



FREE TRAINING PLAN

Sub 3:15 Hour Marathon Training Plan

Build towards sub-3:15 with 5 running days a week, progressive endurance and a complete 18-week race-date schedule.

GOAL

Sub 3:15

Race rhythm: 4:35/km / 7:23/mile.

DURATION

18 weeks

A complete build ending on race day.

TRAINING WEEK

5 runs

Frequency reduces in race week.

PEAK MILEAGE

52 miles / 83.7 km

Longest run: up to 20 miles / 32.2 km.

IS THIS PLAN RIGHT FOR YOU?

Already running consistently around 30 miles / 48.3 km a week, comfortable with 11 miles / 17.7 km in one run, and able to sustain 5 running days. A recent half marathon around 1:28 is a useful speed indicator, but does not guarantee this marathon target.



YOUR COMPLETE PLAN ONLINE

Scan to view the marathon schedule

Website, PDF and email copy available.

<https://www.runningfastr.com/marathon-training-plan/sub-3-15-hour-marathon-training-plan/>

Week 1: Settle into the routine

Weekly total: 30 miles / 48.3 km. Keep easy running conversational and protect recovery.

Monday	REST / RECOVERY Rest day Rest or gentle mobility. Avoid making up missed mileage.
Tuesday	EASY RUN / BREAKEVEN 4 miles / 6.4 km easy Conversational effort. Keep the easy day easy. Pace: Effort first; adjust for hills, heat and fatigue
Wednesday	EASY RUN / BREAKEVEN 6 miles / 9.7 km easy Conversational aerobic running. Optional short familiar strength work afterwards; reduce this during the taper. Pace: Effort first; adjust for hills, heat and fatigue
Thursday	EASY RUN / BREAKEVEN 6 miles / 9.7 km easy Conversational effort. Keep the easy day easy. Pace: Effort first; adjust for hills, heat and fatigue
Friday	REST / RECOVERY Rest day Rest or gentle mobility. Avoid making up missed mileage.
Saturday	EASY RUN / BREAKEVEN 3 miles / 4.8 km easy Keep this easy before Sunday. In race week it is an optional shakeout. Pace: Effort first; adjust for hills, heat and fatigue
Sunday	LONG RUN / BREAKEVEN 11 miles / 17.7 km easy long run Conversational effort. Practise breakfast, fuel and drinks. Shorten to around 3 hours if the prescribed distance would take substantially longer; do not speed up to fit it in. Pace: Conversational effort; brief walk breaks for fuel are fine

Week 2: Build easy endurance

Weekly total: 33 miles / 53.1 km. Keep easy running conversational and protect recovery.

Monday	REST / RECOVERY Rest day Rest or gentle mobility. Avoid making up missed mileage.
Tuesday	EASY RUN / BREAKEVEN 5 miles / 8 km easy Conversational effort. Keep the easy day easy. Pace: Effort first; adjust for hills, heat and fatigue
Wednesday	EASY RUN / BREAKEVEN 6 miles / 9.7 km easy Conversational aerobic running. Optional short familiar strength work afterwards; reduce this during the taper. Pace: Effort first; adjust for hills, heat and fatigue
Thursday	EASY RUN / BREAKEVEN 6 miles / 9.7 km easy Conversational effort. Keep the easy day easy. Pace: Effort first; adjust for hills, heat and fatigue
Friday	REST / RECOVERY Rest day Rest or gentle mobility. Avoid making up missed mileage.
Saturday	EASY RUN / BREAKEVEN 4 miles / 6.4 km easy Keep this easy before Sunday. In race week it is an optional shakeout. Pace: Effort first; adjust for hills, heat and fatigue
Sunday	LONG RUN / BREAKEVEN 12 miles / 19.3 km easy long run Conversational effort. Practise breakfast, fuel and drinks. Shorten to around 3 hours if the prescribed distance would take substantially longer; do not speed up to fit it in. Pace: Conversational effort; brief walk breaks for fuel are fine

Week 3: Introduce race rhythm

Weekly total: 36 miles / 57.9 km. Keep easy running conversational and protect recovery.

