



12-WEEK

# Marathon

TRAINING

PLAN

foodspring

In partnership with the editors of TORIA! Media and running coach Kara Dudley



WELCOME

# Get Ready for Race Day

- What you'll need
- How often you'll train
- Workouts at a glance
- Your training plan

## THE 12-WEEK MARATHON TRAINING PLAN

- How it works
- Directions
- Quick tips for maximizing your results
- The strength training routine

WEEKS 1 TO 3: Ramp Up

WEEKS 4 TO 6: Advance, then Cut Back

WEEKS 7 TO 9: Keep Striding

WEEKS 10 TO 12: Peak, then Taper

FUEL UP

Welcome to your 12-week Marathon training program. Designed by running coach and certified personal trainer [Kara Dudley](#), this plan is meant to get you race ready—and can be modified to fit your experience level. Within this guide, you'll also find her tips for all aspects of the training process, including advice around nutrition, recovery, and mindset.

Note: You should be able to run 15 km (and be averaging between 30 and 32 km per week) before participating in this program. If you need some help getting there, consider working with a coach to learn more about safely ramping up your mileage.



### **You will need:**

A way to measure distance while you're running and a pair of dumbbells (you might also want a range of weights to choose from)

**You will train:** Six days a week

### **Your workouts at a glance:**

Monday: **Easy run**

Tuesday: **Strength**

Wednesday: **Easy run**

Thursday: **Strength**

Friday: **Easy run**

Saturday: **Long run**

Sunday: **Rest**

## HOW TO USE THE WEEKLY CALENDARS:

If you are intermediate, follow the plan as written. If you are a beginner change the workout to what is written. If you are advanced, add on the additional exercises provided.

### TIP

As you get ready to hit the pavement, remember this guideline: Typically, you don't want to increase your overall mileage by more than 10% from week to week.





## Directions

This plan was designed for an intermediate runner who has perhaps tackled a half or full marathon before but who doesn't have overly ambitious time goals. If you do want to achieve a PR and/or have a few marathons under your belt, consider opting for the "advanced" workout options within the plan. If, on the other hand, you're a total beginner, take the "beginner" workout options where indicated.

When it comes to strength training days, follow the plan provided (you'll find it on the next page).

## Quick Tips for Maximizing Your Results

Here are Dudley's biggest form tips: Hold your arms at 90-degree angles and keep your elbows pumping behind you. Pick up your knees with each stride. Maintain a slight forward lean from the bottoms of your feet to the top of your head (even if you're going down a hill—it will help you find the momentum to move downhill efficiently). Land through your midfoot, right over your arch.

Ideally, you want your cadence (the number of steps you take per minute) to fall between 160 and 180 steps per minute, Dudley notes, and you can track that metric on many smart watches. A high cadence, she says, helps you to avoid injury by preventing overstriding. It also allows you to move forward more efficiently, since each step gives you the opportunity to push off the ground.

If you're speeding up or running uphill, Dudley says to exaggerate your form and amp up your cadence.





THE

## Strength Training Routine

“In my ideal world, I’d have people going to the gym and using heavy weights,” Dudley says. “Heavy weights and lower reps is what’s going to help a runner in general.”

That’s because it’s kind of the opposite of what you’re doing while running (lots of reps with a lighter load). However, if you’re new to strength work, feel free to start with just your bodyweight until you nail the form.

Glutes are the most important muscle group for runners to train, because it makes the biggest difference in speed, according to Dudley. Plus, she adds, injuries to your knees and hips can stem from weak glutes. Here, you’ll build up your glutes with a combination of front squats and deadlifts.

Directions: Start with one round of the warm-up exercises, then go into the “main work” moves, completing the prescribed number of reps for each exercise one after the next, then repeating for a total of three rounds (with one minute of rest in between each). Next, move on to the “accessory work,” “burnout,” and “stretch” components of the routine.

