



ROAD RUNNER
HIGH SPEED ONLINE™

Road Runner Akron Marathon

GENERAL TRAINING INFORMATION

If you are just getting started on your path to becoming a marathoner, we recommend that you start training at least 5-6 months prior to the race. There are many different theories about training and various training schedules to choose from, all based on your experience and abilities!

Marathon Training

In training for a marathon, you are striving to condition your body to sustain itself during 26+ miles of near-peak performance. While there is no magic formula you can use to train for marathons that will guarantee you a successful performance, scientific observations and research have pointed out facts that can be used as guidelines for ensuring a maximum return on the effort expended in training.

The marathon is unique in that 99% of the running is done at an aerobic level, that is, oxygen is replaced in the bloodstream as fast as it is used. Most other races require large periods of anaerobic effort, in which oxygen is used from the bloodstream faster than it can be replaced. This causes "oxygen debt", which produces a buildup of lactic acid in the muscles since oxygen is the prime element used to oxidize the lactic acid. Lactic acid build-up is what makes the muscles feel tired. In an anaerobic state the body is unable to oxidize all the lactic acid and the body soon becomes tired. If the anaerobic state is continued beyond the "tired" point, exhaustion soon overcomes the runner.

Fortunately a runner can train his body to accept large amounts of anaerobic activity without serious loss of performance. Since only 1% of the 26+ miles requires anaerobic activity and because all training should be specific, the bulk of marathon training should consist of running long, slow distances (LSD training). From time to time you should include some speed work to build up your anaerobic ability and help build your stride and legs, but remember, 100 yard dashes are not going to do too much in adapting your body to the rigors of 26 miles, 385 yards. Probably the best combination of speed and distance work is the use of short, fast spurts during your long runs. This should not be carried to extremes, however, as you can easily overtrain and exhaust or injure yourself.

In order to train properly you must have both a goal and a schedule. The primary goal of every marathon runner is to finish. Towards that goal three training schedules are included. The schedules should be considered as guides only, since only you yourself can judge your performance in relation to the various schedules. However, if you are able to follow any of these schedules, you can be assured of not only finishing, but finishing in good physical condition. Consider these points as you study the schedules:

- Age is no barrier to competing in and finishing a marathon (men in their 70's and women in their 60's regularly complete marathons in four hours). Common sense, however, should dictate a somewhat reduced schedule for runners over 60.
- Since you are asking your body to condition itself to great strain, you must remember that rest is essential during the training schedule; for the majority, a "hard-easy", schedule works best. Too much effort without sufficient rest and your body will exhaust itself and retard, rather than advance, your conditioning process.

Most training schedules are categorized as beginner, intermediate or advanced.

Beginner: Highly recommended for all first-time marathoners. Even if you're a speedster at completing the 5k or 10k race, we suggest following a beginner's schedule. One of the worst decisions a new marathoner can make is training at a level that is too difficult for your body to adjust properly. You might risk injury either before or during the race. It is best to simply set your goal on finishing the first marathon rather than on how fast you can complete it. Many runners stay at the beginner level of training for their first few marathons.

Intermediate: Have you run a few marathons, and feel like you've gotten the hang of things? Perhaps you should take a step up to the next level. Intermediate schedules are often for runners who have some experience and might want to improve on their times. At this level, you might add another day of running to your weekly schedule, or perhaps speed up the pace on long runs. Intermediate runners also increase their total weekly mileage.

Advanced: Are you already at a high level of personal performance? Been running marathons for years? Then the experienced schedule might be for you. This training schedule might add more weight training, hill training, track runs, tempo runs or speed training to your workouts. However, be cautious before jumping up to the advanced schedules. A lot of these workouts can make you more susceptible to injuries. Always be certain to do the proper stretching and listen to your body to let you know if you are training too much too fast.

The *Road Runner Akron Marathon* has compiled a few noted programs to pass along to runners in an effort to better prepare them for the rigors of running a marathon. All the programs differ, but hold true to a few principles. Training should begin months before the race with the runner building from an established base, increasing mileage and then tapering the weeks prior to the marathon. It is also important to try the replenishment drink and energy gel that will be used on the course if you plan to take advantage of those amenities the day of the race. The replenishment drink will be PowerAde. It can be purchased in ready-to-drink sizes at most stores. The energy gel will be GU Energy Gel, available at most running stores. Ensure your body is acclimated to these products by training with them. We hope that you will find one of these programs helpful on your way to completing the *Road Runner Akron Marathon*.

Reminder: Marathon running is not recommended for people below the age of fourteen. It is also recommended that anyone over the age of 35 and/or with a family history of heart disease consult with their physician before undertaking the marathon.

Runners - Good luck and good training!!