Monday	REST / RECOVERY Rest day Rest or gentle mobility. Avoid making up missed mileage.
Tuesday	EASY RUN / BREAKEVEN 5 miles / 8 km easy Conversational effort. Keep the easy day easy. Pace: Effort first; adjust for hills, heat and fatigue
Wednesday	EASY RUN / BREAKEVEN 7 miles / 11.3 km easy Conversational aerobic running. Optional short familiar strength work afterwards; reduce this during the taper. Pace: Effort first; adjust for hills, heat and fatigue
Thursday	MARATHON PACE / BREAKTHROUGH 7 miles / 11.3 km including marathon pace 1 mile easy, 3 miles at marathon pace, 3 miles easy. All warm-up and cool-down mileage is included. Pace: Marathon sections: 4:35/km / 7:23/mile
Friday	REST / RECOVERY Rest day Rest or gentle mobility. Avoid making up missed mileage.
Saturday	EASY RUN / BREAKEVEN 4 miles / 6.4 km easy Keep this easy before Sunday. In race week it is an optional shakeout. Pace: Effort first; adjust for hills, heat and fatigue
Sunday	LONG RUN / BREAKEVEN 13 miles / 20.9 km easy long run Conversational effort. Practise breakfast, fuel and drinks. Shorten to around 3 hours if the prescribed distance would take substantially longer; do not speed up to fit it in. Pace: Conversational effort; brief walk breaks for fuel are fine

Week 4: Recover and absorb

Weekly total: 28 miles / 45.1 km. Recovery week: absorb the previous work.

Monday	REST / RECOVERY Rest day Rest or gentle mobility. Avoid making up missed mileage.
Tuesday	EASY RUN / BREAKEVEN 4 miles / 6.4 km easy Conversational effort. Keep the easy day easy. Pace: Effort first; adjust for hills, heat and fatigue
Wednesday	EASY RUN / BREAKEVEN 6 miles / 9.7 km easy Conversational aerobic running. Optional short familiar strength work afterwards; reduce this during the taper. Pace: Effort first; adjust for hills, heat and fatigue
Thursday	EASY RUN / BREAKEVEN 5 miles / 8 km easy Conversational effort. Keep the easy day easy. Pace: Effort first; adjust for hills, heat and fatigue
Friday	REST / RECOVERY Rest day Rest or gentle mobility. Avoid making up missed mileage.
Saturday	EASY RUN / BREAKEVEN 3 miles / 4.8 km easy Keep this easy before Sunday. In race week it is an optional shakeout. Pace: Effort first; adjust for hills, heat and fatigue
Sunday	LONG RUN / BREAKEVEN 10 miles / 16.1 km easy long run Conversational effort. Practise breakfast, fuel and drinks. Shorten to around 3 hours if the prescribed distance would take substantially longer; do not speed up to fit it in. Pace: Conversational effort; brief walk breaks for fuel are fine

Week 5: Extend your endurance

Weekly total: 38 miles / 61.2 km. Keep easy running conversational and protect recovery.

