

MARATHON TRAINING GUIDE



TRAINING ADVICE

Learn all the different types of training you can do, to help get race ready and keep the sessions fun.

KIT

What you wear on your feet and your body is vital when it comes to comfortable running. Learn the kit essentials - and luxuries.

NUTRITION

You are what you eat. Learn how to fuel your body as the miles get longer.

INJURIES

Staying injury free is the key to a successful training programme.

Learn how to avoid and treat common injuries.

A Note From the Author

It is now nearly 10 years ago since our Charity running training guide went into circulation.

In these 10 years, the guides have evolved from being a solitary 15 page guide on how to train for a marathon to a series of 3 highly informative training guides, helping runners of all abilities train for 10k, half marathon and marathon events.

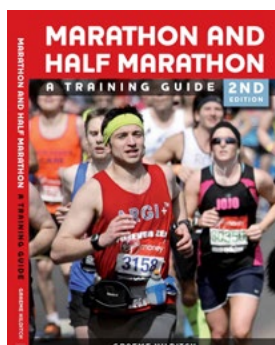
In this recent update, the guides have had a major facelift and now include even more comprehensive & interactive training, injury and nutritional information including - **free** access to the new [GH Training Video Library](#)



As the author of 3 leading running books, including the second edition of the UK's best-selling endurance running book "[The Marathon and Half Marathon: A Training Guide](#)," I am confident that you will find all the information in this guide an invaluable resource on your journey to train for, and compete in your marathon.

However, please note that this guide does not cover everything you need to know about training. There are many more aspects of training, nutrition and particularly injury prevention which you should read about in order to get the most out of training and give yourself the best chance of staying injury free.

So, although this guide is a very good start, for a comprehensive guide ideal for bedtime reading, I strongly suggest you buy my book which is available as a paperback or as an e-book.



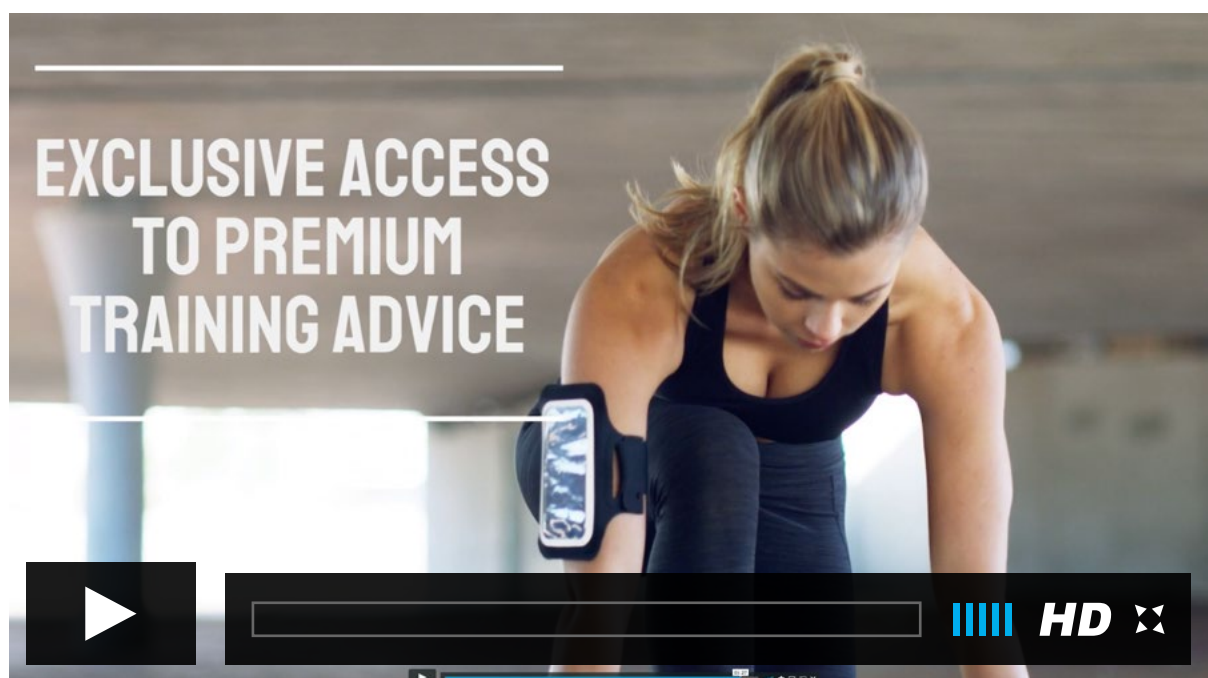
BBC newsreader and prolific marathon runner Sophie Raworth ranked the books as one of her top reads and said :

"I love this book – it's really practical and helpful and I'm often flicking through it!"

