 secs</p> <p>Same as dynamic hamstring stretch.</p> <p>For additional glute stretch - lead with knee and drive upwards.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pulled muscle</li> <li>• Back pain / injury</li> </ul>

# THE TRAINING



## GETTING DOWN TO BUSINESS

Now it's time to get serious.

All that's left now is to get some serious miles in your legs, heart and lungs and condition them to tolerate a 26.2 mile race.

Whatever your goal for the marathon, there are three golden rules you should adhere to ensure you give yourself the best chance of starting, finishing and achieving your marathon dream.

Remember - RUN

### R – Rest and recovery

These are two of the most under-rated aspects of training. Training breaks your body down and it's during the rest and recovery time that your heart and muscles adapt to that stress and make you fitter. **DO NOT** forget to rest and recover after hard training. (Nutrition is an integral part of this, which is covered in more depth later)

### U – Understand your limits

When it comes to endurance running, there are many things which are beyond your control. Your “genetic potential” being one of them.

We are all different, so if you are finding that you can't hit the splits you had hoped for, despite quality training, accept that you may have reached the limit of your genetic potential. Trying to push yourself too hard and beyond those limits is not only futile, but likely to result in injury.

### N – Never run on an injury

As tempting as it might be to try and ignore a muscle or tendon niggle, you are likely to make it far worse by running on it and possibly end up missing weeks of training. Injuries ruin runner's dreams every year, so please don't be a statistic – get your injury seen to. Including “Cross Training” (such as cycling and swimming) into your weekly training plan can not only help reduce the risk of injury, but also help to keep you training if / when you get injured.



**It's strongly recommended you get your blood pressure checked by your G.P before you begin training. NEVER ignore symptoms of a tight chest, dizziness, or ill health - even if you are in good shape.**

# TRAINING INTENSITY

Knowing how hard to push yourself during training is one of the hardest things to do when training for a marathon, especially if you have been successful in other sporting disciplines.

Your weekly training regime is a tricky balance between the slow / steady sessions to help build endurance - and higher intensity sessions to increase your resistance to fatigue and increase your threshold.

The question is how hard should you push?

## Too easy

Although slow and steady sessions are an important part of training, if performed too frequently, low intensity sessions can lead to a training plateau.

By not running far enough or running too slowly, particularly during interval or tempo sessions, then you will not stimulate the body sufficiently to adapt to training.



## Too hard

If you push yourself too hard, either by running too fast, too often or too far, then you are at risk of overloading the body and over stressing it. Pushing yourself too hard can result in injury and is a common reason for muscle and tendon overload in marathon runners.

In addition, excessively hard training sessions can lead to extensive “delayed onset muscle soreness” (DOMS) for a few days after training. Although this is seen as a “good sign” in some sports, in marathon training it is not desirable. Excessive DOMS can mean enforced time off training, leading to missed sessions and ultimately a net fitness loss.

So, how do you gauge what intensity you should train at?

## Know your “R.P.E”

**A heart rate monitor is an excellent, cost effective way to ensure you are training at the right intensity. If you don't own one or need a “back-up” guide, then spend a few minutes looking at the next page and get familiar with your**

**“RATE OF PERCEIVED EXERTION”**

# RATE OF PERCEIVED EXERTION

The “rate of perceived exertion” scale is an excellent scale to help you gauge the intensity of your training sessions. Although some versions show the scale from **1-20**, this simpler version helps you rate your effort on a scale of **1-10**.

Approximate heart rate percentages are also suggested if you also like to train with a heart rate monitor. **(Max HR = 220 - your age [for men] OR 226 - your age [for women])\***

R.P.E. SCALE	HOW YOU FEEL	% HR MAX
1	Chilling. Sitting down, feet up watching a movie.	30-40%
2	A walk to the shops to get more popcorn.	45-55%
3	A light jog.	60-70%
4	A perfect sociable pace. Quicker than a jog but able to have a chat.	70-75%
5	Pretty comfortable. Got a good sweat on and you feel great.	75-80%
6	Comfortable -ish. You feel like it's good paced run.	80-85%
7	Talking getting difficult. Possible - but not very easy.	85-90%
8	Only short answers to important questions possible.	90-95%
9	Talking all but impossible.	95%+
10	Talking is impossible. You can only keep this intensity up for 10-15 seconds or so.	N/A

\* Approximate method to work out HR Max - true HR max vary significantly from runner to runner.