# The Exercises

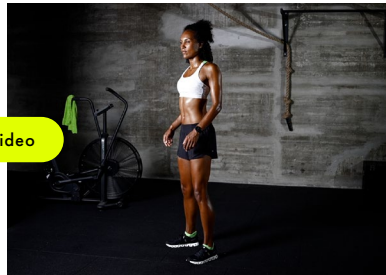
## WARM-UP

EXERCISE	REPS
Shoulder Rolls	10 Front, 10 Back
Shoulders Up, Retract, Down, Neutral	10 Total
Lateral Squat	5 Each Side
Alternating Front Lunge	5 Each Side
Alternating Reverse Lunge	5 Each Side
Jumping Jacks	20 Total

## SHOULDER ROLLS



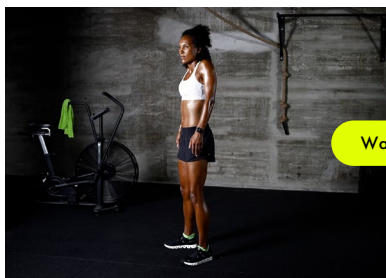
[Watch Video](#)



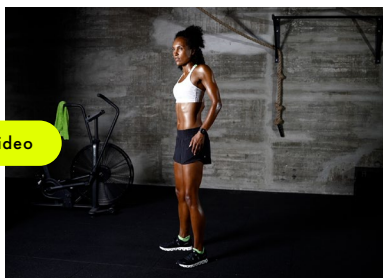
Stand tall with your arms at your sides and your feet about shoulders-width apart. Shrug both shoulders up to your ears in a forward and circular motion. Repeat in the opposite direction.



## SHOULDERS UP, RETRACT, DOWN, NEUTRAL



Watch Video



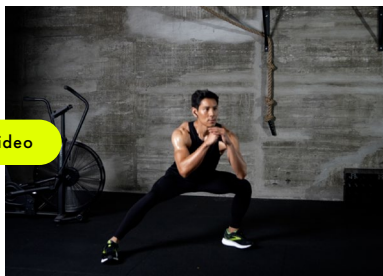
Stand tall with your arms at your sides and your feet about shoulders-width apart. Shrug both shoulders up to your ears and pause for one to two seconds.

Then, retract your shoulders back like you're pinching your shoulder blades together and pause for one to two seconds. Drop your shoulders down, keeping them retracted, and pause for one to two seconds. Release back to neutral and repeat.

## LATERAL SQUAT



Watch Video



Stand with your feet together and your arms at your sides. Step your right leg far out to the side. Bend your right knee so that your thigh is almost parallel to the ground. At the same time, bring your left arm across your body.

Reverse step three (the knee bend), and then step two (the step to the side).

Alternate sides until you complete 10 total.

## ALTERNATING FRONT LUNGE



Watch Video



Stand with your feet shoulders-width apart. Step one leg forward while slowly lowering your opposite knee to the ground. Return to the top. Repeat on the other side, alternating sides until you've done 10 total.

## ALTERNATING REVERSE LUNG



Watch Video



Stand with your feet shoulders-width apart. Step one leg back behind you while slowly lowering your knee to the ground. Drive your weight into the heel of the opposite foot as you return to the top. Repeat on the other side, alternating sides until you've done 10 total.

## JUMPING JACKS



Watch Video



Stand tall with your legs together and your arms at your sides. Jump in the air and spread your legs to about shoulders-width apart while raising your arms to your sides and up overhead. Land softly and repeat.





What's  
your  
goal?

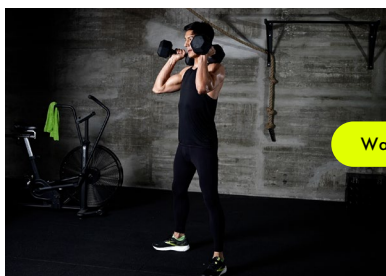


## MAIN WORK

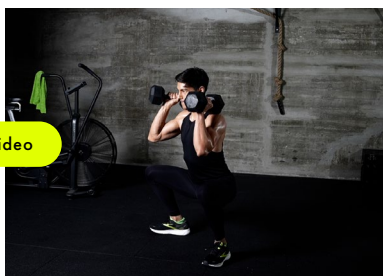
EXERCISE	REPS
Front Squats	10 Total
Single-Arm Dumbbell Rows	10 on each side
Romanian Deadlifts	10 Total

Rest for one minute, then repeat twice more.

