12-WEEK HALF MARATHON PLAN

Comprehensive Dual-Unit Training Guide • Miles & Kilometers

Program Overview

Designed for runners aiming to complete a 21.1 km (13.1 mi) race safely and strong. Builds a balanced foundation of aerobic endurance, tempo strength, and essential recovery.

Target Audience

Intermediate runners able to run 3–4 miles (5–6 km) comfortably. Features 4 running days, 1 cross-training day, and 2 complete rest days per week.

Easy / Recovery	Tempo Run	Intervals	Long Run
Zone 2 • Chatty pace	Zone 3-4 • Comfortably hard	Zone 4-5 • Fast effort	Zone 2 • Slow & steady

PHASE 1: BASE BUILDING & AEROBIC FOUNDATION

Weeks 1 – 4

Focus on establishing a consistent schedule, strengthening connective tissue, and keeping all long runs strictly conversational.

WEEK	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT (LONG RUN)
Wk 1	*Rest*	3 mi 5 km Easy Run	Cross-Train 30–40 min	3 mi 5 km Easy Run	*Rest*	4 mi 6.5 km Easy Pace
Wk 2	*Rest*	3.5 mi 5.5 km Easy Run	Cross-Train 35–45 min	3 mi 5 km Strides (4x)	*Rest*	5 mi 8 km Easy Pace
Wk 3	*Rest*	4 mi 6.5 km Easy Run	Cross-Train 40–45 min	3.5 mi 5.5 km Easy Run	*Rest*	6 mi 9.5 km Easy Pace
Wk 4	*Rest*	3 mi 5 km Recovery	Cross-Train 30 min	3 mi 5 km Easy Run	*Rest*	4.5 mi 7 km Step-Back Wk

Phase 1 Key Insight: The "Step-Back" Concept

Week 4 reduces mileage intentionally. Step-back weeks give muscles, tendons, and joints time to repair, consolidating your fitness gains while preventing early burn-out.

PHASE 2: STRENGTH, SPEED & STAMINA PEAK

Weeks 5 – 8

Introduces race-tempo segments and structured interval workouts to boost lactate threshold and stamina.

Tempo Runs
Continuous effort at 80-85% HR max. "Comfortably hard"—talking is limited to single words.

Speed Intervals
3-5 min efforts at 5K pace with equal recovery jogs to raise VO2 max efficiency.

Cross-Training
Low-impact activity: Cycling, swimming, or strength training focusing on core and hips.

WEEK	MON	TUE (QUALITY)	WED	THU	FRI	SAT (LONG RUN)
Wk 5	*Rest*	4 mi 6.5 km 1.5m Tempo	Cross-Train 45 min	4 mi 6.5 km Easy Run	*Rest*	7 mi 11 km Easy Pace
Wk 6	*Rest*	4.5 mi 7 km 4x800m Int.	Cross-Train 45–50 min	4 mi 6.5 km Easy Run	*Rest*	8 mi 13 km Progressive Pace
Wk 7	*Rest*	5 mi 8 km 2m Tempo	Cross-Train 45 min	4.5 mi 7 km Easy Run	*Rest*	9.5 mi 15 km Easy Pace
Wk 8	*Rest*	4 mi 6.5 km Easy Recovery	Cross-Train 30–40 min	3.5 mi 5.5 km Easy Run	*Rest*	6 mi 9.5 km Step-Back Wk

Mid-Block Fueling Check

During long runs of 7+ miles (11+ km), start practicing race-day fuel intake. Aim for 30–60g of carbohydrates per hour using energy gels, chews, or sports drink.

Hydration Protocol

Drink to thirst during runs under 60 minutes. For long runs, sip 150–250 mL of water or electrolyte solution every 20 minutes to maintain plasma volume.

PHASE 3: PEAK DISTANCE & TAPER

Weeks 9 – 12

Peak your endurance in Week 10 before reducing volume to guarantee fresh legs on race morning.

WEEK	MON	TUE (QUALITY)	WED	THU	FRI	SAT (LONG RUN)
Wk 9	*Rest*	5.5 mi 9 km 3m Goal Pace	Cross-Train 45 min	4 mi 6.5 km Easy Run	*Rest*	11 mi 17.5 km Peak Endurance
Wk 10	*Rest*	5 mi 8 km Tempo Intervals	Cross-Train 40 min	4 mi 6.5 km Easy Run	*Rest*	12 mi 19 km Max Long Run
Wk 11	*Rest*	4 mi 6.5 km 2m Goal Pace	Rest / Stretch	3 mi 5 km Easy Taper	*Rest*	7 mi 11 km Taper Long Run
Wk 12	*Rest*	3 mi 5 km Easy + Strides	*Rest*	2 mi 3 km Shakeout	*Rest*	RACE DAY! 13.1 mi 21.1 km

RACE DAY EXECUTION CHECKLIST

Pro Strategy

Pre-Race (24–48h)

Carb Load: Increase simple carbs (rice, pasta, oats) without overeating.
Gear Check: Nothing new on race day. Wear proven shoes, socks, and outfit.

Race Strategy

Miles 1–3 (1–5 km): Hold back! Aim 10–15 sec/mi slower than target pace.
Miles 4–10 (6–16 km): Settle into steady, rhythmic goal pace.
Miles 11–13.1 (17–21.1 km): Empty the tank with a strong finish!