



RunVermont Rdy2Run Beginner Marathon Plan

18-Week • 4-Day Training Schedule

Welcome

This plan is designed for first-time marathoners and runners returning to the distance. The emphasis is on consistency, gradual progression, recovery, and arriving at the starting line healthy.

Before You Begin This Plan

Your goal is not to complete every workout perfectly. Your goal is to arrive at the marathon healthy, confident, and excited to run. This schedule is a guide. Adjust it when life, illness, travel, or fatigue require it, then simply get back on track.

- Run easy most of the time. Conversational running builds the aerobic foundation needed for the marathon.
- Consistency is more important than any individual workout.
- Take an extra recovery day whenever needed.
- Recovery—sleep, nutrition, hydration, and strength training—is part of your training.
- Practice your race-day fueling and hydrating during long runs.

How to Use This Plan

- Tuesday: Easy run with optional strides.
- Thursday: Easy run or easy run with short tempo intervals.
- Saturday: Long run at conversational effort.
- Sunday: Short recovery run.
- Monday, Wednesday and Friday: Rest or optional cross-training.
- Strides: 6 × 20 seconds fast (5K effort) but relaxed with full recovery.
- Tempo intervals: Comfortably hard with easy jogging between repetitions (20-30 seconds faster per mile than marathon pace)

Weeks 1–4: Build the Habit

Develop consistency before worrying about speed.

Week	Tuesday	Thursday	Saturday	Sunday	Weekly Total
1	4E	4E	6	3	17
2	4E+S	5E	8	3	20
3	5E+S	5E	10	3	23
4	4E	4E	8	2	18



Weeks 5–8: Build Endurance

Increase endurance while keeping the effort easy.

Week	Tuesday	Thursday	Saturday	Sunday	Weekly Total
5	5E+S	6E	12	3	26
6	5E+S	6E	14	3	28
7	6E+S	7E	16	3	32
8	5E	5E	12	3	25

Weeks 9–12: Introduce Tempo

Short tempo intervals provide variety without excessive fatigue.

Week	Tuesday	Thursday	Saturday	Sunday	Weekly Total
9	6E+S	6 mi: 2×5 min T	16	3	31
10	6E+S	7 mi: 3×5 min T	18	3	34
11	6E+S	8 mi: 2×8 min T	20	3	37
12	5E	6E	14	3	28

Weeks 13–15: Peak Training

Maintain consistency and resist doing more than prescribed.

Week	Tuesday	Thursday	Saturday	Sunday	Weekly Total
13	6E+S	8 mi: 3×8 min T	18	4	36
14	6E+S	8 mi: 2×10 min T	20	4	38
15	5E+S	7 mi: 2×6 min T	14	3	29

Weeks 16–18: Taper

Reduce fatigue while maintaining rhythm.

Week	Tuesday	Thursday	Saturday	Sunday	Weekly Total
16	5E+S	6 mi: 4×3 min T	12	3	26
17	4E	4E	8	2	18
18	3E	2E	2E	Marathon (26.2)	33.2

Workout Key

- E = Easy conversational pace
- S = Strides (6 × 20 seconds at 5K effort)
- T = Tempo intervals at a comfortably hard effort with easy jogging recoveries (20-30 seconds faster per mile than marathon pace).



Fueling & Hydration

Beginning with long runs of 10–12 miles, practice taking fluids regularly and consuming carbohydrates during your run. Never try new nutrition on race day.

Strength Training

Twice each week after an easy run, spend 10–15 minutes performing squats, lunges, calf raises, glute bridges, planks, and side planks.

Race Week

- Reduce your mileage and trust your training.
- Stay hydrated and eat familiar foods.
- Lay out your race gear the day before.
- Start conservatively and enjoy the experience.

Final Thoughts

The marathon is the reward for months of patient, consistent training. Trust the process, stay healthy, and enjoy the journey.



most importantly... **HAVE FUN!**

& if you need a little extra motivation or have any questions,
reach out to **info@runvermont.org**