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# Your Ultimate Marathon Preparation Guide

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EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO PREPARE AND TRAIN FOR YOUR UPCOMING HALF MARATHON

## Your Ultimate Marathon Preparation Guide

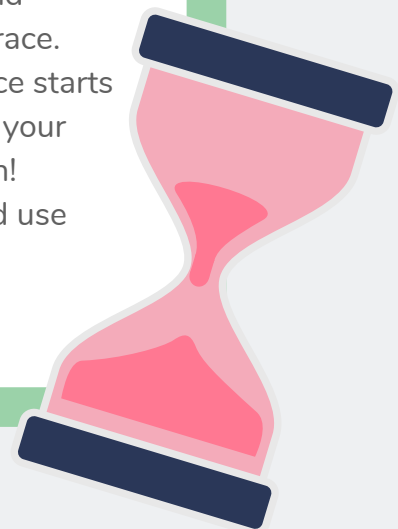
# Ready, Set, Go...

Whether you're a seasoned runner or a complete beginner, you'll know that tackling a race like this is no walk in the park (excuse the pun!) which is why we've combined some of our favourite hints and tips from some of the best sources around into one handy guide to get you Half Marathon ready!

So, whilst you'll no doubt be spending the months and weeks leading up to your race day following a rigorous training and nutrition plan, it's easy to forget how important the right preparation is on the big day itself - including what to wear, when to go for that last minute loo break and how to replenish your muscles after the race.

## Before...

- **Don't experiment with new foods** - a change in diet may upset your stomach and give you a stitch (it's risky business!)
- **Hydrate well** - drink plenty of fluids (ideally water) before your race, it'll help you physically and mentally
- **Go to the toilet** - seems obvious, right? At busy events you could be queuing for a long time so give yourself plenty of time!
- **Be confident but realistic** - don't get carried away with setting a PB if you're a beginner - make sure your goal is achievable and instead try to focus on enjoying the race.
- **Food and fuel** 3 hours before the race starts - this will give you plenty of time for your food to digest and help avoid a stitch!
- **Apply Vaseline** to avoid chaffing and use blister plasters where necessary!



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## During...

- **Your number one priority** - ENJOY YOUR RACE!
- **The mental battle** - your brain will want you to give up before your body does, so just remember you're capable of more than you think so keep going!
- **It's not a race!** Well, you know what we mean... start out slowly and pace yourself so you've got the energy for a strong finish
- **Don't get hung up on your finish time** - you should be proud of yourself no matter what, just remember to breathe!
- **It's okay to walk** - we aren't invincible. If you need to walk, try power walking - just listen to your body!



## After...

- **Drink plenty of fluids** to rehydrate your brain and muscles!
- **Gently stretch off after your race** - but nothing too strenuous, your legs have been through a lot!
- **Replenish your muscles with the right food** - Fruit, energy bars and carbohydrates are all good 30 mins after your run.
- **Keep moving** - resist the urge to spend the rest of the day lying on the sofa - you don't want to cease up!
- **Post-race care** should continue a full week after your race - so book a day off work, get a massage and rest, you deserve it!

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# What to consider ahead of your Marathon...



## Follow a Training Plan

Whether you're a beginner about to run your very first race or a seasoned runner, following a training plan will help immensely with your marathon prep! Choose a plan that suits your body - prepare early (20 weeks before if possible) and aim to complete your furthest distance 3 weeks prior to the real thing. And try to train in all weather - there's no guarantee it won't rain on the big day!



## Rest and Recover

Never, ever run through an injury. We know this is frustrating, but no matter how desperately you want to train it's important that you stop, rest and recover too. Ice any joints and muscles that feel sore - this will help reduce tension and swelling and help you to perform better on your next run. It's important we listen to when our bodies need to rest, and you'll be more productive after a good night's sleep.



## Eat Well and Stay Hydrated

Although many of us are tempted to reward a training session with a treat (often a chocolate bar!) - it's important to keep a balanced diet throughout training. Lots of vitamins, minerals and good nutrition is essential! Remember to drink lots of water - not drinking enough can be dangerous before, during and after the race. A top tip - fasten a water bottle to your waist during your run and you'll always have it to hand.



## Injury Prevention

Injuries are the most common reason for marathon drop-outs! Don't over do it in training - where practice is key, it's important not to over-exert yourself as it can put you at risk of injury. Warming up before training and alternating training days can help you reduce the risk of straining your muscles.



## Wear The Right Attire

Train in your marathon outfit at least twice before the big day so you've got chance to check it's comfortable. Blisters from new trainers and itchy labels will not only be distracting, but could be the difference between finishing the race. It's not a fashion statement so wear those tried and tested trainers, buy a pair of high quality running socks and choose lightweight clothing (you'll get warm and sweaty no matter the weather!)

### References:

[mensrunninguk.co.uk](http://mensrunninguk.co.uk) | [runtastic.com/blog](http://runtastic.com/blog) | [clevelandclinic.org](http://clevelandclinic.org) | [runnersworld.com](http://runnersworld.com)

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### How is your marathon training going?

We'd love to hear your training plans, preparations and who you're raising money for - so please do get in touch by tagging us in a Facebook or Twitter Post (**@MyPaycare**) with the hashtag **#WolvesMarathonEvents** or by simply emailing us on **marketing@paycare.org**



**Good Luck!**

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