Monday	REST / RECOVERY Rest day Rest or gentle mobility. Avoid making up missed mileage.
Tuesday	EASY RUN / BREAKEVEN 5 miles / 8 km easy Conversational effort. Keep the easy day easy. Pace: Effort first; adjust for hills, heat and fatigue
Wednesday	EASY RUN / BREAKEVEN 7 miles / 11.3 km easy Conversational aerobic running. Optional short familiar strength work afterwards; reduce this during the taper. Pace: Effort first; adjust for hills, heat and fatigue
Thursday	CONTROLLED TEMPO / BREAKTHROUGH 8 miles / 12.9 km including 3 x 8 minutes controlled tempo Begin with 2 miles easy, then 3 x 8 minutes at a controlled comfortably-hard effort with 2 minutes easy jogging between efforts. Complete the remaining distance easy. Use current fitness; do not turn this into a race. Pace: Controlled tempo based on current fitness; easy warm-up, recoveries and cool-down
Friday	REST / RECOVERY Rest day Rest or gentle mobility. Avoid making up missed mileage.
Saturday	EASY RUN / BREAKEVEN 4 miles / 6.4 km easy Keep this easy before Sunday. In race week it is an optional shakeout. Pace: Effort first; adjust for hills, heat and fatigue
Sunday	LONG RUN / BREAKEVEN 14 miles / 22.5 km easy long run Conversational effort. Practise breakfast, fuel and drinks. Shorten to around 3 hours if the prescribed distance would take substantially longer; do not speed up to fit it in. Pace: Conversational effort; brief walk breaks for fuel are fine

Week 6: Practise marathon pace

Weekly total: 40 miles / 64.4 km. Keep easy running conversational and protect recovery.

Monday	REST / RECOVERY Rest day Rest or gentle mobility. Avoid making up missed mileage.
Tuesday	EASY RUN / BREAKEVEN 5 miles / 8 km easy Conversational effort. Keep the easy day easy. Pace: Effort first; adjust for hills, heat and fatigue
Wednesday	EASY RUN / BREAKEVEN 8 miles / 12.9 km easy Conversational aerobic running. Optional short familiar strength work afterwards; reduce this during the taper. Pace: Effort first; adjust for hills, heat and fatigue
Thursday	MARATHON PACE / BREAKTHROUGH 8 miles / 12.9 km including marathon pace 1 mile easy, 4 miles at marathon pace, 3 miles easy. All warm-up and cool-down mileage is included. Pace: Marathon sections: 4:35/km / 7:23/mile
Friday	REST / RECOVERY Rest day Rest or gentle mobility. Avoid making up missed mileage.
Saturday	EASY RUN / BREAKEVEN 4 miles / 6.4 km easy Keep this easy before Sunday. In race week it is an optional shakeout. Pace: Effort first; adjust for hills, heat and fatigue
Sunday	LONG RUN / BREAKEVEN 15 miles / 24.1 km easy long run Conversational effort. Practise breakfast, fuel and drinks. Shorten to around 3 hours if the prescribed distance would take substantially longer; do not speed up to fit it in. Pace: Conversational effort; brief walk breaks for fuel are fine

Week 7: Build time on feet

Weekly total: 42 miles / 67.6 km. Keep easy running conversational and protect recovery.

Monday	REST / RECOVERY Rest day Rest or gentle mobility. Avoid making up missed mileage.
Tuesday	EASY RUN / BREAKEVEN 6 miles / 9.7 km easy Conversational effort. Keep the easy day easy. Pace: Effort first; adjust for hills, heat and fatigue
Wednesday	EASY RUN / BREAKEVEN 8 miles / 12.9 km easy Conversational aerobic running. Optional short familiar strength work afterwards; reduce this during the taper. Pace: Effort first; adjust for hills, heat and fatigue
Thursday	EASY RUN / BREAKEVEN 8 miles / 12.9 km easy Conversational effort. Keep the easy day easy. Pace: Effort first; adjust for hills, heat and fatigue
Friday	REST / RECOVERY Rest day Rest or gentle mobility. Avoid making up missed mileage.
Saturday	EASY RUN / BREAKEVEN 4 miles / 6.4 km easy Keep this easy before Sunday. In race week it is an optional shakeout. Pace: Effort first; adjust for hills, heat and fatigue
Sunday	LONG RUN / BREAKEVEN 16 miles / 25.7 km easy long run Conversational effort. Practise breakfast, fuel and drinks. Shorten to around 3 hours if the prescribed distance would take substantially longer; do not speed up to fit it in. Pace: Conversational effort; brief walk breaks for fuel are fine

Week 8: Recover and reset

Weekly total: 32 miles / 51.5 km. Recovery week: absorb the previous work.