### FRONT SQUATS



[Watch Video](#)



Stand tall with your feet about shoulders-width apart. Rack your heavy dumbbells on your shoulders and squat to parallel. Hold for one second and return to standing.

**Muscles:** Core, quads, hamstrings, glutes

**Easier:** Start with bodyweight only

**Harder:** Increase your weight, or add 5 reps

#### REMEMBER

In your progression from bodyweight to heavy weight, start by using just one dumbbell. As you get stronger, you can add the second.

## SINGLE-ARM DUMBBELL ROWS



Holding a heavy dumbbell at your side, stagger your stance and lean forward.

Rest your opposite elbow on your corresponding knee.

Pull the dumbbell toward your chest, keeping your elbow tight to your side.

**Muscles:** Back, biceps, forearms

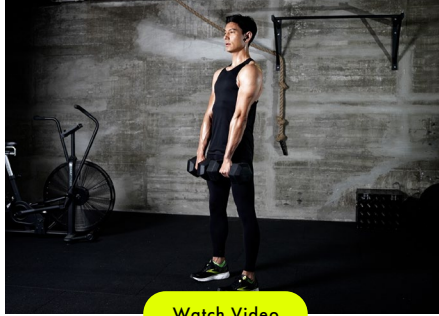
**Easier:** Use a lighter weight

**Harder:** Increase your weight, or add 5 reps

### REMEMBER

Your stabilizing elbow should stay attached to your knee.

## ROMANIAN DEADLIFTS



[Watch Video](#)



Stand tall with two heavy dumbbells at your sides. Hinge at the hips until you find a soft bend in your knees and feel a stretch in your hamstrings.

Squeeze your glutes as you return to stand.

**Muscles:** Glutes, hamstrings, back

**Easier:** Use a lighter weight

**Harder:** Increase your weight, or add 5 reps

### REMEMBER

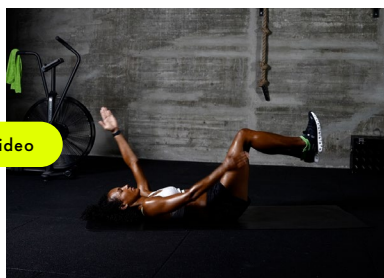
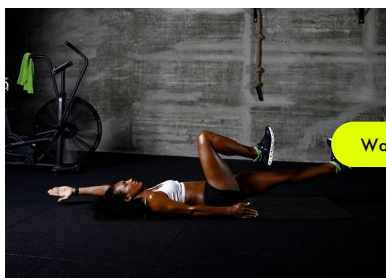
Keep your back straight.

## ACCESSORY WORK

EXERCISE	REPS
Dead Bugs	20 Total
Single-Arm Overhead Press	10 on each side

Rest for one minute, then repeat twice more.

### DEAD BUGS



Lie on your back with your legs lifted and bent at a 90-degree angle. Squeeze your core as you extend opposite limbs to the ground.

**Muscles:** Core

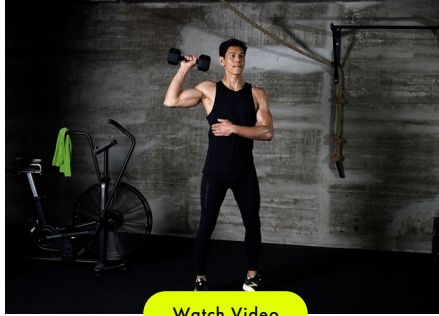
**Harder:** Add reps as you feel stronger

#### REMEMBER

Press your lower back into the ground.



## SINGLE-ARM OVERHEAD PRESS



Holding a moderate dumbbell in one hand, raise the dumbbell to the height of your ear. Press directly overhead, hold one second, and return to start.

**Muscles:** Shoulders, triceps

**Easier:** Start out with lighter weights

**Harder:** Increase your weight, or add 5 reps

### REMEMBER

Pinch your shoulder blades behind you on the press, keeping your shoulders down.