## Steady paced run (R.P.E 3-5 or 70-80% HRmax)

A steady pace is just that.

A pace which you feel is steady and one which you can maintain for a long time.



Steady paced runs will form a large part of your training. This is the pace you should stick to for all of your long weekend runs, as well as a good chunk of your mid-week runs too. It helps build endurance and encourages the nervous and muscular systems to tolerate long distance running

There is no precise pace which can be labelled a “steady run”, as everyone is different, but if you feel comfortable and are able to hold a conversation with someone at this pace without having to gasp for air every other word, then you’re pretty much spot on.

As you get fitter, you’ll find that not only will your “steady pace” get faster but you’ll also be able maintain that pace for longer without fatigue.

## Tempo paced run (RPE 5-7 or 80-85% HRmax)

A tempo run is a pace which is a notch or two quicker than a steady pace. At this intensity, talking is just about possible but you should only be able to manage “short-ish” sentences before needing to take a breath.

The length of time that you are able to maintain a tempo paced run varies depending on your fitness level.

Beginners may initially find that a one or two mile tempo run is tough going but a conditioned runner may be able to maintain tempo pace for a good eight miles and beyond. As your fitness levels improve, you will find that tempo runs gradually become easier to maintain for longer periods.

Tempo sessions are excellent at increasing your tolerance to fatigue and should feature at least once a week in your training schedule.





## Fartlek (RPE 6-8 or 85-90+% HRmax)

Fartlek training is brilliant but often under used by marathon runners.

It is based on a steady paced run but interspersed with periods of faster running at random times of your choice.

Use visual landmarks such as lamp-posts, park benches and street corners to increase your pace, then ease back when you reach them. They could be as little as 100m away or up to 1km+ away.

Vary the distance / time of the fast paced sections of these sessions to mix up the training stimulus and keep you interested. Suggested times for fast sections can vary from 30 secs at RPE 8-9 to 5 mins at RPE 6-8.



## Intervals (RPE 7-9 or 85+% HRmax)

Intervals are very similar to fartlek training. The key difference between them is that they are far more structured.

Interval sessions are excellent at increasing your threshold, thereby teaching the body to tolerate running at faster speeds.

Examples of marathon training interval sessions:

Distance / Time	Number of Intervals	Rest between intervals	RPE	% of Max HR
1 mile	3-5	5-3 mins	6-8	80-90
5 minutes	4-8	1 min	6-7	80-90
800 meters	6-8	3-2 mins	7-8	85-95
400 meters	10-12	2-1 mins	8 <i>(notch faster than 5k PB pace)</i>	85-95
<b>NOTES:</b>	<i>Increase interval number as fitness improves.</i>	<i>*Reduce rest time as fitness and recovery improves.</i>	<i>*RPE will naturally increase towards end of session as fatigue sets in.</i>	<i>HR will naturally increase (drift) during session.</i>

# NUTRITION & HYDRATION:

# TRAINING FUEL



# NUTRITION & HYDRATION

A significant determinant of how well our bodies function, build immunity, handle stress, produce energy and recover from physical exertion is through nutrition. You really are what you eat.

Poor quality materials build poor quality products - so why should our bodies be any different.

## It's complicated

The science of sports nutrition is incredibly complex, but the fundamental principles of marathon nutrition are fairly simple to understand and that's what we'll cover in the next few pages.

This information will not only help you gain a good understanding of what you'll need to eat and drink throughout your marathon training but also address the important questions of **when** you need to eat them and **why**.

You can find a detailed [nutritional strategy](#) to help ensure you stay properly hydrated and fed before, during and after your training session, in the training plan at the end of this guide.

## Macro-nutrients

There are three core nutrients we eat on a daily basis which form the fundamental base of our diets.

- **Carbohydrate**
- **Protein**
- **Fat**

This guide will focus on the carbohydrate and protein and help you gain an insight into their importance. If consumed in the correct quantities and at the right times, it can mean the difference between a fantastic training run and a pretty miserable one.