Monday	REST / RECOVERY Rest day Rest or gentle mobility. Avoid making up missed mileage.
Tuesday	EASY RUN / BREAKEVEN 4 miles / 6.4 km easy Conversational effort. Keep the easy day easy. Pace: Effort first; adjust for hills, heat and fatigue
Wednesday	EASY RUN / BREAKEVEN 6 miles / 9.7 km easy Conversational aerobic running. Optional short familiar strength work afterwards; reduce this during the taper. Pace: Effort first; adjust for hills, heat and fatigue
Thursday	EASY RUN / BREAKEVEN 6 miles / 9.7 km easy Conversational effort. Keep the easy day easy. Pace: Effort first; adjust for hills, heat and fatigue
Friday	REST / RECOVERY Rest day Rest or gentle mobility. Avoid making up missed mileage.
Saturday	EASY RUN / BREAKEVEN 4 miles / 6.4 km easy Keep this easy before Sunday. In race week it is an optional shakeout. Pace: Effort first; adjust for hills, heat and fatigue
Sunday	LONG RUN / BREAKEVEN 12 miles / 19.3 km easy long run Conversational effort. Practise breakfast, fuel and drinks. Shorten to around 3 hours if the prescribed distance would take substantially longer; do not speed up to fit it in. Pace: Conversational effort; brief walk breaks for fuel are fine

Week 9: Strengthen the aerobic base

Weekly total: 45 miles / 72.4 km. Keep easy running conversational and protect recovery.

Monday	REST / RECOVERY Rest day Rest or gentle mobility. Avoid making up missed mileage.
Tuesday	EASY RUN / BREAKEVEN 6 miles / 9.7 km easy Conversational effort. Keep the easy day easy. Pace: Effort first; adjust for hills, heat and fatigue
Wednesday	EASY RUN / BREAKEVEN 9 miles / 14.5 km easy Conversational aerobic running. Optional short familiar strength work afterwards; reduce this during the taper. Pace: Effort first; adjust for hills, heat and fatigue
Thursday	CONTROLLED TEMPO / BREAKTHROUGH 9 miles / 14.5 km including 3 x 8 minutes controlled tempo Begin with 2 miles easy, then 3 x 8 minutes at a controlled comfortably-hard effort with 2 minutes easy jogging between efforts. Complete the remaining distance easy. Use current fitness; do not turn this into a race. Pace: Controlled tempo based on current fitness; easy warm-up, recoveries and cool-down
Friday	REST / RECOVERY Rest day Rest or gentle mobility. Avoid making up missed mileage.
Saturday	EASY RUN / BREAKEVEN 4 miles / 6.4 km easy Keep this easy before Sunday. In race week it is an optional shakeout. Pace: Effort first; adjust for hills, heat and fatigue
Sunday	LONG RUN / BREAKEVEN 17 miles / 27.4 km easy long run Conversational effort. Practise breakfast, fuel and drinks. Shorten to around 3 hours if the prescribed distance would take substantially longer; do not speed up to fit it in. Pace: Conversational effort; brief walk breaks for fuel are fine

Week 10: Hold your rhythm

Weekly total: 47 miles / 75.6 km. Keep easy running conversational and protect recovery.