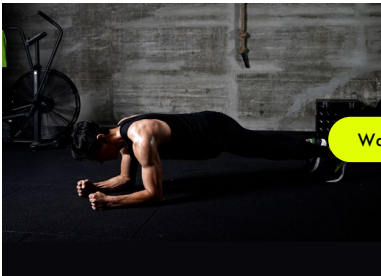
Go  
further

## BURNOUT

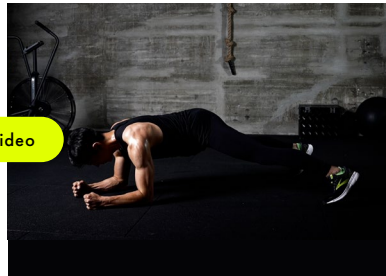
EXERCISE	REPS
Plank with Lateral Toe Taps	10 on each side
Plank Rock	10 Total

Rest for one minute, then repeat twice more.

### PLANK WITH LATERAL TOE TAPS



Watch Video



Start in a plank position on your elbows. While maintaining a braced core, move one foot out three to six inches, tap the ground, return to center. Repeat on the other side, then continue alternating sides.

**Muscles:** Core

**Easier:** Start on your hands rather than your elbows

**Harder:** After the toe tap, bring your knee to your elbow

#### REMEMBER

Keep your hips down and your shoulders over your elbows.

## PLANK ROCK



From a plank position on your elbows, shift forward and then back to neutral.

**Muscles:** Core

**Easier:** Start on your hands rather than your elbows, or start by simply holding a plank on your elbows

**Harder:** In the forward or neutral position, lift one foot off the ground at a time and hold. Repeat on the other side.

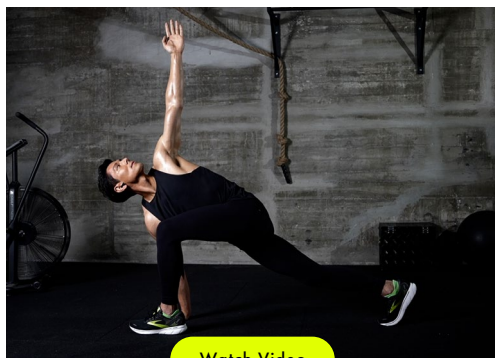
### REMEMBER

Don't shift back—just forward and to your neutral position.

## STRETCH

EXERCISE	REPS
Runner's Lunge on the right	30 sec
Pyramid on the right	30 sec
Runner's Lunge on the left	30 sec
Pyramid on the left	30 sec
Lateral Stretch to the Right	30 sec
Lateral Stretch to the Left	30 sec

### RUNNER'S LUNGE



Stand tall and step back with your left foot so you're in a deep lunge. Lean forward and place your left hand on the ground, raising your right arm. Twist to look up at your right hand. Repeat for the right side.

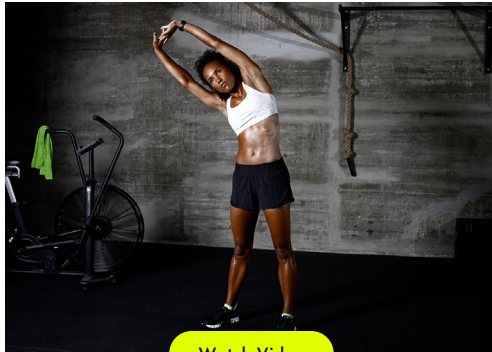
## PYRAMID



[Watch Video](#)

