



MARATHON - FIRST TIMERS PROGRAM

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

Note: This schedule is expressed mostly as run/walk. This is a good way for beginners to start running, but it is always better if you can work towards completing the distances without having to walk. I encourage you to stretch yourself as the schedule progresses and work towards omitting the walking segments. If you are already at the point where you don't need to walk, then do the run/walk sessions as straight runs.

22 Weeks to Go (May 13, 2023)

- **Sunday:** 10 km Run/Walk
- **Monday:** Rest or Walk
- **Tuesday:** 30 minutes Run/Walk or other aerobic exercise.
- **Wednesday:** 30 - 40 minutes Run/Walk (9 minutes run and 1 minute walk)
- **Thursday:** Walk or other aerobic exercise
- **Friday:** 30 minutes Run/Walk
- **Saturday:** Rest

As noted in the introduction, all the running in this program is done using the 9 minutes of running followed by 1 minute of walking except where other formats are described. Other aerobic exercise may include: cycling, aerobics, cross country skiing or Nordic track, swimming, water running, etc.

21 Weeks to Go

- **Sunday:** 12 km Run/Walk (9 minutes run and 1 minute walk)
- **Monday:** Rest or Walk
- **Tuesday:** 30 minutes or other aerobic exercise
- **Wednesday:** 30 - 40 minutes Run/Walk (9 minutes run and 1 minute walk)
- **Thursday:** Walk or other aerobic exercise
- **Friday:** 30 minutes Run/Walk (9 minutes run and 1 minute walk)
- **Saturday:** Rest

20 Weeks to Go

- **Sunday:** 14 km Run/Walk (9 minutes run and 1 minute walk)
- **Monday:** Rest or Walk
- **Tuesday:** 30 minutes Run/Walk or other aerobic exercise
- **Wednesday:** 30 - 40 minutes Run/Walk (9 minutes run and 1 minute walk)
- **Thursday:** Walk or other aerobic exercise
- **Friday:** 40 minutes Run/Walk (9 minutes run and 1 minute walk)
- **Saturday:** Rest

19 Weeks to Go

- **Sunday:** 16 km Run/Walk (9 minutes run and 1 minute walk)
- **Monday:** Rest or Walk
- **Tuesday:** 30 minutes Run/Walk or other aerobic exercise
- **Wednesday:** 40 - 50 minutes Run/Walk



- **Thursday:** Walk or other aerobic exercise
- **Friday:** 45 minutes Run/Walk (9 minutes run and 1 minute walk)
- **Saturday:** Rest

18 Weeks to Go

- **Sunday:** 12 km Run/Walk (9 minutes run and 1 minute walk)
- **Monday:** Rest or Walk
- **Tuesday:** 30 minutes Run/Walk or other aerobic exercise
- **Wednesday:** 40 - 50 minutes Run/Walk (9 minutes run and 1 minute walk)
- **Thursday:** Walk or other aerobic exercise
- **Friday:** 50 minutes Run/Walk (9 minutes run and 1 minute walk)
- **Saturday:** Rest

Note: We are now moving into a period of hard and easy weeks. Every second week, the long run is shorter, allowing your body to recover, before moving on to the next level.

17 Weeks to Go

- **Sunday:** 18 km Run/Walk (9 minutes run and 1 minute walk)
- **Monday:** Rest or Walk
- **Tuesday:** 30 minutes Run/Walk or other aerobic exercise
- **Wednesday:** 30 - 40 minutes Run/Walk (9 minutes run and 1 minute walk)
- **Thursday:** Walk or other aerobic exercise
- **Friday:** 30 minutes Run/Walk
- **Saturday:** Rest

17 Weeks to Go

- **Sunday:** 14 km Run/Walk (9 run and 1 walk)
- **Monday:** Rest or Walk
- **Tuesday:** 30 minutes Run/Walk or other aerobic exercise
- **Wednesday:** 50 - 60 minutes Run/Walk (9 minutes run and 1 minute walk)
- **Thursday:** Walk or other aerobic exercise
- **Friday:** 50 minutes Run/Walk (9 minutes run and 1 minute walk)
- **Saturday:** Rest

16 Weeks to Go

- **Sunday:** 20 km Run/Walk (9 minutes run and 1 minute walk)
- **Monday:** Rest or Walk
- **Tuesday:** 30 minutes Run/Walk or other aerobic exercise
- **Wednesday, June 24:** 50 - 60 minutes Run/Walk (9 minutes run and 1 minute walk)
- **Thursday, June 25:** Walk or other aerobic exercise
- **Friday, June 26:** 60 minutes Run/Walk (9 minutes run and 1 minute walk)
- **Saturday, June 27:** Rest



