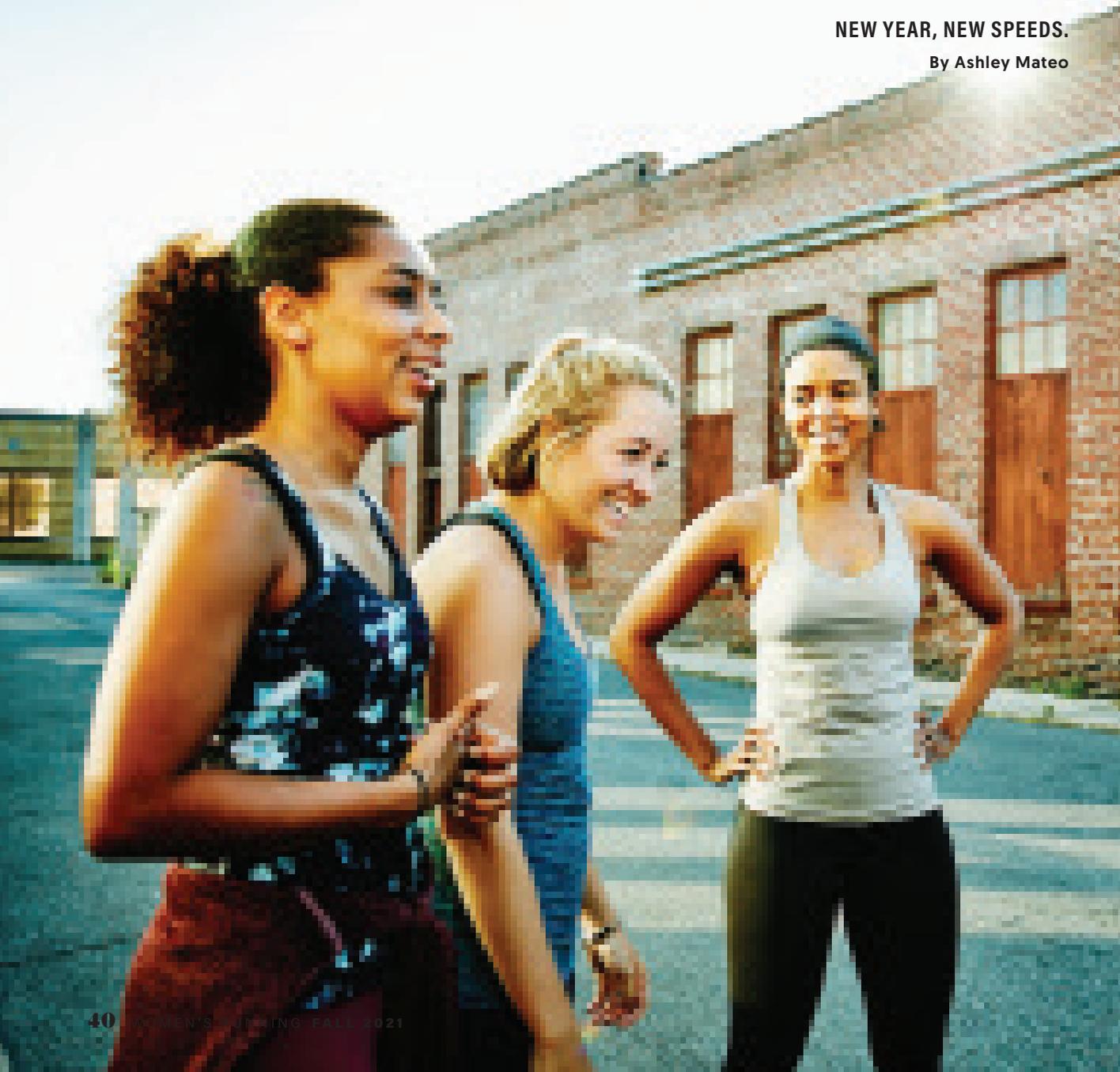


# Be a Better Runner in 2022

NEW YEAR, NEW SPEEDS.