**Like all training topics, nutrition is very individual, so although the advice in this chapter will apply to the vast majority of people, do not feel you have to follow it if you have certain dietary requirements.**

# CARBOHYDRATE

Biologically, carbohydrates are fairly simple structures.

Stored in the body as a substance known as “glycogen,” they can be used at short notice to supply the body with energy.

It is for this reason that they are the body’s “go to” energy source during activities such as running.

The problem marathon runners face, is that there is limited space available in the liver and muscles to store glycogen.



## Essential carbohydrate facts

- **The body (liver & muscles) can store approximately 500g of carbohydrate.**
- **500g of stored carbohydrate equates to approximately 2000 calories.**
- **2000 calories of carbohydrate will take you to (approx) mile 18-20 of the marathon.**

This relative lack of storage space means that marathon runners have to be extra vigilant about their carbohydrate nutrition:

- **Eat too little** - you won’t be able to meet the energy demands of training.
- **Eat too much** - despite clocking up plenty of miles in training, you could put on weight.

As a rough guide, take a look at the table below to give you an idea of your daily carbohydrate requirements during your marathon training.

Training Volume	Carbohydrate per kg of Body weight
3-5 hrs / week	4-5 g
1-2 hrs / day	6-7 g
2-4 hrs a day	7-8 g

# PROTEIN

Despite being more closely aligned with strength & power based sports, protein is still a vitally important nutrient for marathon runners.

Following a long or intense training run, muscle fibres need the right combination of nutrients and key amino acids, to help rebuild and repair damaged tissue.

Without sufficient dietary protein, the body will effectively steal it from existing muscle tissue to patch up damaged tissue, leading to a potential range of issues such as fatigue, a compromised immune system and slow/inadequate recovery between training runs.



- **Animal protein contains all of the essential amino acids required to meet your protein needs. Known as complete protein.**
- **Protein from non-meat sources needs to be carefully considered to ensure all “essential” amino acid requirements are met.**
- **Protein replacement drinks although not vital, are an excellent and convenient way to meet your post run protein needs.**

Knowing how much protein to eat before and after training can be difficult, as each runner and individual has different protein needs. However, the table below will help to give you a good idea as to how much protein you should be consuming daily:

Training Intensity / timing	Protein
Low intensity (daily requirement)	0.8g - 1g Per kg of body weight
High intensity (daily requirement)	1.3 - 1.5g Per kg of body weight
Immediately post run	20-25g mixed with carbohydrate

# HYDRATION

When moving up from a 10k or half marathon, your hydration needs change significantly when training for a marathon.

The importance of both the quantity and nutritional make-up of the fluid you drink is arguably greater than your carbohydrate nutrition, for obvious - and not so obvious reasons.

## Keep cool

During a run, your body heats up.

To keep body temperature at an optimal level, water is drawn from blood plasma and secreted from pores in the skin, as sweat, to cool the body down.

As the water content of blood decreases as a result of respiration and perspiration, the body reduces the peripheral blood flow to the skin surface to preserve the blood supply to the muscles and vital organs.

This reduces the body capability to dissipate heat, and with a drop in blood volume, heart rate increases to meet the demands to sustain the same level of exercise. This ultimately leads to feelings of fatigue and premature exhaustion.

## Essential hydration facts

- **The human body is made up of around 60-70 % water.**
- **A runner can easily lose 2-3+ pints of fluid an hour in warm conditions.**
- **A 2% decrease in hydration, leads to a 10-20% decrease in aerobic capacity.**
- **A carbohydrate-electrolyte drink is absorbed faster than water.**
- **Fluids containing electrolytes increase palatability & increase urge to drink.**

The quantity, quality and timing of your fluid intake before, during and after training is vitally important to ensure optimum performance and recovery.

See the table [here](#) to work out your water and sports drink needs.



# AVOIDING STOMACH PROBLEMS

The phase “runners trots,” is one that most runners will have heard of, and probably experienced, at some stage of their running “career.”