Monday	REST / RECOVERY Rest day Rest or gentle mobility. Avoid making up missed mileage.
Tuesday	EASY RUN / BREAKEVEN 6 miles / 9.7 km easy Conversational effort. Keep the easy day easy. Pace: Effort first; adjust for hills, heat and fatigue
Wednesday	EASY RUN / BREAKEVEN 9 miles / 14.5 km easy Conversational aerobic running. Optional short familiar strength work afterwards; reduce this during the taper. Pace: Effort first; adjust for hills, heat and fatigue
Thursday	MARATHON PACE / BREAKTHROUGH 9 miles / 14.5 km including marathon pace 1 mile easy, 5 miles at marathon pace, 3 miles easy. All warm-up and cool-down mileage is included. Pace: Marathon sections: 4:35/km / 7:23/mile
Friday	REST / RECOVERY Rest day Rest or gentle mobility. Avoid making up missed mileage.
Saturday	EASY RUN / BREAKEVEN 5 miles / 8 km easy Keep this easy before Sunday. In race week it is an optional shakeout. Pace: Effort first; adjust for hills, heat and fatigue
Sunday	LONG RUN / BREAKEVEN 18 miles / 29 km easy long run Conversational effort. Practise breakfast, fuel and drinks. Shorten to around 3 hours if the prescribed distance would take substantially longer; do not speed up to fit it in. Pace: Conversational effort; brief walk breaks for fuel are fine

Week 11: Rehearse the long run

Weekly total: 50 miles / 80.5 km. Keep easy running conversational and protect recovery.

Monday	REST / RECOVERY Rest day Rest or gentle mobility. Avoid making up missed mileage.
Tuesday	EASY RUN / BREAKEVEN 6 miles / 9.7 km easy Conversational effort. Keep the easy day easy. Pace: Effort first; adjust for hills, heat and fatigue
Wednesday	EASY RUN / BREAKEVEN 10 miles / 16.1 km easy Conversational aerobic running. Optional short familiar strength work afterwards; reduce this during the taper. Pace: Effort first; adjust for hills, heat and fatigue
Thursday	EASY RUN / BREAKEVEN 10 miles / 16.1 km easy Conversational effort. Keep the easy day easy. Pace: Effort first; adjust for hills, heat and fatigue
Friday	REST / RECOVERY Rest day Rest or gentle mobility. Avoid making up missed mileage.
Saturday	EASY RUN / BREAKEVEN 5 miles / 8 km easy Keep this easy before Sunday. In race week it is an optional shakeout. Pace: Effort first; adjust for hills, heat and fatigue
Sunday	LONG RUN / BREAKTHROUGH 19 miles / 30.6 km including marathon pace 12 miles easy, 5 miles at marathon pace, 2 miles easy. Practise race-day fuel. If effort rises or fatigue is high, run the whole session easy or shorten it. Pace: Marathon sections: 4:35/km / 7:23/mile; remainder easy

Week 12: Freshen up

Weekly total: 37 miles / 59.5 km. Recovery week: absorb the previous work.

Monday

REST / RECOVERY

Rest day

Rest or gentle mobility. Avoid making up missed mileage.

Tuesday

EASY RUN / BREAKEVEN

5 miles / 8 km easy

Conversational effort. Keep the easy day easy. | Pace: Effort first; adjust for hills, heat and fatigue

Wednesday

EASY RUN / BREAKEVEN

7 miles / 11.3 km easy

Conversational aerobic running. Optional short familiar strength work afterwards; reduce this during the taper. | Pace: Effort first; adjust for hills, heat and fatigue

Thursday

EASY RUN / BREAKEVEN

7 miles / 11.3 km easy

Conversational effort. Keep the easy day easy. | Pace: Effort first; adjust for hills, heat and fatigue

Friday

REST / RECOVERY

Rest day

Rest or gentle mobility. Avoid making up missed mileage.

Saturday

EASY RUN / BREAKEVEN

4 miles / 6.4 km easy

Keep this easy before Sunday. In race week it is an optional shakeout. | Pace: Effort first; adjust for hills, heat and fatigue

Sunday

LONG RUN / BREAKEVEN

14 miles / 22.5 km easy long run

Conversational effort. Practise breakfast, fuel and drinks. Shorten to around 3 hours if the prescribed distance would take substantially longer; do not speed up to fit it in. | Pace: Conversational effort; brief walk breaks for fuel are fine

Week 13: Build the final endurance

Weekly total: 51 miles / 82.1 km. Keep easy running conversational and protect recovery.