By Ashley Mateo



Maybe you've been racing a lot during the pandemic. Maybe you took some time off and you're finally ready to get back out there. Maybe you've been running regularly but you're itching to pick up the pace.

A new year is a fresh start, and wherever you're at, 2022 has potential to make you stronger, fitter, and faster. And it turns out, collectively we're off to a pretty strong start. Runners are already running more than ever: 26.2 million people ran more than 50 times in 2020, a 4.5 percent increase over 2019, according to the Sports and Fitness Industry Association's 2021 Topline Report. But just upping your frequency isn't enough when it comes to goal-chasing—you have to run smart.

Planning ahead (like, maybe way ahead) can help you be proactive about your training, whether you've got your sights set on speedy shorter distances this spring or a PR in a fall marathon. Wherever you're at right now, make the most of this upcoming year with our comprehensive training guide.



## How to Assess Your Current Fitness Level

To move forward, you have to look back, says Rebeka Stowe, a Nike Run Club coach and Olympic Trials finalist based in New York. "You have to be really honest with yourself when you're putting a plan together to figure out what you need."

To take stock, you can start with basic questions: How many days a week were you training? What was your average overall volume? What type of sessions were you doing? What type of sessions were you avoiding? A running coach would dig a little deeper, with queries like:

- What are your short- and long-term running goals?
- What aspect of running are you most intimidated by (if any)?
- What are your top running-related strengths and weaknesses?
- On a scale of 1 to 10, how much do you look forward to hard training sessions?
- On a scale of 1 to 10, how susceptible are you to mental burnout?

The answers might not be immediate. That's OK, but taking the time to develop self-awareness (whether it be in your own head on the run or through a journaling practice) will help in the long run.

Going beyond the metrics on your watch also addresses the mental aspects of training. "I always ask my athletes—whether they're ultramarathoners or 800-meter runners—what is going to bring you joy? What are you going to be excited about on the daily?" says Asher Kyger Henry, a running coach, certified strength and conditioning specialist, and doctor of physical therapy. "That's your starting point."

Maybe you want to feel strong in your running, or include strength training, or use running to connect socially. That makes running less about a finish line goal (which can be impacted by factors out of your control, like weather conditions) and more about process goals that create a positive, healthy relationship with running, says Henry.

"An outcome goal is authentic and can really drive an athlete, but you have to be honest about where you're at and realistic about your timeline," says Stowe. "If the goal is truly to make improvements, you have to highlight



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the areas you were successful in and embrace the areas that you may have avoided.”

You can't move forward without establishing what you're physically capable of, either. Whether you've done a recent race or not, the New Year can be a great time for a benchmark workout. Not only will that clue you into your current fitness levels, it will help you track progress as you keep training.

One of the easiest ways to establish a running baseline: Jeff Galloway's Magic Mile, says Henry. Here's how it works: Warm up with a slow one mile run. Do a few strides. Run about as hard as you can for one mile (without feeling like you're going to puke at the end). Walk for about five minutes to cool down.

Got your mile pace? Add 33 seconds to that to determine your 5K pace, then multiply your magic mile time by 1.15 for 10K pace, by 1.175 for 10-mile pace, by 1.2 for half marathon pace, and by 1.3 for marathon pace (Galloway's website also has a calculator if numbers aren't your thing).

These paces aren't set in stone, but are meant to be a reference point for gauging effort during certain workouts, whether you're doing repeats at mile pace or working half marathon pace intervals into a long run. The best part: You can repeat this test every six to eight weeks (that's how long it takes the body to physiologically adapt to stress, says Henry) to stay on top of your goals and course-correct if necessary.

## How to Make a Plan for 2022

A fresh calendar is a blank slate for race training. But filling in those months and weeks can feel totally overwhelming without the guidance of a pro. Good news: We've got insights from two of them. Here's how to look at your yearly calendar and plan for a successful training schedule.

### If you want to PR in a half or full marathon:

Distance running requires a huge aerobic foundation, or base, says Stowe—and that introductory phase of a training cycle can take the longest. How long depends on your experience and fitness level, but at least six to eight weeks of easy running before jumping into a training plan is a good place to start, says Stowe; Henry recommends 12 weeks if you can. That time investment is important, because this part of training increases your aerobic capacity (read: endurance), improves muscular strength, and trains the mind-body connection.

