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HALF MARATHON BEGINNER TRAINING GUIDE

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For Better Health

I CAN DO THIS

If you are aiming to complete your first half marathon event, this training program is for you.

Everyone is an individual and your base level of fitness may vary. For those who have already been doing some running, this general guide should give you all the endurance you will need to make the 21.1km feeling strong. If you are new to running and find some of the early runs in this guide a little challenging, consider completing the 10km **'I can do this'** training guide first to give yourself a base to build into the half marathon training.

This 12-week training guide is just that, a guide, so feel free to be a little flexible with it to make it work for you.

Remember this is a 12-week guide and you don't need to go too hard, too soon – that is what demotivates people or causes injury. Build your way into it.

[Here is an explanation of the terms used in the Half marathon 'I can do this' training guide:](#)

Run The pace you run at should be comfortable. If you're training with a friend, the two of you should be able to hold a conversation. If you measure your heart rate, your target zone should be between 65 and 75 percent of your maximum heart rate.

Distance The training guide includes runs that vary from 5km to 16km. Use those distances as your guide, not as your prescription. Review the distances in the guide and pick courses through your local area that roughly measure up to the training guide distances. You can use Google maps to measure courses or a GPS based app.

Rest Your muscles need time to recover and rebuild, so taking the right amount of time to rest is just as important as the runs in this guide. In particular, it is important to rest before and after your long run to help reduce your risk of injury.

Long runs Important sessions in the guide are the long runs, which progressively increase in distance each weekend. You will jump from your longest training run of 16km to the half marathon – a big leap, but your training and inspiration on the day will see you over the line.

Cross-train You can choose your preferred form of cross-training, be it swimming, cycling, walking, rowing or a combination. Cross-training days should be considered easy days that allow you to recover from the running you do during the week.

Stretch + strengthen After your long Sunday run, Mondays are for stretching and strengthening (this doesn't mean you shouldn't stretch on other days). Strength training, particularly for your core muscles, is an important focus of this training guide. Bodyweight-based activities like push-ups, chin-ups or dips are beneficial or light weights with high reps at your local gym.

Guide length If you have the time and don't feel the 12 week program is enough to get you ready, you can add extra weeks throughout to make it 16 or 20 weeks.

Test The idea with the test runs is to measure your time, progress and fitness, if it suits you. Another option is to find local fun-runs at these distances to allow you to time your race and get used to running with other competitors.

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Flexibility Over a 12-week program, it is important to be flexible and mix up days and runs when you need to. If you miss a run, you can make it up. The real aim is to be consistent with your training, and the overall details won't matter.



Fact: If you do follow this guide to the letter you will have completed nearly 80km of running – pat on the back!

WEEK	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN
1	Stretch + strength	5.0km run	3.0km run or x-train	5.0km run + strength	Rest	30 min x-train	6.0km run
2	Stretch + strength	5.0km run	3.0km run or x-train	5.0km run + strength	Rest	30 min x-train	6.0km run
3	Stretch + strength	5.0km run	3.0km run or x-train	5.0km run + strength	Rest	40 min x-train	8.0km run
4	Stretch + strength	6.0km run	3.0km run or x-train	6.0km run + strength	Rest	40 min x-train	8.0km run
5	Stretch + strength	6.0km run	3.0km run or x-train	6.0km run + strength	Rest	40 min x-train	10km run
6	Stretch + strength	6.0km run	3.0km run or x-train	6.0km run + strength	Rest	Rest	5.0km test
7	Stretch + strength	7.0km run	5.0km run or x-train	7.0km run + strength	Rest	50 min x-train	12km run
8	Stretch + strength	7.0km run	5.0km run or x-train	7.0km run + strength	Rest	50 min x-train	14km run
9	Stretch + strength	8.0km run	5.0km run or x-train	8.0km run + strength	Rest	Rest	10km test
10	Stretch + strength	8.0km run	5.0km run or x-train	8.0km run + strength	Rest	60 min x-train	15km run
11	Stretch + strength	8.0km run	5.0km run or x-train	8.0km run + strength	Rest	60 min x-train	16km run
12	Stretch + strength	8.0km run	5.0km run or x-train	5.0km run	Rest	Rest	Race day