Monday	REST / RECOVERY Rest day Rest or gentle mobility. Avoid making up missed mileage.
Tuesday	EASY RUN / BREAKEVEN 6 miles / 9.7 km easy Conversational effort. Keep the easy day easy. Pace: Effort first; adjust for hills, heat and fatigue
Wednesday	EASY RUN / BREAKEVEN 10 miles / 16.1 km easy Conversational aerobic running. Optional short familiar strength work afterwards; reduce this during the taper. Pace: Effort first; adjust for hills, heat and fatigue
Thursday	MARATHON PACE / BREAKTHROUGH 10 miles / 16.1 km including marathon pace 1 mile easy, 6 miles at marathon pace, 3 miles easy. All warm-up and cool-down mileage is included. Pace: Marathon sections: 4:35/km / 7:23/mile
Friday	REST / RECOVERY Rest day Rest or gentle mobility. Avoid making up missed mileage.
Saturday	EASY RUN / BREAKEVEN 5 miles / 8 km easy Keep this easy before Sunday. In race week it is an optional shakeout. Pace: Effort first; adjust for hills, heat and fatigue
Sunday	LONG RUN / BREAKEVEN 20 miles / 32.2 km easy long run Conversational effort. Practise breakfast, fuel and drinks. Shorten to around 3 hours if the prescribed distance would take substantially longer; do not speed up to fit it in. Pace: Conversational effort; brief walk breaks for fuel are fine

Week 14: Peak with control

Weekly total: 52 miles / 83.7 km. Keep easy running conversational and protect recovery.

Monday	REST / RECOVERY Rest day Rest or gentle mobility. Avoid making up missed mileage.
Tuesday	EASY RUN / BREAKEVEN 6 miles / 9.7 km easy Conversational effort. Keep the easy day easy. Pace: Effort first; adjust for hills, heat and fatigue
Wednesday	EASY RUN / BREAKEVEN 10 miles / 16.1 km easy Conversational aerobic running. Optional short familiar strength work afterwards; reduce this during the taper. Pace: Effort first; adjust for hills, heat and fatigue
Thursday	EASY RUN / BREAKEVEN 11 miles / 17.7 km easy Conversational effort. Keep the easy day easy. Pace: Effort first; adjust for hills, heat and fatigue
Friday	REST / RECOVERY Rest day Rest or gentle mobility. Avoid making up missed mileage.
Saturday	EASY RUN / BREAKEVEN 5 miles / 8 km easy Keep this easy before Sunday. In race week it is an optional shakeout. Pace: Effort first; adjust for hills, heat and fatigue
Sunday	LONG RUN / BREAKEVEN 20 miles / 32.2 km easy long run Conversational effort. Practise breakfast, fuel and drinks. Shorten to around 3 hours if the prescribed distance would take substantially longer; do not speed up to fit it in. Pace: Conversational effort; brief walk breaks for fuel are fine

Week 15: Final controlled rehearsal

Weekly total: 42 miles / 67.6 km. Keep easy running conversational and protect recovery.

Monday	REST / RECOVERY Rest day Rest or gentle mobility. Avoid making up missed mileage.
Tuesday	EASY RUN / BREAKEVEN 5 miles / 8 km easy Conversational effort. Keep the easy day easy. Pace: Effort first; adjust for hills, heat and fatigue
Wednesday	EASY RUN / BREAKEVEN 8 miles / 12.9 km easy Conversational aerobic running. Optional short familiar strength work afterwards; reduce this during the taper. Pace: Effort first; adjust for hills, heat and fatigue
Thursday	EASY RUN / BREAKEVEN 8 miles / 12.9 km easy Conversational effort. Keep the easy day easy. Pace: Effort first; adjust for hills, heat and fatigue
Friday	REST / RECOVERY Rest day Rest or gentle mobility. Avoid making up missed mileage.
Saturday	EASY RUN / BREAKEVEN 4 miles / 6.4 km easy Keep this easy before Sunday. In race week it is an optional shakeout. Pace: Effort first; adjust for hills, heat and fatigue
Sunday	LONG RUN / BREAKTHROUGH 17 miles / 27.4 km including marathon pace 9 miles easy, 6 miles at marathon pace, 2 miles easy. Practise race-day fuel. If effort rises or fatigue is high, run the whole session easy or shorten it. Pace: Marathon sections: 4:35/km / 7:23/mile; remainder easy