The second part of base training is strides. Once you can do a comfortable 40 minutes of running at a conversational pace, you can introduce these short (about 100-meter) pickups where you almost hit your top speed, then slow back down to a jog and repeat. “Strides are all about increasing turnover and pairing your running mechanics with your cardiovascular system to make sure you're being as efficient as possible,” says Henry. You can do strides two to four times a week, she says—try adding four reps of 15 to 30 seconds, with two minutes of easy running in between, to a run.

After two to four weeks incorporating strides, says Henry, you can start layering in workouts. Caveat: If you're someone who's done months of aerobic work, you can start with strides and jump right into lactate threshold, VO2 max, and race pace training, says Stowe. “If you're looking to set a PR in a longer distance, you're going to want 8 to 12 weeks' worth of work where you're running not only at half marathon and marathon paces, but pushing your ability to go faster at shorter distances.” Stowe recommends a minimum of 10 weeks for half marathon training and 16 weeks for marathon training—after your base building period.

### If you want to PR in a 5K or 10K:

No matter the distance, you need an aerobic base. “It's not just your cardio system that needs to be ready; your muscles, tendons, and ligaments need to be prepped, too,” says Henry.

That's especially important for speedier shorter distances, because “the faster you move, the more load you're putting on your body,” says Stowe. Remember: You need at least six to eight weeks minimum for a base, plus two to four weeks of strides, says Henry. “At a minimum, you could be ready to cover that distance in eight weeks,” she says, “but for a PR effort, you still need a block of race-specific workouts.”

You have to run fast to get fast. “This is where you get to tap into power development, both aerobic and anaerobic,” Stowe says. That might look like high reps of short intervals (think 200s or 400s) at 5K pace, or lower reps of longer intervals (like 800s or 1000s) at half marathon pace. “You may be doing shorter sessions, where the total volume is as low as two miles, but you're doing really fast work that doubles as strength training,” says Stowe. Over the course of the program, you'll increase the length or the intensity of those intervals as you get stronger.

And while it may seem like you need less time to get prepped for a shorter distance, it still takes time for physiological remodeling to take place to a degree where you can actually see muscle growth, says Henry. That's why a mile, a 5K, and a 10K all call for at least eight weeks of race-specific training after establishing your base.



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### If you're injured or have taken more than two months away from running:

There's no situation where base building is more important than when you're returning to running after a break. “You need at least six to eight weeks of low heart rate, aerobic base training with the implementation of strides before going into a training plan,” says Henry. (And, if you're coming back from an injury, you absolutely need your doc's OK to hit the road.)

“When you haven't run in awhile, the load you're going to be putting on your body is totally different,” says Stowe. “You may feel great because you're so rested, but you have to make sure your tissues are ready to handle that load.”

In those first six to eight weeks, supplemental work is super important—think strength training, foam rolling, stretching, mobility. “You want to make sure you're as solid as can be to reduce the potential risk of setbacks or future injury,” says Henry.

## Your Complete 2022 Training Plan Pack

Remember this: There is no perfect training plan. “The best one molds and flexes and adjusts to your life,” says Henry. These plans, devised by Stowe, are meant to be a guide. It's totally fine if you miss a workout or have to move things around to fit your schedule. “We all get overwhelmed with life sometimes, and when that happens, just take a step back and focus on overall consistency,” says Henry. The less pressure you put on yourself to plan in permanent marker, the less stressed you'll feel—and the better you'll run.

### Marathon (p. 48)

A marathon is a 98 percent aerobic activity, which means training requires predominantly aerobic work, says Stowe. “At the same time, you want to build total-body strength to withstand that time on your feet, so some faster turnover sessions that tap into 5K and 10K pace (and hills!) are important,” she says. Nailing that combo in your schedule will help you go the distance.

