

Easy/Recovery Run:

Purpose: Easy runs are slow runs usually within 24 hours after a harder run to promote recovery, while maintaining or advancing our cardiovascular fitness and our body's adaptation to running. They should be kept easy and likely between 90-120 seconds slower than your marathon pace. If you feel you need to go slower then by all means do so. You should be comfortable enough that you can carry on a conversation. Going easy gives you a mental break and allows you to relax while running. You want to be able to push harder on hard days so take it easy on recovery days.

Tempo Run:

Purpose: This is a great workout to stress both stamina and endurance as well as develop mental toughness. Tempo runs should be comfortably hard which means you are working relatively hard, but the pace is manageable for a fairly long time. The pace is usually an effort that you can only sustain for 60 minutes and around 80-90% of VO2 max. Start conservative and ease into it, then hold a nice steady effort and settle into a good rhythm.

Intervals (VO2 Max Repeats):

Purpose: To maximize aerobic power (VO2 max) to improve the amount of oxygen the body can deliver to the muscle cells by stressing the heart, lungs, and VO2 max. The actual workout may vary on how many intervals you perform. The pace ranges from 3 -5 minutes with a slow recovery jog between each one. This is a pace you can hold in an all effort for 11-15 minutes. You want to avoid making the mistake of going too fast on the first one. The goal is to complete all sets at a consistent pace. If you go too fast in the beginning and then are way off pace by the final rep you're not getting the most from the workout.

Long Run (aerobic):

Purpose: These long easy paced runs build endurance both physically and mentally. The long run teaches your body to prepare physiologically for the stresses it will undergo on race day. Long runs are typically done at an aerobic effort which could be 60-120 seconds slower than marathon pace. The key is to find a slow and steady effort and settle into a good rhythm. If you run these too quick on a regular basis you increase your risk of overtraining and incurring an injury. Long runs are a great time to practice with race day nutrition.

Long Run – Goal Race Pace:

Purpose: If you have a goal race pace then this is an effective type of workout that gets you ready to run at that pace. The distance will vary depending on what you are training for but usually 12-15 miles total for a marathon training plan is good. It can be split up into segments as well as positioned at the front, middle, or end of the run. You don't want to rush right into the effort. It's better to allow your body to naturally find it's rhythm those first few miles and then settle into race pace. You want to maintain a steady pacing and focus on staying relaxed.

Progression Run:

Purpose: Progression runs (aka Negative Split) are very effective if done right. You want to start out easy and then finish fast. These teach you mental patience and how to run faster when tired. In a race, you want to avoid going out too quick in the beginning. Start easy and then gradually get quicker so that you are finishing the last mile at marathon pace, threshold pace, or interval pace (based on coach's input).

Fartlek:

Purpose: Fartlek workouts are intended to be fun runs of varying speeds based on how you feel. After a warmup, you play with speed by running at faster efforts for short periods of time followed by an easy-effort to recover. Each interval might range from 10 seconds to 5 minutes. There is no set format for a Fartlek session so you go based on how you feel, just don't overdo it.

Hill Repeats

Purpose: Improves leg strength, running economy, and a great way to prepare for speed training. This type of workout will also give you confidence in a race when you approach a hill. It should feel quick and hard with a steady rhythm. Keep your posture straight and don't lean too far forward or backward. Shorten your stride, increase your footsteps, and quicken your arm swing to give you that extra momentum to reach the top. The pace depends on the incline of the hill but aim for about 5k effort. Once you reach the top of the hill your legs may feel heavy and you will likely be breathing hard. Take your time jogging slowly down the hill or walking if needed to catch your breath and restore some strength in your legs.

Race Specific:

Purpose: These are workouts done in order to increase the runners' familiarity with a goal race pace. They are also used to prepare for a certain aspect of the goal race, and can serve as a type of dress rehearsal. They can be race specific where you perform the workout at goal race pace broken into segments with short recovery jogs between each segment. They can also be course specific where the workout is done to simulate the course you will be racing.

Back-to-Back Long Run:

Purpose: B2B long runs are beneficial for training for longer distance races like ultra-marathons, as they are used to build-up mileage towards a long-distance race. It's typically long runs scheduled on two consecutive days. The idea behind them is to get used to running on tired legs to mimic the fatigue you'll experience on race day without having to run a super long run in one setting. For a marathon, it may look like 16 miles on day one and 10 miles on day two. For a 50 miler, it may look 20 miles day one and 18 miles on day two.

Cross Training:

Purpose: Choose an activity that will enhance your injury prevention. The best activity for runners are usually non-impact ones that do not place added stress on your body. Activities may include bicycling, swimming, strength training, rowing, power walking, aqua jogging, etc.

Don't Forget to Warm Up and Cool Down:

A proper warm up gives your muscles and joints a chance to loosen up and prepare your body for a more strenuous activity. Do dynamic stretches with controlled leg movements before working out to loosen up and improve your range of motion. You can do leg swings, skipping drills, backward jogging, high knees, butt kicks, walking on toes and heels as part of the warmup. Running strides are also beneficial to do during the warmup or as they will recruit your fast-twitch muscle fibers and boost your blood flow to your muscles. Strides are accelerations of around 100 meters where you start out easy and build into an effort upwards of 95% of your max speed, and then gradually slow to a stop. Look for 3-4 sets of 20 -30 seconds per stride and 60-90 seconds rest between each one. Strides can be done following a run to shakeout some of the tightness you might feel after running at the same pace. The cool down will safely get your body and muscles back down to normal operating temperatures.