



Milton Keynes half marathon training programme

This is a simple training programme devised by At Home Fitness and based on our years of coaching experience. It will help you prepare for any running event on just three training sessions per week and there are some extra half-marathon tips towards the end. The three runs are short, medium and long and each is performed once per week.

At the start you may only be able to complete a couple of intervals and your long run may be a mix of jogging and walking. That's OK. As you improve your runs will get longer and quicker. Aim to be following the programme more exactly six weeks before shorter races and 12 weeks for longer ones.

Short Run: This is focussed on speed work and should be quicker than your target race pace by about 10%. It uses either intervals or a time trial. The time trial is a flat out run over a distance of 20%-35% of total race distance. The aim is to beat your previous PB for this run. Intervals should be over 600m-1km for a 5km race and 1km-2 miles for a half-marathon. Any race distance in between can be tailored according to distance. Pace is up to 10% quicker than race pace and recovery time is equal to interval time or a maximum of five minutes, whichever is shorter.

Medium Run: This is a brisk run, at a pace where you can just talk, of up to half race distance

Long Run: This is a run up to race distance or 80% race distance for longer races. Speed is unimportant, it is about getting used to being on your feet for prolonged periods.

Examples

Race Distance	5km	Half-Marathon
Target Time	30 minutes (6mins per km)	2 hours 11 mins (10 mins per mile)
Short Run	Intervals: 3x 1km @ 5.30 pace. 5 mins recovery slow jogging. Time-Trial: 2km flat out	Intervals: 4x 1mile @ 9.30 pace. 5 mins recovery. Time Trial: 3 miles flat out.
Medium Run	2.5km at 6.30 pace	5 miles at 11.00 min mile pace
Long Run	4-5km, at least 30 mins running	c.10 miles and around 2 hours running.

Running a good half marathon is all about pacing yourself well. It is therefore key that you practice your race pace in the interval sessions for a month before the race and reduce your recovery to just three minutes. This will help your race pace to become automatic. You should also be looking to build up to running around 20 miles per week and a longest run of 10 miles in the five weeks before the race. In the week immediately before the race train lightly so that your body is recovered for the big day.

There is a real tendency to go too quickly at the start as you get caught up in the excitement of a big race. Alternatively, if it is a tightly packed start you might not be able to get into your stride for the first mile so then you try to make up for lost time by running too quickly.

Top runners will use what are called negative splits in marathons and half-marathons. This means they run the second half faster than the first. If you are delayed at the start by other runners you can always make up time near the end with a negative split. If you feel good at the ten mile mark try to run a little quicker over the last three miles and you'll make up lost time.