### Half Marathon (p. 47)

Half marathon training has a lot of similarities to marathon training, because it's still a highly aerobic event, says Stowe. This time, though, “you're going to be doing a touch more lactate threshold work—working at 90 to 92 percent of your max effort—because it's important to train your body to process waste efficiently,” she says. This plan is the perfect way to build aerobic capacity but still challenge yourself from a speed perspective.

### 10K (p. 46)

When training for a 10K, you tap into those faster paces more often. “After the first three weeks, you're going to bump up to two speed-specific workouts a week, including in the long run,” says Stowe. “There's still a lot of work at half marathon pace, but you're really getting down to 5K and even mile pace more frequently.” To get faster over longer distances, you have to hit the gas during shorter intervals first.

### 5K (p. 45)

For the 5K, you still need lactate threshold (i.e. half marathon pace) work, because that's what gets you to 4K. But crushing that final K requires developing the anaerobic system with 5K velocity work and more aggressive strength training, says Stowe. “You're going to see more varied work here—change of pace, change of effort—just because you want to start understanding what 5K pace feels like, and it's not a comfortable place.”

### One Mile (p. 44)

Mile training is similar to 5K training, but it's even faster. “You're adding in more strides and more reps of shorter intervals here,” says Stowe. The reason is simple: To get fast, you have to run fast. Meanwhile, the longer efforts and easy runs help keep that aerobic engine revving, so you can focus on building speed and power.

# Mile Training Plan

WEEK	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
<b>1</b>	PT / Strength Focused Lift	30 min + 4 x 20 sec strides or OFF	6-10 x 400m @ HM-10K w/ 400m jog recovery	PT / Endurance Focused Lift	30 min run or 45 - 60 min cross-train	8 x 200 @ 5K - Mile w/ 200m jog recovery	45 min
<b>2</b>	PT / Strength Focused Lift	30 min + 4 x 20 sec strides or OFF	4 x 5 min @ HM w/ 1:30 min recovery	PT / Endurance Focused Lift	30 min run or 45 - 60 min cross-train	8 -10 x 30 sec hill w/ jog down recovery	45 min
<b>3</b>	PT / Strength Focused Lift	30 min + 4 x 20 sec strides or OFF	3-4 x 1 mile @ HM w/ 1 min walk recovery	PT / Endurance Focused Lift	30 min run or 45 - 60 min cross-train	500, 400, 300, 200 @ Mile w/ previous distance jog recovery (i.e. 500 @ Mile, 500 recovery, 400m @ Mile, 400m recovery)	45 - 60 min
<b>4</b>	PT / Strength Focused Lift	30 min + 4 x 20 sec strides or OFF	45 min run	PT / Endurance Focused Lift	30 min run or 45 - 60 min cross-train	4 x 800/300 @ 5K/ Mile w/ 100m/400m jog recovery (i.e. 800 @ 5K, 100m jog, 300 @ Mile, 400m jog)	6
<b>5</b>	PT / Strength Focused Lift	30 min + 4 x 20 sec strides or OFF	2 x 10 min @ HM w/ 1:30 min recovery + 4 x 1 min @ 5K-Mile w/ 2 min jog recovery	PT / Power Focused Lift	30-40 min Run or 45 - 60 min cross-train	8 -10 x 30 sec hill w/ jog down recovery	8
<b>6</b>	PT / Strength Focused Lift	30 min + 4 x 20 sec strides or OFF	6-8 x 400m @ 10K-5K w/ 400m jog recovery	PT / Power Focused Lift	30-40 min Run or 45 - 60 min cross-train	8 x 200 @ 5K - Mile w/ 200m jog recovery	6
<b>7</b>	PT / Strength Focused Lift	30 min + 4 x 20 sec strides or OFF	45 min run	PT / Power Focused Lift	30-45 min Run or 45 - 60 min cross-train	1000m @ Mile, 5 min jog recovery, 2 x 300m cut down (100 @ 5K, 100 @ Mile, 100 @ Faster)	45 - 60 min
<b>8</b>	PT / Strength Focused Lift	30 min + 4 x 20 sec strides or OFF	400, 300, 200 @ Mile w/ previous distance jog recovery (i.e. 400 @ Mile, 400 recovery, 300m @ Mile, 300m recovery)	PT / Power Focused Lift	30 min + 4 x 100m strides @ Mile for rhythm	<b>MILE</b>	30 min