15 Weeks to Go

- **Sunday:** 14 km Run/Walk (9 minutes run and 1 minute walk)
- **Monday:** Rest or Walk
- **Tuesday:** 30 minutes Run/Walk or other aerobic exercise
- **Wednesday:** 30 - 40 minutes Run/Walk (9 minutes run and 1 minute walk)
- **Thursday:** Walk or other aerobic exercise
- **Friday:** 30 minutes Run/Walk (9 minutes run and 1 minute walk)
- **Saturday:** Rest

14 Weeks to Go

- **Sunday:** 22 km Run/Walk (9 minutes run and 1 minute walk)
- **Monday:** Rest or Walk
- **Tuesday:** 30 minutes Run/Walk or other aerobic exercise
- **Wednesday:** 10 minutes Run/Walk, 4 circuits of hill session (see below), 10 minutes Run/Walk. Total 40 minutes.
- **Thursday:** Walk or other aerobic exercise
- **Friday:** 50 minutes Run/Walk (9 minutes run and 1 minute walk)
- **Saturday:** Rest

Hill Session

I have chosen to insert a session into this program that has you do some specific running uphill in the course of a Run/Walk session. The reason for including a hill session is that doing some running uphill will help increase your strength and provides a work out with a little more intensity without any increased pounding. Find a steep hill that will take you about a minute to run up. The effort should be hard, but you don't need to sprint the hills. Aim for 5k pace.

13 Weeks to Go

- **Sunday:** 24 km Run/Walk (9 minutes run and 1 minute walk)
- **Monday:** Rest or Walk
- **Tuesday:** 30 minutes Run/Walk (if you are doing the run/walk, try to run without walking)
- **Wednesday:** 10 minutes Run/Walk, 6 sets of 1 minute running up a steep hill with easy walk to the bottom for rest, 10 minutes Run/Walk.
- **Thursday:** Walk or other aerobic exercise
- **Friday:** 60 minute Run/Walk (9 minutes run and 1 minute walk)
- **Saturday:** Rest

12 Weeks to Go

- **Sunday:** 15 km Run/Walk (if doing the 9/1 pattern, try to alter it by running a few minutes longer before taking your walk break)
- **Monday:** Rest or Walk
- **Tuesday:** 30 minutes Run
- **Wednesday:** 10 minutes Run/Walk, 8 sets of 1 minute running up a steep hill with easy walk to the bottom for rest, 10 minutes Run/Walk.
- **Thursday:** Walk or other aerobic exercise
- **Friday:** 60 minutes Run/Walk (if doing the 9/1 pattern, try to alter it by running a few minutes longer before taking your walk break)
- **Saturday:** Rest



11 Weeks to Go

- **Sunday:** 26 km Run/Walk (if doing the 9/1 pattern, try to alter it by running a few minutes longer before taking your walk break)
- **Monday:** Rest or Walk
- **Tuesday:** 30 minutes Run
- **Wednesday:** 10 minutes Run/Walk, 10 sets of 1 minute running up a steep hill with easy walk to the bottom for rest, 10 minutes Run/Walk.
- **Thursday:** Walk or other aerobic exercise
- **Friday:** 60 minutes Run/Walk (if doing the 9/1 pattern, try to alter it by running a few minutes longer before taking your walk break)
- **Saturday:** Rest

10 Weeks to Go

- **Sunday:** 28 km Run/Walk (take walking breaks as needed)
- **Monday:** Rest or Walk
- **Tuesday:** 30 minutes Run
- **Wednesday:** 10 minutes Run, 12 sets of 1 minute running up a steep hill with easy walk to the bottom for rest, 10 minutes Run.
- **Thursday:** Walk or other aerobic exercise
- **Friday:** 30 - 40 minutes Run
- **Saturday:** Rest

9 Weeks to Go

- **Sunday, August 9:** 16 km Run/Walk (take walking breaks only as needed)
- **Monday, August 10:** Rest or Walk
- **Tuesday, August 11:** 30 minutes Run
- **Wednesday, August 12:** 10 minutes Run, 4 sets of 2 minute uphill with easy jog down as rest, 10 minutes Run. Choose a hill that isn't as steep as previous weeks.
- **Thursday, August 13:** Walk or other aerobic exercise
- **Friday, August 14:** 40 minutes Run
- **Saturday, August 15:** Rest

8 Weeks to Go

- **Sunday:** 30 km Run/Walk (take walking breaks only as needed)
- **Monday:** Rest or Walk
- **Tuesday:** 30 minutes Run
- **Wednesday:** 10 minutes Run, 3 x pace session (see outline below), 10 minutes Run. Total 35 minutes.
- **Thursday:** Walk or other aerobic exercise
- **Friday:** 65 minutes Run/Walk (take walking breaks only as needed)
- **Saturday:** Rest

Pace Session

I have included one session that I have called the pace session. The aim of this session is to do some running that is a little faster than your normal training pace, but not sprinting. Run a little faster than your marathon pace to increase your ability to run comfortably at your marathon pace when you run your marathon.