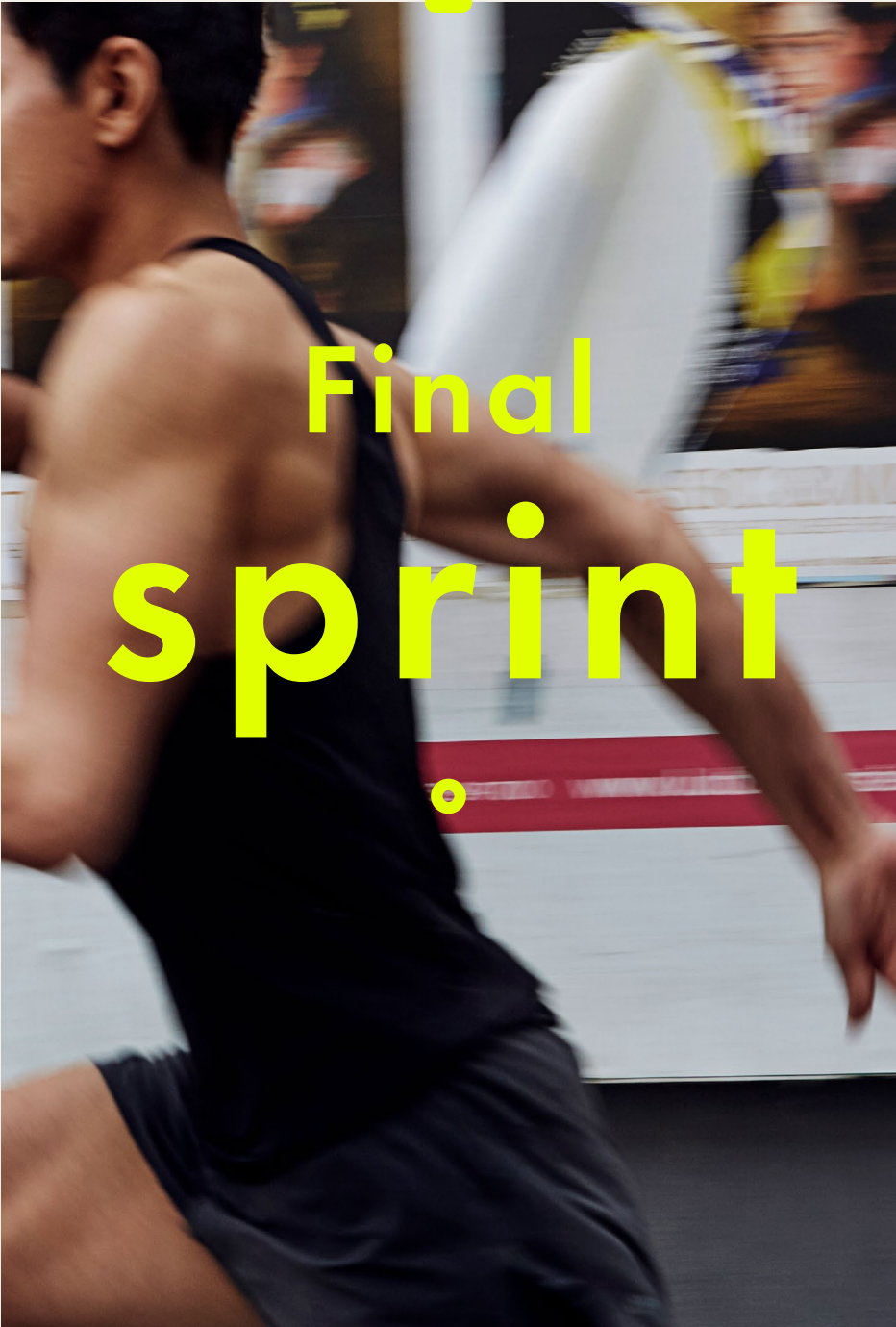
Stand tall and step back with your left foot so you're in a deep lunge with both hands on the ground. Turn your left foot out to about a 45-degree angle and straighten your front leg. You should feel a stretch in your right hamstring.

## HANDS CLASPED ABOVE HEAD, LATERAL STRETCH



[Watch Video](#)

Stand tall with your feet hips-width apart. Reach your hands over your head and clasp your hands together. Lean to the right until you feel a stretch along your left side.



# Final sprint

## RAMP UP

While this is just the beginning of your marathon training, technically speaking, it starts with a bang: a 16 km long run. That's why Dudley recommends having a solid running base before diving in. Beginners, though, have the option to scale back their mileage a bit compared to advanced and intermediate runners.

		MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN	Weekly Mileage
WEEK 1	Intermed.	6 km easy run	45-60 min strength 1.5 km warm up 200 x 8 1.5 km cool down	8 km easy run	45-60 min strength	5 km easy run	16 km long run	Rest	40
	Beginner	5 km easy run	Strength only	6 km easy run					32
	Advanced								40
WEEK 2	Intermed.	6 km easy run	45-60 min strength 1.5 km warm up 200 x 8 hills 1.5 km cool down	8 km easy run	45-60 min strength	6 km easy run	18 km long run	Rest	43
	Beginner	5 km easy run	Strength only			5 km easy run			35
	Advanced								43

## INTERVAL REPEATS

ON TUESDAYS (AND THURSDAYS LATER IN THE PLAN) YOU'LL SEE A METERED DISTANCE TIMES A SET NUMBER OF REPETITIONS (IG. 200 X 8). WHEN NOT SPECIFIED, THESE SPRINTS ARE ON FLAT GROUND, BUT WHEN "HILL" IS WRITTEN THEY ARE DONE ON AN INCLINE.