# 5K Training Plan

WEEK	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
<b>1</b>	PT / Strength Focused Lift	30 min + 4 x 20 sec strides or OFF	6-10 x 400m @ HM-10K w/ 400m jog recovery	PT / Endurance Focused Lift	30 min run or 45 - 60 min cross-train	8 x 200 @ 5K - Mile w/ 200m jog recovery	45 - 60 min
<b>2</b>	PT / Strength Focused Lift	30 min + 4 x 20 sec strides or OFF	4 x 5 min @ HM w/ 1:30 min recovery	PT / Endurance Focused Lift	30 min run or 45 - 60 min cross-train	8 -10 x 30 sec hill w/ jog down recovery	45 - 60 min
<b>3</b>	PT / Strength Focused Lift	30 min + 4 x 20 sec strides or OFF	3-5 x 1 mile @ HM w/ 1 min walk recovery	PT / Endurance Focused Lift	30 min run or 45 - 60 min cross-train	2 x 500, 400, 300, 200 @ 5K/Mile w/ previous distance jog recovery (i.e. 500 @ Mile, 500 recovery, 400m @ Mile, 400m recovery) first set @ 5K, second set @ Mile	60 - 70 min
<b>4</b>	PT / Strength Focused Lift	30 min + 4 x 20 sec strides or OFF	45 min run	PT / Endurance Focused Lift	30 min run or 45 - 60 min cross-train	4 x 800/300 @ 5K/ Mile w/ 100m/400m jog recovery (i.e. 800 @ 5K, 100m jog, 300 @ Mile, 400m jog)	8
<b>5</b>	PT / Strength Focused Lift	30 min + 4 x 20 sec strides or OFF	2 x 10 min @ HM w/ 1:30 min recovery + 4 x 1 min @ 5K-Mile w/ 2 min jog recovery	PT / Power Focused Lift	30 min run or 45 - 60 min cross-train	8 -10 x 30 sec hill w/ jog down recovery	10
<b>6</b>	PT / Strength Focused Lift	30 min + 4 x 20 sec strides or OFF	8-10 x 400m @ 10K-5K w/ 400m jog recovery	PT / Power Focused Lift	30 min run or 45 - 60 min cross-train	12-14 x 200 @ 5K - Mile w/ 200m jog recovery	8
<b>7</b>	PT / Strength Focused Lift	30 min + 4 x 20 sec strides or OFF	45 min run	PT / Power Focused Lift	30 min run or 45 - 60 min cross-train	3000m @ 5K, 5 min jog recovery, 2 x 600/200 @ 5K/Mile w/ 200m/400m jog recovery (600 @ 5K, jog 200m, 200 @ Mile, jog 400m - REPEAT)	45 - 60 min
<b>8</b>	PT / Strength Focused Lift	30 min + 4 x 20 sec strides or OFF	1 Mile @ 5K, 2 min 10 min @ HM, 2 x 200m @ Mile w/ 2 min	PT / Power Focused Lift	30 min + 2 x 200m strides @ 5K for Rhythm	<b>5K</b>	30 min