Begin the session with a 10 minute warm up run. Then run 1 minute at a pace you could hold for 10km.



Without stopping, speed up and do a minute at a pace you could hold for 5km. Then slow for a minute at 10km pace. You should still feel in control of your running throughout the effort. Finally take a 1 minute walking break. The set should be 1 minute at 10k pace, 1 minute at 5km pace, 1 minute at 10km pace, 1 minute walk. Repeat this progression as many times as outlined in the program. Conclude the session with a 10 minute warm down jog.

7 Weeks to Go

- **Sunday:** 30 km Run/Walk (take walking breaks as needed)
- **Monday:** Rest or Walk
- **Tuesday:** 30 minutes Run
- **Wednesday:** 10 minutes Run/Walk, 4 x pace session (see week 16), 10 minutes Run/Walk. Total 40 minutes.
- **Thursday:** Walk or other aerobic exercise
- **Friday:** 65 minutes Run/Walk
- **Saturday:** Rest

6 Weeks to Go

- **Sunday:** 15 km Run (only take a walking break if you really need to)
- **Monday:** Rest or Walk
- **Tuesday:** 40 minutes Run
- **Wednesday:** 20 minutes Run, 5 x pace session (see week 16), 10 minutes Run. Total 45 minutes.
- **Thursday:** Walk or other aerobic exercise
- **Friday:** 40 minutes Run
- **Saturday:** Rest

5 Weeks to Go

- **Sunday:** 32 km Run/Walk (take walking breaks only as needed)
- **Monday:** Rest or Walk
- **Tuesday:** 30 minutes Run
- **Wednesday:** 20 minutes Run, 5 x pace session (see week 16), 10 minutes Run. Total 45 minutes.
- **Thursday:** Walk or other aerobic exercise
- **Friday:** 50 minutes Run (only take walking breaks as needed)
- **Saturday:** Rest

On Sunday, you complete the longest session in the entire program (except completing your marathon in October of course). It is a good idea for you to wear clothing that you might expect to wear in the marathon during this run (weather conditions permitting). Also, eat and drink the foods that you expect to have with you during the event. If you are expecting to use the aid stations to replenish your fluids (fill your water bottle) you may wish to use electrolyte drink on your long runs as an electrolyte drink will be available at the aid stations along with water. Finding a group to complete your long runs with is also a great benefit. Time flies by when you have someone to chat with as you run.

4 Weeks to Go

- **Sunday:** 34 km Run/Walk (take walking breaks as needed). TAKE THIS RUN EASY! Don't run this hard or you risk doing your best running four weeks from the marathon.
- **Monday:** Rest or Walk



- **Tuesday:** 30 minutes Run/Walk
- **Wednesday:** 10 minutes Run, 3 x pace session (see week 16), 10 minutes Run. Total 40 minutes.
- **Thursday:** Walk or other aerobic exercise
- **Friday:** 55 minutes Run/Walk (take walking breaks as needed)
- **Saturday:** Rest

3 Weeks to Go

- **Sunday:** 24km Run/Walk (take walking breaks as needed)
- **Monday:** Rest or Walk
- **Tuesday:** 30 minutes Run
- **Wednesday:** 20 minutes Run/Walk, 4 x pace session (see week 16), 10 minutes Run/Walk. Total 50 minutes.
- **Thursday:** Walk or other aerobic exercise
- **Friday:** 50 minutes Run
- **Saturday:** Rest

2 Weeks to Go

- **Sunday:** 27 km Run/Walk (take walking breaks as needed)
- **Monday:** Rest or Walk
- **Tuesday:** 30 minutes Run
- **Wednesday:** Rest or Walk
- **Thursday:** 30 minutes Run
- **Friday:** 40 minutes Run
- **Saturday:** Rest

All the running during this last two weeks should be very relaxed. The objective is simply to keep your body moving smoothly and fluidly. Spend time during each run visualizing yourself successfully completing those final miles of the marathon and happily and triumphantly crossing the finish line.

All your preparation is now complete...now it is time to reap the rewards.

Race Week

- **Sunday:** 12 km Run/Walk (take walking breaks as needed)
- **Monday:** Rest
- **Tuesday:** 30 minutes Run
- **Wednesday:** Rest or Walk
- **Thursday:** 20 minutes Run
- **Friday:** Rest day; day off
- **Saturday:** 10 minutes of running
- **Sunday:** RACE DAY

This last week of the program is the most difficult to create as runners are very specific about what they do in the final week before the big event. The main objective during this week is to combine gentle running with lots of relaxation.

Here you go - you've done the work! Your medal is waiting for you!