Gastro-intestinal discomfort and the overwhelming desire to urgently “go” is an incredibly frustrating and embarrassing issue for runners. It can strike for no logical reason at any stage of training - or racing.

The good news, is that although there is no guaranteed way to ensure you’ll never be afflicted with runners trots, there are several measures you can take to significantly reduce your chances.

If you have suffered from stomach problems in the past or feel you have a “delicate constitution” take a look at the following suggestions to give yourself the best chance of staying on the road and out of the porta-loos.



- **Avoid spicy foods the evening before a run / race.**
- **By all means drink your usual coffee, but avoid drinking too much.**
- **Fatty foods take longer to digest, so avoid fatty / creamy / cheesy foods before training.**
- **Avoid a cooked breakfast on the morning of a run/race. It's too rich.**
- **Some vegetables such as garlic, peppers, onions and leeks cause excessive abdominal gas. Avoid these the night before a run/race.**
- **On the morning of a race, eat the breakfast you have always eaten and that you know does not cause stomach discomfort.**
- **Like fat, protein takes a long time to digest. Avoid large quantities of meat the night before or on the morning of a run/race.**
- **NEVER switch brands of gels or drink on race day. If you've used SiS products in training, then consume them on race day.**

# CARB LOADING

In the 48 hours leading up to race day, a lot goes through a marathon runners mind.

With so much going on, the last thing you want to be doing is trying to work out what you should be eating in the two days before the race.

Ultimately, the key thing to remember is to stick with what you know and eat foods which you have eaten throughout training and have never caused any stomach concerns.

To help give you an idea, take a look at some sample menu plans that you can mix up, to help ensure your glycogen stores are stocked up and that you're not eating anything that's likely to cause any stomach issues.



Breakfast	AM Snack	Lunch	PM snack	Dinner
Bowl of muesli with a toast and / or fruit.	2 x Bananas.	1 x Jacket potato with light mayonnaise and tuna.	1 x Cereal Bar	Chicken with rice, pasta or noodles in tomato sauce.
2-3 x Shredded wheat with skimmed milk.	2 x Toast with honey.	Serving of pasta in tomato sauce.	Serving of yoghurt with raisins.	Grilled salmon with new potatoes.
Bowl of porridge with raisins / fruit.	Low fat fruit yoghurt with fruit.	2 x Sandwiches (white bread) with chicken.	1 x Bagel and Jam	Jacket Potato with tuna.

## SUPPLEMENTS AND FLUIDS

Drink water regularly throughout the day and feel free to also include the following SiS products:

**SiS Rego, SiS GO Energy and SiS Go Bar.**



# TIMING YOUR NUTRITION

Although the type and amount of fuel you consume before and after training, is a vital component of your nutritional programme, it is the timing of your carbohydrate, protein and fluid consumption that is just as important.

Incorrect timing of your nutrition, can lead to range of problems, all of which are avoidable, provided you follow the recommended guidelines covered in this guide.

With so many obstacles in the way from now until race day, you'd be foolish not to take your nutrition seriously and ensure you get the timing right.

Every year, runners make easily avoidable mistakes when it comes to nutrition quantity, quality and timing - don't become a statistic.



- **Inadequate glycogen (carbohydrate replenishment) resulting in low energy.**
- **Gastro-intestinal discomfort.**
- **Prolonged and delayed muscle pain and repair.**
- **Hypoglycaemia (low blood sugar) during long runs.**
- **Elevated heart rate (dehydration).**
- **Fatigue and lethargy.**
- **Dizziness and nausea.**
- **Reduced performance.**

To help give you a quick reference guide as to which nutrients you should be consuming and when, take a look at the nutritional strategy table in the marathon training plan by clicking [here](#).

# FAQS

## How often should I do intervals or fartlek training?

You should do no more than 2 interval / fartlek sessions a week and make sure you leave at least 48 hours in between sessions. These are intense sessions and it takes a while for the body to recover from them.