Week 16: Begin the taper

Weekly total: 31 miles / 49.9 km. Taper: reduce mileage and arrive rested.

Monday	REST / RECOVERY Rest day Rest or gentle mobility. Avoid making up missed mileage.
Tuesday	EASY RUN / BREAKEVEN 4 miles / 6.4 km easy Conversational effort. Keep the easy day easy. Pace: Effort first; adjust for hills, heat and fatigue
Wednesday	EASY RUN / BREAKEVEN 6 miles / 9.7 km easy Conversational aerobic running. Optional short familiar strength work afterwards; reduce this during the taper. Pace: Effort first; adjust for hills, heat and fatigue
Thursday	MARATHON PACE / BREAKTHROUGH 6 miles / 9.7 km including marathon pace 1 mile easy, 2 miles at marathon pace, 3 miles easy. All warm-up and cool-down mileage is included. Finish comfortable; no fitness test. Pace: Marathon sections: 4:35/km / 7:23/mile
Friday	REST / RECOVERY Rest day Rest or gentle mobility. Avoid making up missed mileage.
Saturday	EASY RUN / BREAKEVEN 3 miles / 4.8 km easy Keep this easy before Sunday. In race week it is an optional shakeout. Pace: Effort first; adjust for hills, heat and fatigue
Sunday	LONG RUN / BREAKEVEN 12 miles / 19.3 km easy long run Conversational effort. Practise breakfast, fuel and drinks. Shorten to around 3 hours if the prescribed distance would take substantially longer; do not speed up to fit it in. Pace: Conversational effort; brief walk breaks for fuel are fine

Week 17: Keep the legs moving

Weekly total: 22 miles / 35.4 km. Taper: reduce mileage and arrive rested.

Monday	REST / RECOVERY Rest day Rest or gentle mobility. Avoid making up missed mileage.
Tuesday	EASY RUN / BREAKEVEN 3 miles / 4.8 km easy Conversational effort. Keep the easy day easy. Pace: Effort first; adjust for hills, heat and fatigue
Wednesday	EASY RUN / BREAKEVEN 5 miles / 8 km easy Conversational aerobic running. Optional short familiar strength work afterwards; reduce this during the taper. Pace: Effort first; adjust for hills, heat and fatigue
Thursday	MARATHON PACE / BREAKTHROUGH 4 miles / 6.4 km including marathon pace 1 mile easy, 1 miles at marathon pace, 2 miles easy. All warm-up and cool-down mileage is included. Finish comfortable; no fitness test. Pace: Marathon sections: 4:35/km / 7:23/mile
Friday	REST / RECOVERY Rest day Rest or gentle mobility. Avoid making up missed mileage.
Saturday	EASY RUN / BREAKEVEN 2 miles / 3.2 km easy Keep this easy before Sunday. In race week it is an optional shakeout. Pace: Effort first; adjust for hills, heat and fatigue
Sunday	LONG RUN / BREAKEVEN 8 miles / 12.9 km easy long run Conversational effort. Practise breakfast, fuel and drinks. Shorten to around 3 hours if the prescribed distance would take substantially longer; do not speed up to fit it in. Pace: Conversational effort; brief walk breaks for fuel are fine

Week 18: Race week

Weekly total: 35.2 miles / 56.7 km including the marathon. Taper: reduce mileage and arrive rested.