I hope you enjoy your upcoming weeks of training.

The journey ahead is not going to be easy, but trust me, when you cross that finishing line, you'll not regret doing it for one moment.

GH TRAINING RUNNING HUB



As useful as this Training Guide will hopefully be in the coming weeks, you also have exclusive access to a growing library of videos and tutorials.

Updated in 2020, the GH Training Running Hub has been developed to help runners of all abilities with their race preparations.

The Hub not only hosts all of these weekly countdowns, a range of training guides and plans for beginners through to advanced runners - but it also features dozens of videos and tutorials on the following topics:

- **Stretching**
- **Foam Rolling**
- **Strengthening**
- **Injury treatment and prevention**
- **Vlogs**

Login Details:

Login using your **Facebook, Strava or Google** account

When prompted, enter you Charity Code - **mstrunhub:**

Please click [here](#) for the login page.

Please remember to bookmark / save the library login page and login details on your browser.

What have I Done?

Right now, you may be going through a series of emotions.

There's a good chance that you've been toying with the idea of signing up for a marathon for a few months (or even years) and the fact that you're reading this means that you have taken your first significant step towards that goal of running 26.2 miles glorious (albeit daunting) - miles.

Whether you are a complete newcomer to the world of running or moving up a distance from a 10k or half marathon, this guide will help you every step of the way and make sure your mind, body and soul are well prepared for the big race in a few months time.



This training guide has been written in such a way that you can easily dip in and out of it as and when you need help and advice on your training. The training plans that accompany this guide can be printed out and stuck on your fridge if you wish and the rest of the guide saved on your PC or tablet and accessed whenever you like.

Still feeling anxious? Relax

If you are new to exercise of this magnitude and are wondering whether you have got it in you to see this challenge through, I have learnt one definitive fact from helping people train for such events that always rings true:

"If you have the desire, the belief and the determination to take this challenge on and raise money for a cause you believe in passionately, then you will find the training and the event itself very enjoyable and one which you will cherish for the rest of your life."

On Your Marks!

Now you're signed up and committed to your race, the first thing you need to do is make sure your body is up to the task ahead – specifically your heart.

Even if you have run recreationally for a few years, now that you are taking a big step up in distance, it's strongly advised that you take a trip to your GP and get him/her to check your blood pressure.

Even if you feel fit and well, you may have high blood pressure and not know about it – which is why high blood pressure (hypertension) is often referred to as the “silent killer.”



As over dramatic as this sounds, I cannot stress the importance of getting your heart checked out just to make 100% sure that you're fit and healthy and in good shape to begin training.

Once you are given the green light by your GP, then you can begin thinking about training with confidence that your heart and blood pressure have been checked and your GP is happy for you to proceed.

Even if you have been given the all clear, if you ever feel unwell during training or have chest tightness at any stage, always see your GP to discuss your symptoms.

Get Set!

So, you're signed up and committed to the race, your GP is happy that your blood pressure and lungs are in good shape and they're happy for you to begin training – so what's next?

What to expect?

Whatever your level of ability or experience of running, there's a good chance that you'll be feeling a little apprehensive of the training that lies ahead.

Although you may be fully committed to the upcoming challenge, negative thoughts can often creep in and ask questions of you and your ability.



- **Will I be able to do this?**
- **What if I fail?**
- **Am I too old to be doing challenges like this?**
- **What if I let myself and my charity down?**

These are just a few of the common questions that your sub-conscious may well ask you as you begin your training but be confident that no matter what negative thoughts enter your mind, you can do this and you will do this challenge.



Negative thoughts are so normal, from the day you begin training, right up to the day of the race, so do not think that you're the only one who is questioning your ability to see this through.

If you need a bit of a nudge and a healthy dose of inspiration, take a look at the short video to the left (click the image) whenever you need a lift and see just what is possible if you put your mind to it.

This video is incredibly moving and is essential viewing for anyone undertaking a challenge event who thinks they can't keep going.

Go!

Right, it's time to get cracking!