## How do I know how much rest to have in between intervals?

This is not always easy but start off being quite generous with your rest periods. In the early stage of training, start with a ratio of 1:1 (eg. 5 mins of hard running with 5 minutes rest inbetween intervals)

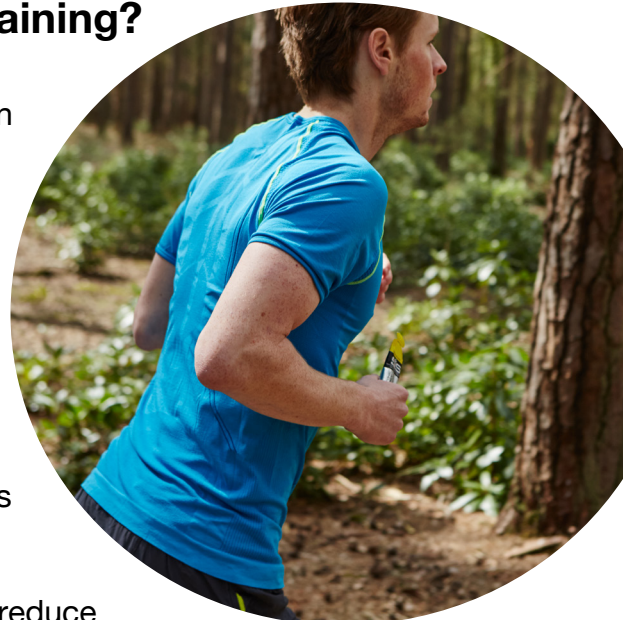
As your fitness and your ability to recover improves aim to reduce the rest period by 30 seconds at a time and see how you feel.

## Do I need to include hill training?

Hill training is a fantastic way to propel your fitness levels to new heights but don't bust a gut to include them in your weekly schedule. As effective as hills are to improve your leg and cardio-vascular strength, they also increase your risk of injury so unless your upcoming race has lots of hills in it, don't worry if you leave them out of your training schedule.

## Is it worth having a sports massage once in a while?

In short, yes. Sports massages are incredibly effective at realigning muscle fibres, aiding the recovery process and helping to avoid injury. They can be a little uncomfortable during the treatment, but your legs will feel incredible afterwards.



# MARATHON TRAINING PLAN & NUTRITIONAL STRATEGY



# NUTRITIONAL STRATEGY

Despite what many aspiring marathon runners believe, simply putting in regular high quality training sessions week in week out, is not enough to guarantee fitness gains and a successful marathon campaign.

The timing, quantity and quality of the food you eat before, during and after training has a significant influence on how well your body is able to recover from each training run.

Simply consuming large quantities of carbohydrate or protein at random times of the day is **NOT** going to help you maximise your recovery and energy replenishment.



The following facts help to highlight this point:

- **Post run, high GI carbohydrates drive an insulin response, which help to replenish glycogen stores (Try SiS Rego)**
- **The window in the first 2-3 hours post training are the most important time to replenish expended glycogen stores. (Try SiS REGO in the 30 minutes post-training and follow-up with a meal within the following 2-3 hours)**
- **Despite frequent hydration during long runs, you'll still be dehydrated when you finish. Drink at least 1 litre of fluid with glucose post run. (Follow up your SiS REGO with 500ml of GO Hydro over the following 2-3 hours)**

The table on the following pages will help to give you a good idea of what you should be eating and drinking at the various stages of training.

As a reminder of how much carbohydrate you should be aiming to consume on a daily basis depending on your training hours and body weight, take a look at the table below:

Training Volume	Carbohydrate per kg of Body weight
3-5 hrs / week	4-5 g
1-2 hrs / day	6-7 g
2-4 hrs a day	7-8 g

Nutrient	Pre-run	Mid Run (longer than 1 hour)	30 mins post run	2-3 hours post run
<b>Carbohydrate (Food)</b>	Light snack 2-3 hours before run e.g toast.	N/A	Fruit smoothy with added protein.	Pasta/rice/potato rich meal. Include protein or supplement with an <b>SIS Protein Bar.</b>
<b>Carbohydrate (gels / bars / shake)</b>	To be consumed 1-2 hours before training/race: <b>One serving of an SiS Energy Power OR SiS Energy Bar 1-2 hours before training / race.</b>	Consume every 20-30 minutes (max of 3 per hour) : <b>SiS GO Energy + Caffeine Gels OR SiS GO Isotonic Energy Gels.</b>	<b>SiS REGO Rapid Recovery</b>	<b>SiS REGO Rapid Recovery.</b>
<b>Protein</b>	Not essential but ensure they are easily digestible.	N/A	<b>SiS Protein Bar OR SiS Advanced Isolate+ Powder.</b>	<b>SiS Whey Protein Powder OR SiS Overnight Protein.</b>



