

# Intermediate Marathon Training Schedule

Improve your Marathon Performance

By [Eunan Quinn](#) 2018

So you've already run at least one marathon (26.2 miles), and now you're moving on to your next goal: Improving your time / performance. Use this 20-week training schedule (see table below) to help you run a [personal record](#) (PR) or improve your performance in your next marathon.

To start this plan, you should already be running about 30-60 minutes a day, about 4-5 days a week and can run up to 6 miles comfortably. If you're not up to that, try the [Advanced Beginner Marathon Schedule](#).

Remember the Magee 1866 is a challenging course so include some training on hilly routes, and every second long run should be on a hilly route.

## Notes about the Schedule:

**Cross-training (CT):** [Cross-training](#) activities allow you to give your joints and running muscles a break, while still working on your cardio. When the schedule calls for CT, do a cardio activity other than running (biking, swimming, elliptical trainer, pilates, walking) at moderate effort for 45 to 60 minutes.

**Tempo Run:** Tempo runs help you develop your Aerobic threshold, which is critical for faster running. For a 40-minute tempo run, for example, start with 10 minutes of easy running, then continue with 20 minutes of running at about 10K pace. Finish with 10 minutes of cooling down. If you're not sure what your 10K pace is, run at a pace that feels "comfortably hard."

Hilly routes - Choose a challenging route and work hard on the uphill, and recover on the downhill.

Don't start out too hard on tempo/hill runs. You want to maintain a good consistent pace and finish strong.

**Strength-train (ST):** After a 10 minute **warm-up**, spend about 20-25 minutes doing lower body and core strengthening exercises.

**Interval workouts (IW):** After a warm-up, run 400 metres (one lap around most tracks) hard (5Km pace), then recover by jogging or walking 400m.

For example, 3 x 400 would be three hard 400's, with a 400 m recovery in between.

**Easy pace (EP):** These runs should be done at an easy, comfortable pace. You should be able to breathe and talk easily.

**Race pace (RP):** After you run a 10-minute warm-up, run the designated mileage at your "marathon race pace" (RP).

Follow that with a 10-minute cool down. If you're not sure what your marathon race pace is, add 30-45 seconds per mile to your half marathon pace.

**Rest:** Rest is critical to your recovery and **injury prevention** efforts, so don't ignore rest days. Your muscles actually build and repair themselves during your rest days. If you run every day without taking days off, you won't see much improvement. Fridays are a good day for rest, as you'll have run on Thursday and will have your longest run of the week on Saturday.

**Saturday long runs:** After you warm up, run at a comfortable, conversational pace for the designated mileage. Make sure you cool down and stretch after your run. Try to do some running off-road as this is easier on the body!

**Sundays:** This is an active recovery day. Your run should be at your comfortable, easy pace (EP), which helps loosen up your muscles.

**Note:** You can switch days to accommodate your schedule. If you're busy one day, it's fine to swap a rest day for a run day.

## Intermediate Marathon Training Schedule

| Week        | Monday | Tues          | Wed            | Thur         | Friday | Sat               | Sunday    |
|-------------|--------|---------------|----------------|--------------|--------|-------------------|-----------|
| 1<br>Feb 19 | CT     | 4 mi tempo    | Strength train | 4 mi EP      | Rest   | 6 mi              | 3 mi EP   |
| 2           | CT     | 4 mi tempo    | ST             | 4 mi EP      | Rest   | 6 mi              | 3 mi EP   |
| 3           | CT     | 4 mi tempo    | ST             | 5 mi EP      | Rest   | 7 mi              | 3-4 mi EP |
| 4           | Rest   | 4 mi tempo    | ST             | 5 mi EP      | Rest   | 8 mi              | 3-4 mi EP |
| 5           | CT     | 6x400 IW      | ST + 3 mi EP   | 6 mi EP      | Rest   | 9 mi              | 3-4 mi EP |
| 6           | CT     | 4x800 IW      | ST + 4 mi EP   | 6 mi EP      | Rest   | 10 mi             | 3-4 mi EP |
| 7           | CT     | 5x800 IW      | ST + 4 mi EP   | 35 min tempo | Rest   | 12 mi             | 3-4 mi EP |
| 8           | CT     | 5 hilly route | ST + 5 mi EP   | 35 min tempo | Rest   | 14 mi             | 4 mi EP   |
| 9           | CT     | 5 hilly route | ST + 5 mi EP   | 40 min tempo | Rest   | 10 mi             | 3 mi EP   |
| 10          | Rest   | 6 hilly route | ST + 4 mi EP   | 6 mi RP      | Rest   | 14mi              | 4-5 mi EP |
| 11          | CT     | 6 hilly route | ST + 5 mi EP   | 35 min tempo | Rest   | 16 mi             | 3 mi EP   |
| 12          | CT     | 7 hilly route | ST + 6 mi EP   | 6 mi RP      | Rest   | 10 mi             | 4-5 mi EP |
| 13          | CT     | 7 hilly route | ST + 5 mi EP   | 35 min tempo | Rest   | 16 mi (last 4 RP) | 3 mi EP   |

|    |      |              |                 |              |      |                   |           |
|----|------|--------------|-----------------|--------------|------|-------------------|-----------|
| 14 | Rest | 45 min tempo | ST + 5 mi EP    | 6 mi RP      | Rest | 12 mi             | 4-5 mi EP |
| 15 | CT   | 6 mi RP      | ST + 5 mi EP    | 35 min tempo | Rest | 18 mi             | 3 mi EP   |
| 16 | CT   | 45 min EP    | ST + 5 mi EP    | 7 mi RP      | Rest | 12 mi             | 4-5 mi EP |
| 17 | CT   | 5 mi RP      | ST + 5 mi EP    | 35 min tempo | Rest | 20 mi (last 4 RP) | 3-4 mi EP |
| 18 | Rest | 3 mi RP      | 5 mi EP         | 35 min tempo | Rest | 12 mi             | 3-4 mi EP |
| 19 | CT   | 4 mi RP      | Rest or 4 mi EP | 4 mi EP      | Rest | 6 mi              | 3-4 mi EP |
| 20 | Rest | 2 mi RP      | Rest            | 3 mi EP      | Rest | 2 mi EP           | RACE!     |



