18-Week Marathon Training Plan: Phases and Adjustment Rules

Printable week-by-week summary (not a day-by-day calendar).

Plan page: https://26weeks.ai/blog/training/marathon/18-week-plan
Race date: (not set)

Week-by-week

Use this as a high-level map. Keep easy days easy, protect the long run, and avoid panic make-up workouts.

Week 1 — Base
Weekly load: 36.2–56.8 km
Focus: Build consistency and durable easy volume.
Long: 1h 10m long run (fueling practice every 20–30 min)
Key: Strides + controlled aerobic
Key: Hill sprints (short) + strength

Week 2 — Base
Weekly load: 37.4–58.6 km
Focus: Build consistency and durable easy volume.
Long: 1h 17m long run (fueling practice every 20–30 min)
Key: Strides + controlled aerobic
Key: Hill sprints (short) + strength

Week 3 — Base
Weekly load: 38.6–60.4 km
Focus: Build consistency and durable easy volume.
Long: 1h 24m long run (fueling practice every 20–30 min)
Key: Strides + controlled aerobic
Key: Hill sprints (short) + strength

Week 4 — Base
Weekly load: 30.9–48.3 km
Focus: Reduce weekly load and absorb the previous block. Keep any faster work brief and controlled.
Long: 1h 17m long run (fueling practice every 20–30 min)
Key: Strides + controlled aerobic
Key: Easy aerobic work and recovery
Cutback: yes (reduce load, keep rhythm).

Week 5 — Base
Weekly load: 41–64 km
Focus: Build consistency and durable easy volume.
Long: 1h 38m long run (fueling practice every 20–30 min)
Key: Strides + controlled aerobic
Key: Hill sprints (short) + strength

Week 6 — Build
Weekly load: 42.2–65.8 km
Focus: Add quality while protecting recovery.
Long: 1h 45m long run (fueling practice every 20–30 min)
Key: Tempo or cruise intervals
Key: Long-run progression

Week 7 — Build
Weekly load: 43.4–67.6 km
Focus: Add quality while protecting recovery.
Long: 1h 52m long run (fueling practice every 20–30 min)
Key: Tempo or cruise intervals
Key: Long-run progression

Week 8 — Build
Weekly load: 34.7–54.1 km
Focus: Reduce weekly load and absorb the previous block. Keep any faster work brief and controlled.
Long: 1h 41m long run (fueling practice every 20–30 min)
Key: Tempo or cruise intervals
Key: Easy aerobic work and recovery
Cutback: yes (reduce load, keep rhythm).

Week 9 — Build
Weekly load: 45.8–71.2 km
Focus: Add quality while protecting recovery.
Long: 2h 6m long run (fueling practice every 20–30 min)
Key: Tempo or cruise intervals
Key: Long-run progression

Week 10 — Build
Weekly load: 47–73 km
Focus: Add quality while protecting recovery.
Long: 2h 13m long run (fueling practice every 20–30 min)
Key: Tempo or cruise intervals
Key: Long-run progression

Week 11 — Build
Weekly load: 48.2–74.8 km
Focus: Add quality while protecting recovery.
Long: 2h 20m long run (fueling practice every 20–30 min)
Key: Tempo or cruise intervals
Key: Long-run progression

Week 12 — Build
Weekly load: 38.6–59.8 km
Focus: Reduce weekly load and absorb the previous block. Keep any faster work brief and controlled.
Long: 2h 5m long run (fueling practice every 20–30 min)
Key: Tempo or cruise intervals
Key: Easy aerobic work and recovery
Cutback: yes (reduce load, keep rhythm).

Week 13 — Peak
Weekly load: 50.6–78.4 km
Focus: Train race-specific pacing and fueling.
Long: 2h 34m long run (fueling practice every 20–30 min)
Key: Marathon-pace blocks
Key: Long run with controlled finish

Week 14 — Peak
Weekly load: 51.8–80.2 km
Focus: Train race-specific pacing and fueling.
Long: 2h 41m long run (fueling practice every 20–30 min)
Key: Marathon-pace blocks
Key: Long run with controlled finish

Week 15 — Peak
Weekly load: 53–82 km
Focus: Train race-specific pacing and fueling.
Long: 2h 48m long run (fueling practice every 20–30 min)
Key: Marathon-pace blocks
Key: Long run with controlled finish

Week 16 — Peak
Weekly load: 42.4–65.6 km
Focus: Reduce weekly load and absorb the previous block. Keep any faster work brief and controlled.
Long: 2h 29m long run (fueling practice every 20–30 min)
Key: Marathon-pace blocks
Key: Easy aerobic work and recovery
Cutback: yes (reduce load, keep rhythm).

Week 17 — Taper
Weekly load: 38.2–59 km
Focus: Reduce load; keep rhythm; arrive fresh.
Long: 2h 20m long run (fueling practice every 20–30 min)
Key: Short tempo + strides
Key: Easy aerobic + sleep focus

Week 18 — Taper

Weekly load: 26.5–41 km

Focus: Race week: arrive rested. Any load range covers pre-race training only, excluding the race.

Long: The race replaces the long run. Keep other runs short, easy and familiar.

Key: Brief familiar race-pace efforts or relaxed strides only if recovered; full easy recovery

Key: Easy running or rest, race logistics and familiar fueling

Generated by 26weeks.ai. Always adjust for health, sleep, and life constraints.