Monday	REST / RECOVERY Rest day Rest or gentle mobility. Avoid making up missed mileage.
Tuesday	EASY RUN / BREAKEVEN 3 miles / 4.8 km easy Conversational effort. Keep the easy day easy. Pace: Effort first; adjust for hills, heat and fatigue
Wednesday	REST / RECOVERY Rest day Rest or gentle mobility. Avoid making up missed mileage.
Thursday	MARATHON PACE / BREAKTHROUGH 4 miles / 6.4 km including marathon pace 1 mile easy, 2 miles at marathon pace, 1 mile easy. All warm-up and cool-down mileage is included. Finish comfortable; no fitness test. Pace: Marathon sections: 4:35/km / 7:23/mile
Friday	REST / RECOVERY Rest day Rest or gentle mobility. Avoid making up missed mileage.
Saturday	EASY RUN / BREAKEVEN 2 miles / 3.2 km easy Keep this easy before Sunday. In race week it is an optional shakeout. Pace: Effort first; adjust for hills, heat and fatigue
Sunday	RACE / BREAKTHROUGH Marathon: 26.2 miles / 42.195 km Start controlled and settle towards 4:35/km / 7:23/mile. Follow your practised fuelling strategy, use official markers and adjust the goal for conditions. Pace: 4:35/km / 7:23/mile

Paces and session guide

RACE THRESHOLD

4:37/km / 7:26/mile

Rounded average for exactly 3:15:00 over 42.195 km.

RACE PACE

4:35/km / 7:23/mile

An even average gives about 3:13:24. A modest margin, not permission to start too fast.

EASY AND LONG RUNS

Conversational effort

Use current fitness and effort, rather than forcing an easy pace from your target. Slow down for heat, hills and fatigue.

CONTROLLED TEMPO

Comfortably hard, never all-out

Set effort from current fitness. Recover with easy jogging; the total prescribed distance includes the full session.

Build your endurance

This is a 5-day running week with an explicit mileage progression.

Easy and medium runs

Most running stays conversational. Medium runs build aerobic support; avoid adding unplanned intensity.

Long runs

Build towards up to 20 miles / 32.2 km, subject to a practical time cap around three hours. Shortening a long run reduces that week's mileage. Never run faster to fit the distance in.

Recovery and strength

Rest on the marked days. Put short familiar strength work after an easy run; avoid soreness before the long run.

Practise your race

A marathon-pace long run replaces the midweek quality session that week.

Marathon rhythm

Use 4:35/km / 7:23/mile for the specified sections only. Warm-ups, recoveries and cool-downs are included in the daily total.

Fuelling rehearsal

Practise breakfast, drinks and regular fuel during long runs. Check carbohydrate per serving and test the actual products available at your race. Race day is not the time to try something new.

Taper and pacing

Reduce volume over the final three weeks. Start the race controlled, check official course markers and adjust for conditions. A small pace margin does not mean banking time early.

How to use this plan

1. Count back 18 weeks from your Sunday marathon. This is a complete build, not a short block to repeat.
2. Start only when the 30 miles / 48.3 km weekly base and 11 miles / 17.7 km long run are comfortable. Recent race speed alone is not enough.
3. 5 weekly running days are prescribed in the build. All warm-ups, recoveries and cool-downs count within the listed distance.
4. Move days while keeping recovery before quality sessions and the long run. Never squeeze missed sessions together.
5. Practise fuel and drinks early, shorten sessions when recovery suffers and adjust your race target if marathon pace is becoming a hard effort.
6. After a missed week, return at a manageable earlier load. After a longer interruption, reassess the target and race date. Stop if pain worsens or changes your stride.

YOUR NEXT PB

Sub 3 Hour Marathon Training Plan

<https://www.runningfastr.com/marathon-training-plan/sub-3-hour-marathon-training-plan/>

Free plan. No subscription required. Pick your target, follow the plan, run faster.

Training guidance is general information, not personalised medical advice. Reduce or stop training if pain changes your stride or worsens.