



BOSTON MARATHON QUALIFIER PROGRAM

If you have questions regarding any of the training programs feel free to contact Bruce Deacon by email at CoachBruce@runvictoriamarathon.com.

Aerobic Conditioning

This period lasts for a total of 8 weeks. The objective of this portion of the training program is to develop a sound base of aerobic running by gradually increasing the mileage of the major long run each week and the amount of time run on other days. In this program the long run is placed on the Sunday, of each week. However, this can be modified to suit your schedule.

Aerobic running means you should exercise between 65 and 75% of your maximum aerobic effort. This is not Long Slow Distance - it is more like Long STEADY Distance. This is running at a good effort and finishing each run feeling pleasantly tired. All running, except for the tempo runs, during this period should be aerobic running (30-40 seconds per kilometre slower than goal pace). You should not get to the point that you are gasping for air and having difficulty maintaining your running pace. When running, you should not be so out of breath that you cannot carry on a conversation with your running buddy.

18 Weeks to Go (June 9, 2024)

- **Sunday:** 17 km steady at 35-45 seconds/km slower than marathon pace
- **Monday:** Rest day
- **Tuesday:** 50 minutes
- **Wednesday:** 20 minutes easy, 10 minutes at marathon goal pace, 20 minutes easy
- **Thursday:** 50 minutes
- **Friday:** Rest or up to 30 minutes
- **Saturday:** 50 minutes including 8 x 100m [relaxed strides](#) with 100m of jogging between each stride

17 Weeks to Go (June 16, 2024)

- **Sunday:** 20 km steady at 35-45 seconds/km slower than marathon pace
- **Monday:** Rest day
- **Tuesday:** 50 minutes
- **Wednesday:** 20 minutes easy warm up, 10 sets of 1 minute fast/1 minute jog, 20 minutes easy cool down
- **Thursday:** 60 minutes
- **Friday:** 30 - 45 minutes
- **Saturday:** 60 minutes including 8 x 100m strides or 30 minutes easy if racing.

16 Weeks to Go (June 23, 2024)

- **Sunday:** 24 km steady at 30-45 seconds/km slower than marathon pace
- **Monday:** Rest day
- **Tuesday:** 60 minutes or 40 minutes if you raced
- **Wednesday:** 20 minutes easy warm up, 20 minutes @ marathon goal pace.
- **Thursday:** 60 minutes
- **Friday:** 30 - 45 minutes
- **Saturday:** 60 minutes including 8 x 100m strides.



15 Weeks to Go (June 30, 2024)

Recovery Week

- **Sunday:** 18 km steady at 30-40 seconds/km slower than marathon pace
- **Monday:** Rest day
- **Tuesday:** 30 including 10 x 100m [relaxed strides](#)
- **Wednesday:** 60 minutes
- **Thursday:** 60 minutes
- **Friday:** Rest day
- **Saturday:** 45 minutes

This is the first of a number of recovery weeks during this training program. The recovery weeks are inserted into the program to allow you an easier week to recover from the previous two intense weeks and to give some rest in preparation for the more intense training that will come in the weeks that follow. Treat recovery weeks as a reward for the hard work you have put in to date. Try to get some more sleep than normal. Pamper yourself with a hot tub, massage, or Epsom salt soak.

14 Weeks to Go (July 7, 2024)

- **Sunday:** The lesser of 27 km or 2:15 steady at 30-45 seconds/km slower than marathon pace
- **Monday:** Rest day
- **Tuesday:** 75 minutes
- **Wednesday:** 20 minutes easy warm up; 5 sets of 2 minutes at 10k effort, 1 minute easy, 3 minutes at 10k effort with 2 minutes between sets; 20 minutes easy cool down
- **Thursday:** 60 minutes
- **Friday:** 30 - 45minutes
- **Saturday:** 60 minutes including 10 x 100m [relaxed strides](#)

13 Weeks to Go (July 14, 2024)

- **Sunday:** The lesser of 30 km or 2:30 steady at 30-45 seconds/km slower than marathon pace
- **Monday:** Rest day
- **Tuesday:** 60 minutes
- **Wednesday:** 20 minutes of easy warm up; 20 minute [out-and-back tempo](#) running first 10 minutes at marathon effort, and the last 10 minutes slightly slower than 10k effort; 15 minutes easy cool down
- **Thursday:** 70 minutes
- **Friday:** 45 minutes
- **Saturday:** 60 minutes including 10 x 100m [relaxed strides](#)

12 Weeks to Go (July 21, 2024)

Recovery Week

- **Sunday:** 16 km steady at 30-40 seconds/km slower than marathon pace
- **Monday:** Rest day
- **Tuesday:** 40 minutes
- **Wednesday:** 50 minutes including 12 x 100m [relaxed strides](#)
- **Thursday:** 45 minutes
- **Friday:** Rest day
- **Saturday:** 30 minutes