**Nutrient**

**Pre-run**

**Mid Run  
(longer than 1 hour)**

**30 mins post run**

**2-3 hours post run**

<p><b>Sports drink</b></p>	<p><b>SiS Go Energy</b> to be consumed 1-2 hours before training/racing:</p>	<p>Consume 300-500ml every hour during long runs. Drink should contain either <b>SiS GO Hydro</b> OR <b>SiS Go Electrolyte</b>.</p>	<p>Consume 500ml of <b>SiS REGO</b>.</p>	<p>Consume additional 500ml of <b>SiS GO Hydro</b></p>
<p><b>Water</b></p>	<p>1-1.5 litres in the 2-3 hours leading up to a run/race. Supplement with: <b>SiS GO Hydro</b> OR <b>SiS Go Electrolyte</b>.</p>	<p>Consume 150-200 ml every 30 mins during long runs.</p>	<p>1 litre - more if the run was intense or conditions were warm.</p>	<p>1-2 litres or until hydrated. Supplement with <b>SiS GO Hydro</b> if conditions were warm.</p>



# MARATHON - BEGINNER'S PLAN

Week	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5	Day 6	Day 7
1	Steady & easy 2-3 miles / Rest	Rest	3-4 miles steady	Rest	3 mile fartlek session <i>(low intensity)</i>	Rest	Steady 4-5 miles
2	Steady & easy 2-3 miles / Rest	Rest	4 miles steady	Rest	3 mile fartlek session <i>(low-medium intensity)</i>	Rest	Steady 5-6 miles
3	Steady & easy 2-3 miles / Rest	Rest	5-6 miles steady	Rest	3-4 mile fartlek session <i>(medium intensity)</i>	Rest	Steady 6-7 miles
4	Rest	Rest	6 miles steady	Rest	3-4 miles steady	Rest	Steady 7-8 miles
5	Steady & easy 3-4 miles / Rest	Rest	4-5 mile tempo	Rest	4-5 mile fartlek session <i>(medium intensity)</i>	Rest	Steady 8-9 miles
6	Steady & easy 3-4 miles / Rest	Rest	4-5 mile tempo	Rest	4-5 mile fartlek session <i>(medium intensity)</i>	Rest	Steady 9-10 miles
7	Steady & easy 3-4 miles / Rest	Rest	5-6 mile tempo	Rest	4-5 mile fartlek session <i>(medium-high intensity)</i>	Rest	Steady 10-11 miles.
8	Rest	Rest	5-6 miles steady	Rest	60 -90 mins Cross Train	Rest	Steady 11-12 miles

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# MARATHON - BEGINNER'S PLAN

Week	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5	Day 6	Day 7
9	Steady & easy 3-4 miles / Rest	Rest	6-7 mile tempo	Rest	4-5 x 1 mile intervals	Rest	Steady 12-13 mile
10	Steady & easy 3-4 miles / Rest	Rest	7-8 mile tempo	Rest	4-5 x 1 mile intervals	Rest	Steady 13-15 miles
11	Steady & easy 3-4 miles / Rest	Rest	7-8 mile tempo	Rest	4-5 x 1 mile intervals	Rest	Steady 16-18 miles
12	Rest	Rest	4-5 mile tempo	Rest	60-90 mins Cross Train	Rest	Steady 18-20 miles
13	Steady & easy 3-4 miles / Rest	Rest	5-6 mile tempo	Rest	8 x 800 metres	Rest	Steady 18-20 miles
14	Rest	Rest	4- 5 mile fartlek	Rest	8 x 800 metres	Rest	Steady 8-10 miles
15	Steady & easy 3-4 miles / Rest	Rest	5-6 mile tempo	Rest	60-90 mins Cross Train	Rest	5-6 miles at race pace
16	Rest	Rest	2-3 mile tempo	Rest	2-3 miles steady	Rest	<b>RACE DAY</b>