Your health has been given the all clear, you're now highly motivated after watching the video on the amazing achievements and drive of Rick and Dick Hoyt, so all that's left now is to get a plan in place and tackle this 26.2 mile challenge head on.

The rest of this guide contains all the information you need to get your training underway and ensure you reach the start line well prepared, injury free and fit enough to see the race through from start to finish.



What to expect.

In the coming weeks, you will go through a roller-coaster ride of emotions and this is something you'll have to come to terms with and accept as part and parcel of the training experience. Some days and weeks you'll feel amazing and other times you'll feel tired, heavy legged and down in the dumps.

The best way to see you through your low points is to get the support of your family and friends and let them know that there will be times when you'll need a bit of TLC and some encouragement to see you through a rough patch.

There will also be times, when a good old fashioned kick in the derriere might be needed to get you out of that door when you're just being lazy – I'll let your nearest and dearest decide when they feel which protocol is required.

So, first things first - let's take a look at the importance of footwear and how to choose the right shoes for all the miles you'll be putting in.

RUNNING SHOES

GET IT RIGHT



CHOOSE WISELY

Your shoes are one of the most important purchases you'll make. Choose wisely.

GAIT ANALYSIS

Let the experts choose the shoes to match your running gait.

GO FOR QUALITY

Always opt for a quality running shoes from a trusted brand. It's often ends up being false economy if you go for the cheap option.

Choosing shoes

Ask any running expert and they will tell you that finding the right pair of running shoes is vital to help you with your race preparations and help avoid injury.

However, deciding which is the right shoe is not as easy you may think.

Which shoe is right for you?

Whether you look online or visit the high street, the amount of choice you'll face is staggering.

There are dozens of brands, shapes, colours, sizes and prices, making the decision to choose just the one pair nearly as daunting as the pending weeks of training.

However, there is one fundamental piece of advice you have to follow if you are to give yourself the best possible chance of getting through your training free from niggling joint and muscle pain.

Buying a good pair of shoes that are specifically manufactured to absorb shock from hard surfaces will help to protect your joints and make training a far more enjoyable experience.

Our Opinion

To give yourself the best chance of choosing a pair of shoes which will look after your feet throughout training our advice is:

- **Quality** - You will always regret going cheap as "budget" shoes lack the quality to endure the rigours of training. Anything around the £100 is recommended.
- **Brand** - Choose a reputable running brand - such as Saucony, New Balance, Brooks. These brands have an excellent reputation in the industry and are used by most runners.



What is a Gait Analysis?



As complicated and scientific as the term “gait analysis” sounds, the principle is actually very simple to understand and the service is often provided absolutely free from reputable running stores.

Put simply, your running gait is the way you run and ultimately how your legs and feet act when they hit the ground and propel you forwards as you progress through your running stride. There are dozens of reasons why our feet land differently when we run, but in order to safeguard against injury, it is essential that you find out what type of running gait you have and buy the appropriate running shoes to complement it.

There are a number of ways to have your gait analysed but by far the most common and accurate is by a video analysis, where you are filmed (from behind) running on a treadmill. The video will show one of three things happening when your feet hit the floor - whether you are a neutral, runner or a under-pronator or over-pronator.

Neutral runner: your running stride is perfect and you have every right to feel smug. You are the envy of most runners, and less likely to pick up niggling injuries.

Over-pronator: your feet ‘roll over’ excessively during your running stride and you’ll need shoes to provide support to counter this.

Under-pronator: although you are the rarest breed of runner, you run more on the outside of your feet and will be recommended trainers to counteract this.

Choosing a Running Shoe



Based on the results of your running gait assessment, you will be given a choice of trainers to choose from and all you have to do is select the shoe that feels the most comfortable and suits your budget.