11 Weeks to Go (July 28, 2024)

- **Sunday:** The lesser of 32 km or 2:50 steady at 30-40 seconds/km slower than marathon pace
- **Monday:** Day off
- **Tuesday:** 75 minutes easy
- **Wednesday:** 10 minutes warm up, 30 minutes at marathon goal pace, 20 minutes easy warm down
- **Thursday:** 75 minutes
- **Friday:** 30-45 minutes
- **Saturday:** 60 minutes including 10 x 100m [relaxed strides](#)

10 Weeks to Go (August 4, 2024)

Aerobic Capacity Phase Begins

The term aerobic literally means “with oxygen”. When we speak of aerobic running, we mean running at a moderate intensity that allows your body to use oxygen to burn both glycogen and fats for fuel. Simply put, if you want to burn fats, you need to run aerobically. As marathoners, we will need to access this important fuel source, because even the leanest of us have more than enough fat to finish multiple marathons.

The opposite of aerobic running is anaerobic running. This is when the intensity of your exercise exceeds your oxygen capacity and your body burns glycogen in the absence of oxygen. A 400 meter sprinter would rely on anaerobic fuel sources in their races, but a marathoner would run entirely aerobically. The faster the pace you can run aerobically without relying on anaerobic energy systems, the better the distance runner you will be.

The Aerobic Capacity Phase is designed to help increase the pace at which you can run aerobically. It is done in two ways:

- 1) We increase the duration of our long runs to help us become more efficient at burning fats; and,
- 2) We focus on running at the high ends of our aerobic zone.

- **Sunday:** The lesser of 30 km steady or 2:45 at 30-40 seconds/km slower than marathon pace
- **Monday:** Day off
- **Tuesday:** 60 minutes
- **Wednesday:** 20 minutes easy warm up; 5-6 X 4 minutes at 5 km pace with 2 minutes rest; 20 minutes easy cool down
- **Thursday:** 75 minutes
- **Friday:** 30 minutes easy
- **Saturday:** 60 minutes including 12 x 100m [relaxed strides](#)

9 Weeks to Go (August 11, 2024)

- **Sunday:** The lesser of 34 km or 3:10 steady at 30-40 seconds/km slower than marathon pace
Remember to hydrate along the way and to consume 300 calories of carbohydrates and proteins within 15 minutes of finishing your run and a full meal within 2 hours.
- **Monday:** Day off
- **Tuesday:** 50 minutes
- **Wednesday:** 15 minutes easy warm up; 4 minutes at 10k pace, 2 minutes jog rest, 6 minutes at 10k pace, 1 minutes jog rest, 8 minutes at 10k pace, 3 minutes jog rest, 4X 1 minute at 5 k pace with 1 minute between each; 10 minute easy cool down
- **Thursday:** 90 minutes



- **Friday:** 30 minutes
- **Saturday:** 60 minutes including 12 x 100m [relaxed strides](#)

8 Weeks to Go (August 18, 2024)

Recovery Week

- **Sunday:** 18 km steady at 35-45 seconds/km slower than marathon pace
- **Monday:** Rest day
- **Tuesday:** 45 minutes
- **Wednesday:** 20 minutes easy warm up; 20 minute [out-and-back tempo](#) run at a bit less than 10 km effort; 20 minute easy cool down
- **Thursday:** 45 minutes
- **Friday:** 30 minutes or day off
- **Saturday:** 50 minutes including 8 x 100m [relaxed strides](#)

7 Weeks to Go (August 25, 2024)

Note: This is a particularly hard week. Make sure to take care of yourself by getting extra sleep, eating well, and staying well hydrated. If it is hot, run in the early morning or evening.

- **Sunday:** The lesser of 35 km or 3:30 steady at 30-45 seconds/km slower than marathon pace
- **Monday:** Day off
- **Tuesday:** 60 minutes
- **Wednesday:** 20 minutes easy warm up; 3-4 sets of 4 minutes at 10 km pace, 30 seconds rest, 2 minutes at 5 km pace with 3 minutes jog between sets, 20 minutes easy cool down
- **Thursday:** 90 minutes
- **Friday:** 30 minutes easy
- **Saturday:** 30-40 minutes including 8 x 100m [relaxed strides](#)

6 Weeks to Go (September 1, 2024)

Marathon Specific Training

The next phase is what I refer to as marathon specific training. The object is to get used to running at your marathon goal pace. Remembering that this is a pace that you intend to hold for over two and a half hours, it tempo runs at marathon pace should feel comfortably quick. If you are struggling to keep your marathon pace it means one of 4 things:

- 1) You are still tired from your recent workouts. Take two days off of running. It is important at this stage to run quality and to learn how to relax while running fast. If you are too tired to do that, then you **MUST** respect your body's need for more rest. Many good marathons are lost by pushing too hard at this phase.
- 2) You are coming down with a virus. Inability to hold a pace you should be able to run can mean that you are on the verge of getting sick. Don't be a hero!
- 3) You might not be fit enough to run your goal pace. Perhaps your goal is too ambitious. Maybe you have lost some time due to sickness or injury. Reconsider your race goals and adjust your time accordingly.
- 4) You might just have a bad day. You can write off a bad workout, but if this happens more than once, examine the other 3 possibilities.