# 10K Training Plan

WEEK	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
<b>1</b>	PT / Strength Focused Lift	30 min or OFF	6-10 x 400m @ Half marathon-10K pace w/ 400m jog recovery	PT / Endurance Focused Lift	30 min run or 45 - 60 min cross-train	60 - 75 min	30 min or OFF
<b>2</b>	PT / Strength Focused Lift	30 min or OFF	4-6 x 800m @ HM w/ 2 min jog recovery	PT / Endurance Focused Lift	30 min run or 45 - 60 min cross-train	60 - 75 min	30 min or OFF
<b>3</b>	PT / Strength Focused Lift	30 min or OFF	3-5 x 1 mile @ HM w/ 1 min walk recovery	PT / Endurance Focused Lift	30 min run or 45 - 60 min cross-train	60 - 75 min	30 min or OFF
<b>4</b>	PT / Strength Focused Lift	30 min or OFF	45 - 60 min run	PT / Endurance Focused Lift	30 min run or 45 - 60 min cross-train	5 mile run + 4 x 1 mile @ HM w/ 1:30 jog recovery	30 min or OFF
<b>5</b>	PT / Strength Focused Lift	30-40 min or OFF	10 - 12 x 45 sec hill w/ jog down recovery	PT / Endurance Focused Lift	30 min run or 45 - 60 min cross-train	3 x 10 min @ HM/HM/10K w/ 2min jog recovery	30 - 40 min or OFF
<b>6</b>	PT / Strength Focused Lift	30-40 min or OFF	25-35 min Continuous @ HM	PT / Endurance Focused Lift	30 min run or 45 - 60 min cross-train	5 - 8 x 1000m @ HM - 5K w/ 400m jog	30 - 40 min or OFF
<b>7</b>	PT / Strength Focused Lift	30-40 min or OFF	60 - 70 min run	PT / Endurance Focused Lift	30 min run or 45 - 60 min cross-train	5K @ 10K, 5 min jog recovery, 4 x 400m @ 10K - 5K w/ 400m jog recovery	30 - 45 min or OFF
<b>8</b>	PT / Strength Focused Lift	30-45 min or OFF	2 x 800m @ 10K, 4 x 400/200m @ 5K/Mile w/ 2 min jog recovery	PT / Endurance Focused Lift	30 min run or 45 - 60 min cross-train	<b>10K</b>	30 min or OFF

# Half Marathon Training Plan

WEEK	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
<b>1</b>	PT / Endurance Focused Lift	30 min or OFF	6-8 x 400m @ HM-10K w/ 400m jog recovery	PT / Endurance Focused Lift	30 min run or 45 - 60 min cross-train	75 - 90 min	30 min or OFF
<b>2</b>	PT / Endurance Focused Lift	30 min or OFF	4-6 x 800m @ HM w/ 2 min jog recovery	PT / Endurance Focused Lift	30 min run or 45 - 60 min cross-train	75 - 90 min	30 min or OFF
<b>3</b>	PT / Endurance Focused Lift	30 min or OFF	3-5 x 1 mile @ M-HM w/ 1 min walk recovery	PT / Endurance Focused Lift	30 min run or 45 - 60 min cross-train	75 - 90 min	30 min or OFF
<b>4</b>	PT / Endurance Focused Lift	30 min or OFF	45 min run	PT / Endurance Focused Lift	30 min run or 45 - 60 min cross-train	10 miles	30 min or OFF
<b>5</b>	PT / Endurance Focused Lift	30 - 40 min or OFF	10 - 12 x 45 sec hill w/ jog down recovery	PT / Endurance Focused Lift	30 min run or 45 - 60 min cross-train	12 miles	30 - 40 min or OFF
<b>6</b>	PT / Endurance Focused Lift	30 - 40 min or OFF	25-35 min Continuous @ M	PT / Endurance Focused Lift	30 min run or 45 - 60 min cross-train	14 miles	30 - 40 min or OFF
<b>7</b>	PT / Endurance Focused Lift	30 - 45 min or OFF	8 -10 x 60 sec hill w/ jog down recovery	PT / Endurance Focused Lift	30 min run or 45 - 60 min cross-train	12 miles	30 - 45 min or OFF
<b>8</b>	PT / Endurance Focused Lift	30 - 45 min or OFF	45 min run	PT / Endurance Focused Lift	30 min run or 45 - 60 min cross-train	10 miles	30 - 45 min or OFF
<b>9</b>	PT / Endurance Focused Lift	30 - 40 min or OFF	8-10 x 400m @ 10K-5K w/ 400m jog recovery	PT / Endurance Focused Lift	30 min run or 45 - 60 min cross-train	8 miles	30 - 40 min or OFF
<b>10</b>	PT / Endurance Focused Lift	30 - 40 min or OFF	3- 4 x 5 min @ HM w/ 1 min	PT / Endurance Focused Lift	30 min run or 45 - 60 min cross-train	<b>13.1</b>	30 min or OFF