HERE'S AN EXAMPLE OF HOW IT WORKS: THE FIRST WEEK YOU WILL RUN A 1.5KM WARM-UP, THEN A HARD-PACED 200 METERS. YOU WILL REST BRIEFLY (30, 60, OR 90 SECONDS), THEN REPEAT 7 TIMES.





WEEKS 1 TO 3



		MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN	Weekly Mileage
WEEK 3	Intermed.	6 km easy run	45-60 min strength  1.5 km warm up 400 x 8 1.5 km cool down	10 km easy run	45-60 min strength	6 km easy run	19 km long run	Rest	48
	Beginner		Strength only	8 km easy run					40
	Advanced								48

TIP

There are a few points to keep in mind when it comes to pacing. First, eliminate that medium-fast pace (that doesn't feel very fast or very slow) from your training—it won't help you get faster. Instead, work on opposite ends of the spectrum, slowing down easy runs and speeding up your intervals and tempos. You should also practice your goal pace (if you have one) so you know how to course correct if you go out too fast or slow down at the end.

## ADVANCE, THEN CUT BACK

Now, you're getting into the thick of your training plan. In weeks 4 and 5, you'll build mileage and look forward to pulling back in week 6 to give your body a rest (and help prevent injury and burnout). "Cut back" weeks, Dudley says, should come every four to six weeks depending on your experience level.

		MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN	Weekly Mileage
WEEK 4	Intermed.	8 km easy run	45-60 min strength 1.5 km warm up 400 x 8 hills 1.5 km cool down	10 km easy run	45-60 min strength	8 km easy run	21 km long run	Rest	53
	Beginner	6 km easy run	Strength only			6 km easy run			43
	Advanced				1.5 km warm up 1.5 km at tempo				56
WEEK 5	Intermed.	8 km easy run	45-60 min strength 1.5 km warm up 600 x 6 hills 1.5 km cool down	11 km easy run	45-60 min strength	8 km easy run	24 km long run	Rest	58
	Beginner		Strength only	10 km easy run		6 km easy run			48
	Advanced				1.5 km warm up 3 km at tempo				63



WEEKS 4 TO 6



		MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN	Weekly Mileage
WEEK 6	Intermed.	6 km easy run	45-60 min strength 1.5 km warm up 600 x 6 hills 1.5 km cool down	8 km easy run	45-60 min strength	6 km easy run	13 km long run	Rest	40
	Beginner	5 km easy run	Strength only			5 km easy run			30
	Advanced				1.5 km warm up 3 km at tempo 1.5 km cool down				47

TIP

Many people skip leg day when time, because they assume they're getting a leg workout in. But in fact, when you're running, you're only training one repetitive movement—and you need to add in leg strengthening exercises in different planes of motion. Core work, too, can impact your speed and stability. Plus, along with shoulder strength, it can help you to keep a strong posture and a tall, open chest for the entire 42 km (rather than end up hunched over at the end).

## KEEP STRIDING

In these next three weeks, you'll edge closer to the 32 km long run mark. Beginners, though, will get three opportunities each week to cut down on mileage in their easy runs on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday.

		MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN	Weekly Mileage
WEEK 7	Intermed.	10 km easy run	45-60 min strength 1.5 km warm up 800 x 6 1.5 km cool down	11 km easy run	45-60 min strength	10 km easy run	26 km long run	Rest	64
	Beginner	8 km easy run	Strength only	10 km easy run		8 km easy run			51
	Advanced				1.5 km warm up 5 km at tempo				70
WEEK 8	Intermed.	10 km easy run	45-60 min strength 1.5 km warm up 800 x 6 hills 1.5 km cool down	13 km easy run	45-60 min strength	10 km easy run	30 km long run	Rest	69
	Beginner	8 km easy run	Strength only	11 km easy run		8 km easy run			56
	Advanced				1.5 km warm up 5 km at tempo 1.5 km cool down				77



WEEKS 7 TO 9



		MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN	Weekly Mileage
WEEK 9	Intermed.	11 km easy run	45-60 min strength  1.5 km warm up 1.5 km x 3 1.5 km cool down	13 km easy run	45-60 min strength	11 km easy run	30 km long run	Rest	74
	Beginner	10 km easy run	Strength only	11 km easy run		10 km easy run			61
	Advanced				1.5 km warm up 6 km at tempo				82

TIP

Devices like the Hypervolt, foam rollers, and compression boots (if you have access to them) can be great recovery tools. A lacrosse ball (or other hard ball) can be helpful, too, if you have a knot or an area that feels super tight.

## PEAK, THEN TAPER

This is it! You're almost there. Just one more really long run to go before race day, and this one's your 32 km. (Generally, you don't want to run more than 32 km in your training—it won't benefit you much, but it can increase your injury risk.) You'll taper in week 11, have an easy last week of training, then sail into race day. A tapering period can be two to three weeks depending on your level of experience and how much time you have to train overall.

		MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN	Weekly Mileage
WEEK 10	Intermed.	13 km easy run	45-60 min strength 1.5 km warm up 1.5 km x 4 hills 1.5 km cool down	15 km easy run	45-60 min strength	13 km easy run	32 km long run	Rest	82
	Beginner	10 km easy run	Strength only	13 km easy run		10 km easy run			64
	Advanced				1.5 km warm up 8 km at tempo				91
WEEK 11	Intermed.	6 km easy run	45-60 min strength	10 km easy run	45-60 min strength	6 km easy run	13 km long run	Rest	35
	Beginner			8 km easy run					34
	Advanced								35