It is **CRITICAL** to pace yourself well. We will be starting to add marathon pace sections to your long runs. It is so easy to get carried away and to turn your long runs into races by not returning back to the easy pace after the marathon pace section. Many a good marathon is lost like this!! Respect the paces. The entire object is to learn to run relax and not straining at your marathon pace.



- **Sunday:** Marathon tempo, 30 minutes easy warm up, 60 minutes at marathon goal pace, 20 minutes easy
- **Monday:** Day off
- **Tuesday:** 60 minutes easy
- **Wednesday:** 20 minutes, 15 minutes at marathon pace, 3 minute jog recovery, 10 minutes continuous of 200m uphill at 10k effort, 200m downhill at marathon effort, 20 minutes easy cool down
- **Thursday:** 60 minutes
- **Friday:** 30 minutes easy
- **Saturday:** 30-45 minutes EASY including 8 x 100m [relaxed strides](#)

5 Weeks to Go (September 8, 2024)

Recovery Week

- **Sunday:** 20 minutes easy, 3 sets of 25 minutes at marathon pace with 5 minutes jogging between each, 20 minutes easy. 20 minutes easy, 90 minutes at marathon pace [on rolling pavement](#), 5-10 minutes easy
- **Monday:** Day off
- **Tuesday:** 30 minutes easy
- **Wednesday:** 20 minutes easy warm up, 5X 4 minutes at 10 km effort on rolling terrain with 1 minute rest, 15 minutes easy cool down
- **Thursday:** 50 minutes
- **Friday:** 30 - 45 minutes
- **Saturday:** Rest day

4 Weeks to Go (September 15, 2024)

- **Sunday:** 20 minutes easy, 90 minutes at marathon pace [on rolling pavement](#), 5-10 minutes easy
- **Monday:** Day off
- **Tuesday:** 40 minutes
- **Wednesday:** 20 minutes easy warm up; 10 minutes at 10 km effort, 5 minutes jog, 5 minutes at 10k effort, 5 minutes jog, 10 minutes at 10k effort, 10 minutes easy cool down
- **Thursday:** 60 minutes
- **Friday:** 30 minutes easy
- **Saturday:** 30 minutes easy

3 Weeks to Go (September 22, 2024)

Sharpening and Tapering

As we enter the last phase of the training, we are going to be cutting back on our mileage and emphasizing rest and speed. Of course as marathoners, speed is a relative term. The idea isn't to become a sprinter, but rather to refresh our nervous system to faster paces after the marathon specific training. This will help us be more efficient at race pace. The primary goal is to rest enough to arrive feeling healthy and fresh on race day.

- **Sunday:** The lessor of 30 km or 2:50 steady at 30-45 seconds/km slower than marathon pace
- **Monday:** Rest day
- **Tuesday:** 30 minutes
- **Wednesday:** 20 minutes easy warm up, 12 X 1 minute at 5k pace/1 minute easy jogging, 20 minutes easy cool down
- **Thursday:** 60 minutes **very easy** jogging
- **Friday:** 30 minutes



- **Saturday:** 60 minutes including 12 x 100m [relaxed strides](#)

2 Weeks to Go (September 29, 2024)

The Taper Begins

- **Sunday:** 18 km steady at 30-45 seconds/km slower than marathon pace
- **Monday:** Rest day
- **Tuesday:** 45 minutes
- **Wednesday:** 20 minutes easy warm up, 8X 2 minutes at 5 km pace with 1 minute jogging between each, 10 minutes easy cool down
- **Thursday:** 45 minutes
- **Friday:** Rest day
- **Saturday:** 40 minutes including 12 x 100m [relaxed strides](#)

Race Week (starts October 6, 2024)

The main objective during this week is to combine gentle running with lots of relaxation. Many of you will have an idea of what will work for you in the final days prior to the race. However, we are all governed by the same physiological constraints...nothing but rest will help you at this stage. Last minute workouts, or an extra hour run, will not help. The only thing that will help you run faster now is arriving at the start line all rested up and ready to go.

Knock 'em dead - you've done the work! Your medal is waiting for you!

- **Sunday:** 60 minutes easy including 6X100m [relaxed strides](#)
- **Monday:** Day Off
- **Tuesday:** 35 minutes easy
- **Wednesday:** 10 minutes easy warm up, 10 minutes at marathon pace and then right into 2 minutes at 5k pace, 10 minutes easy warm down
- **Thursday:** 20 minutes easy
- **Friday:** Day Off
- **Saturday:** 15 minutes easy jog with 3X100m [relaxed strides](#)
- **Sunday: RACE DAY!!**