# Marathon Training Plan

WEEK	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
<b>1</b>	PT / Endurance Focused Lift	30 min or OFF	6-8 x 400m @ HM-10K w/ 400m jog recovery	PT / Endurance Focused Lift	30 min run or 45-60 min cross-train	75-90 min	30 min or OFF
<b>2</b>	PT / Endurance Focused Lift	30 min or OFF	4-6 x 800m @ HM w/ 2 min jog recovery	PT / Endurance Focused Lift	30 min run or 45-60 min cross-train	75-90 min	30 min or OFF
<b>3</b>	PT / Endurance Focused Lift	30 min or OFF	3-4 x 1 mile @ M-HM w/ 1 min walk recovery	PT / Endurance Focused Lift	30 min run or 45-60 min cross-train	75-90 min	30 min or OFF
<b>4</b>	PT / Endurance Focused Lift	30 min or OFF	45 min run	PT / Endurance Focused Lift	30 min run or 45-60 min cross-train	10 miles	30 min or OFF
<b>5</b>	PT / Endurance Focused Lift	30-40 min or OFF	8-10 x 45 sec hill w/ jog down recovery	PT / Endurance Focused Lift	30-40 min Run or 45-60 min cross-train	12 miles	30-40 min or OFF
<b>6</b>	PT / Endurance Focused Lift	30-40 min or OFF	25-35 min Continuous @ M	PT / Endurance Focused Lift	30-40 min Run or 45-60 min cross-train	14 miles	30-40 min or OFF
<b>7</b>	PT / Endurance Focused Lift	30-45 min or OFF	8-10 x 60 sec hill w/ jog down recovery	PT / Endurance Focused Lift	30-45 min Run or 45-60 min cross-train	16 miles	30-45 min or OFF
<b>8</b>	PT / Endurance Focused Lift	30-45 min or OFF	45 min run	PT / Endurance Focused Lift	30-45 min Run or 45-60 min cross-train	18 miles	30-45 min or OFF

WEEK	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
<b>9</b>	PT / Endurance Focused Lift	30-40 min or OFF	8-10 x 400m @ 10K-5K w/ 400m jog recovery	PT / Endurance Focused Lift	30-40 min Run or 45-60 min cross-train	12 miles	30-40 min or OFF
<b>10</b>	PT / Endurance Focused Lift	30-40 min or OFF	10-12 x 30 sec hill w/ jog down recovery	PT / Endurance Focused Lift	30-40 min Run or 45-60 min cross-train	13.1 miles	30-40 min or OFF
<b>11</b>	PT / Endurance Focused Lift	30-45 min or OFF	4-6 x 1 mile @ M-HM w/ 1 min walk recovery	PT / Endurance Focused Lift	30-45 min Run or 45-60 min cross-train	12 miles	30-45 min or OFF
<b>12</b>	PT / Endurance Focused Lift	30-45 min or OFF	35-45 min Continuous @ M	PT / Endurance Focused Lift	30-45 min Run or 45-60 min cross-train	20 miles	30 min or OFF
<b>13</b>	PT / Endurance Focused Lift	30-40 min or OFF	45 min run	PT / Endurance Focused Lift	30-40 min Run or 45-60 min cross-train	14 miles	30-40 min or OFF
<b>14</b>	PT / Endurance Focused Lift	30-40 min or OFF	6-8 x 800m @ HM w/ 2 min jog recovery	PT / Endurance Focused Lift	30-40 min Run or 45-60 min cross-train	14 miles	30-40 min or OFF
<b>15</b>	PT / Endurance Focused Lift	30 min or OFF	45 min run	30-45 min Run or 45-60 min cross-train	30 min run or cross-train	10 miles	30 min or OFF
<b>16</b>	PT / Endurance Focused Lift	30 min or OFF	4 x 1200m (3 @ M, 1 @ HM) w/ 2 min recovery jog	30 min run or cross-train	30 min run or cross-train	<b>26.2</b>	30 min or OFF