WEEKS 10 TO 12

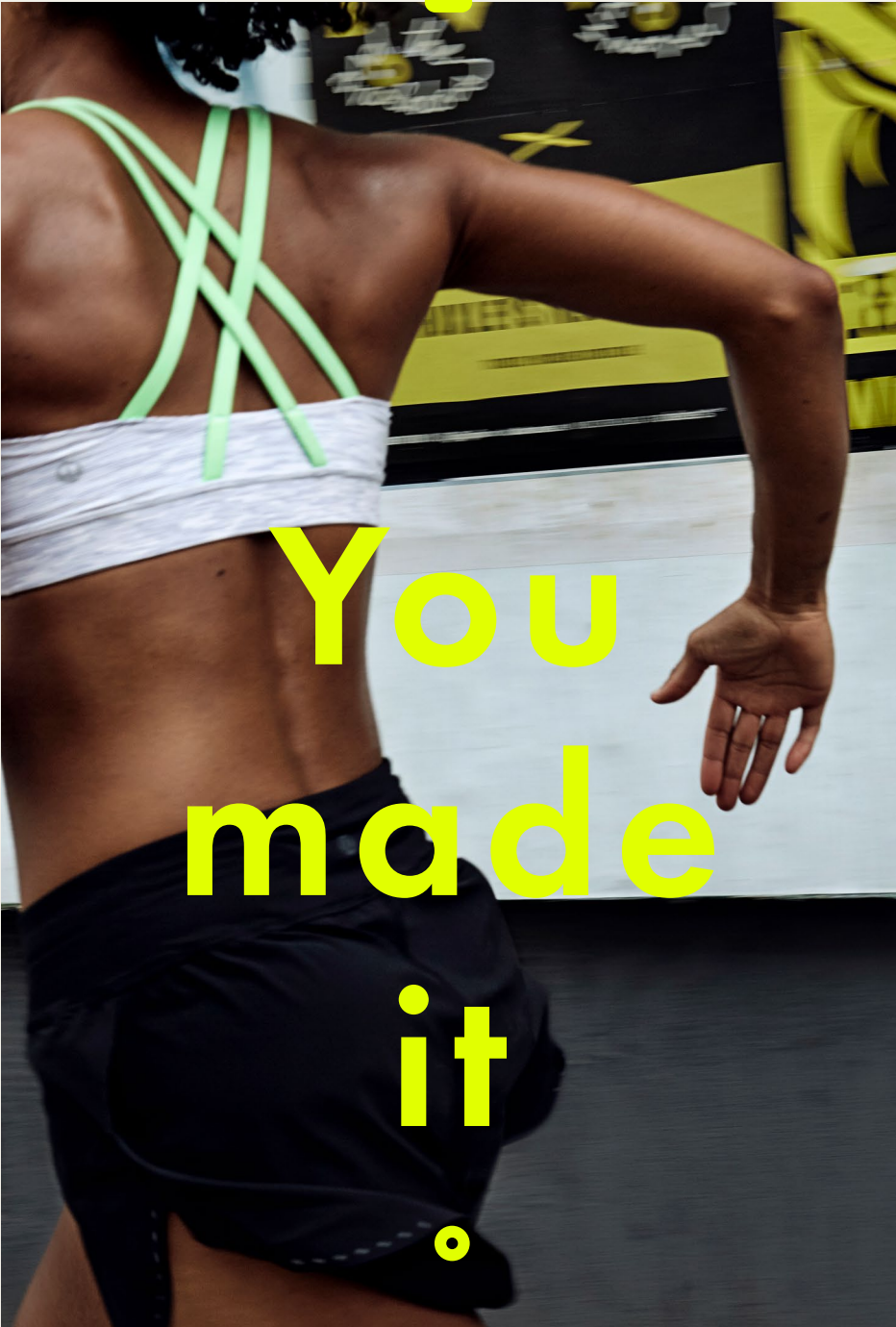


		MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN	Weekly Mileage
WEEK 12	Intermed.	5 km easy run	Rest	3 km easy run	Rest	3 km shakeout	Marathon	Rest	11
	Beginner								
	Advanced								

TIP

There are tons of mental strategies you can use to conquer your race, from mantras (short, meaningful phrases) to visualization. Try them out while training to see what works for you, then pick three to keep in your back pocket. As an example, plan what you're going to do after a long run or race to distract your mind by coming up with a detailed plan. Or, try energy borrowing, or 'stealing' the energy from someone around you that looks like they're cruising along with ease. You can also focus on your form and smile—sounds simple, but it works!





You  
made  
it



# Fuel Up

## NUTRITION TIPS FOR MARATHON TRAINING

Dudley has a variety of tips on giving your body what it needs to train.

For instance, “do not be afraid to eat carbs,” she says. You need those carbs for energy. Below, what to know as you embark on this 12-week plan—from how to incorporate gels to the ideal post-run ratio of carbs to protein.





## Before & After

When it comes to eating before your training runs, listen to your body, Dudley advises. For instance, if you wake up for a morning run and you feel hungry, eat something high in carbs (like toast, oatmeal, waffles, etc.), but low in protein and fiber so it's easier for your body to digest. If you don't feel hungry, you can probably skip the meal—unless you're headed out for a longer run, your weekend long run, or some speed work.

You'll feel much better if you eat the right things immediately post-run, Dudley says. "After a workout, I tell people to try to get carbs and protein in as quickly as they can," she explains, adding that the ideal ratio is two to one. "For people that feel like their stomach might be kind of weird after they run, they can have a protein shake or a smoothie or some chocolate milk," Dudley says. foodspring has both [whey](#) and [vegan protein](#) powder options that mix well into shakes and smoothies.

## Mid-Run

Dudley has her marathoners practice using gels (with water!) once they hit 60-minute long runs. You could also try our Endurance Drink. This gives your stomach a chance to get used to them so you don't have to worry about how it'll react on race day. Taking in fuel every 45 minutes is a great starting point, but you can take them as often as every 20 minutes.

"The more fuel you have, the better you'll feel," Dudley says.



## Hydration

Everyone is different, according to Dudley, but 2 liters per day is a good baseline target for water consumption. And that number can fluctuate: "Say it's going to be 27°C for your long run," Dudley says.

In that case, "you want to increase that all the way up to a gallon.

" She also adds that you should work in electrolytes to help retain your hydration. And when you return from a run, make sure to drink a full glass of water, Dudley advises. Consider adding our [Recovery Aminos](#), especially after your long run days.