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# KEY POINTS ON HOW TO USE THE BEGINNER'S TIMETABLE

- Remember that it is just a guide. Due to individuality and physiological ability, this plan will suit some runners better than Others. Therefore you do not have to follow it word for word. Increase or decrease session intensity accordingly.
- If you have started training early, it's a good idea to repeat a week of training every now and again.
- Although not stated, to help reduce the chances of fatigue and injury, every 4 weeks some runners benefit from easing back on training. Reduce your long distance run by 30-50%, replace runs with cross training and spend more time relaxing and recovering.
- If you choose to run the day after a long steady run, ease back on the pace a little so it's a really easy and gentle pace.
- Feel free to swap sessions around depending on your mood and how your body is feeling.  
For example, swap a fartlek for an interval session or a tempo run with a steady run - or vice versa.
- Hill training can be added if you wish. Swap a fartlek or Interval session with a hill based session as required.
- Feel free to swap any training run with a "Cross Training" session, such as indoor cycling, rowing or swimming. This rests the joints and adds variety to training.
- Don't feel guilty if you miss the odd run. Life has a pleasant or sometimes unpleasant habit of getting in the way of training. If you miss a week or two of training however, go back a week or so in the timetable and build your fitness levels back up again.

# AFTER YOUR RUN

As soon as you finish a training run or a race, it is essential that you take your **recovery** seriously.

If you have any muscle niggles or discomfort in any tendons, it is vital you apply ice to any areas of soreness to help reduce inflammation.

A bag of frozen peas on inflamed muscles or tendons for up to 48 hours after your run, can make a significant difference in helping to reduce pain and help you get back on the road again.

If you continue to feel pain during and after training, despite regular icing of the tender muscle, tendon or joint, try the following injury guidelines.



**Rest** - There is no shame in taking several days off training to give injuries a chance to heal. It's far better to take a week off training and lose a little bit of fitness, than to continue training and make an injury far worse.

**Eat** - Ensure your diet is well balanced and that you are eating sufficient quantities of protein. If your protein intake is inadequate, the body is unable to repair muscle tissue as fast as it could. Consider taking SiS REGO or SiS Overnight Protein.

**Advice** - There is no substitute for professional advice. Book an appointment to see a physiotherapist, who will assess you injury and offer appropriate treatment to get you back on the road as soon as possible.

# ABOUT GH TRAINING



This Marathon training guide has been written and produced by Graeme Hilditch, founder of GH Training.

GH Training produce high quality, branded running and cycling training guides for Charities and Organisations, helping runners and cyclists prepare effectively and safely for a range of endurance challenges from marathons to cycling sportives.

To find out more about GH Training running and cycling guides, health/wellbeing talks and our range of educational functional fitness/cycling videos, please visit our website at [www.ghtraining.co.uk](http://www.ghtraining.co.uk) or contact us directly on [graeme@ghtraining.co.uk](mailto:graeme@ghtraining.co.uk)

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## THE SCIENCE IN SPORT PROMISE

When you commit so much time, energy and determination to being the best you can be, you want a **sports nutrition** partner that truly understands endurance sport – one that you can trust to provide the best products and expert guidance.

Science in Sport's expertise, combined with feedback from the elite athletes such as Sir Chris Hoy and Helen Jenkins, ensure SiS continue to innovate and improve their existing range of trusted endurance **nutrition products**. Our passion means our products are truly trusted and recommended.

SiS tests products over and over again until they are right. We do this to ensure we provide you with the right range of products with the best possible ingredients for your needs – so that you can focus on performing to the best of your ability.

That's our promise – the best science to deliver the best products and the best advice for your sports nutrition.

## DISCLAIMER

The contents of this guide are to help readers prepare for marathons safely and effectively. It should not be used as a substitute for proper medical advice. If you are in any doubt about whether you are able to tolerate marathon training, always seek proper medical advice. SiS or the author cannot be held responsible for illness arising out of the failure to seek medical advice from a doctor.