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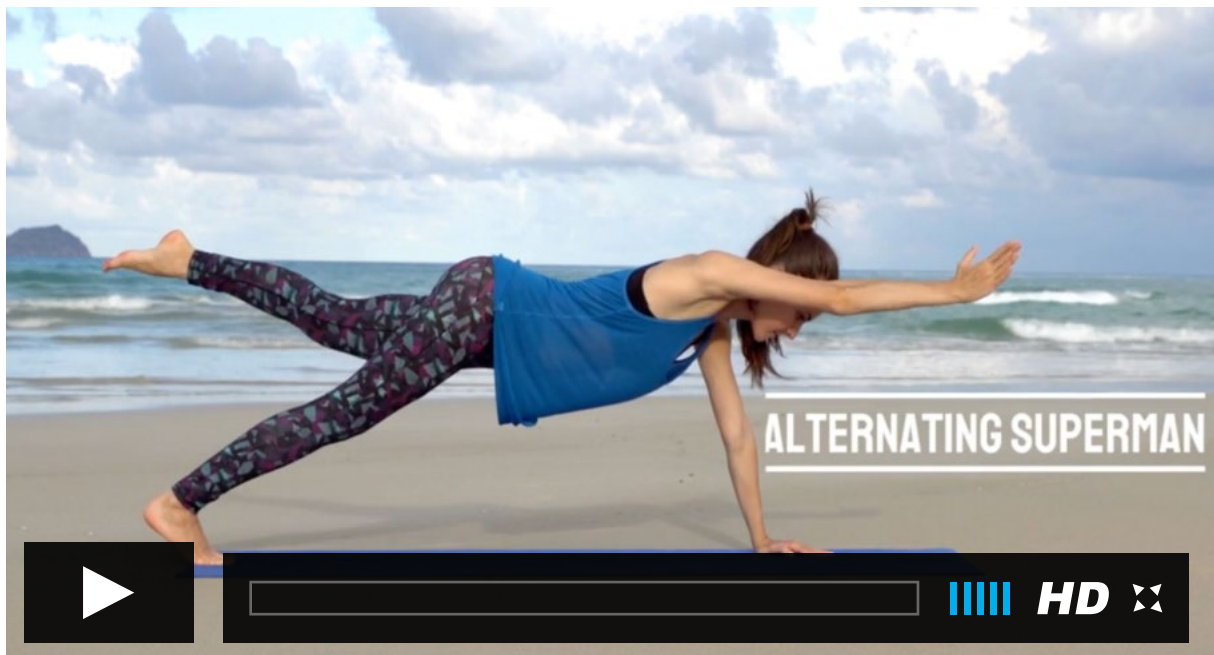
“Choose a pair of running shoes that are not only comfortable but are also made by a specialist running shoe manufacturer”

As previously mentioned, the running Company [Brooks](#), manufacture incredibly high quality and good value running shoes so if you are going to spend the next few months pounding the streets, you need to know that the shoes you are wearing have been made by a reputable company and that they're not going to fall apart on you after just a few weeks.

See if there is a reputable running store such as [Up and Running](#) near you, who will offer shoe advice and a Gait Analysis free of charge.



The importance of Pre-Hab



As important as it is to invest in the correct running shoes for your gait, it is equally important, if not more so, to think about “pre hab” exercises throughout your training.

When you first begin training - when your legs are fresh and the weekly miles are fairly low - injuries are often the last thing on your mind.

The trouble is, now that you are in training for a long distance event, small muscular weaknesses and / or imbalances that you have (but don't realise) will sooner or later begin to cause you problems.

They will start out as minor niggles, which a bit of rest and ice will fix, but as the miles clock up, unless those weaknesses and imbalances are corrected, what start out as minor niggles can quickly turn into seriously painful injuries.

To illustrate this point and to explain in a little more detail about the importance of “pre hab” exercises, click on the image above to watch a short video on how simple exercises that you can do at home, can help prevent a range of injuries.

Pre-hab Exercises

Once you understand the reasons why you should do regular “pre-hab” exercises, login into the [Video Library](#).

Here you'll find a range of videos on injury prevention, foam rolling and stretching.

RUNNING GEAR

KIT OUT YOUR WARDROBE



TIME TO KIT UP

You might have the right kit now, but will it be suitable in the cold, wet and wind?

READY FOR THE RAIN?

You never know what the UK weather will bring, so be prepared.

ACCESSORIES

Which accessories are essential and which ones can you do without?

Running Clothes

If you are one of the many thousands of new runners who, on entering an event, has raided their wardrobe and discovered that their current selection of running kit is bordering on being classed as fancy dress, it's probably time to invest in some new gear.

A casual jog around the park can easily be done in cheap "cotton" running clothes, but when the miles begin creeping up you'll find that cheap running clothes get very uncomfortable very quickly.

As with any other pastime or sport, it's very easy to be seduced by the big brand names, all trying to convince you to buy their new special tops/trousers and socks etc. but

ultimately the most important consideration is whether the clothes fit properly and are going to be suitable for time of year you're going to be training.



What's the difference?

As tempting as it might be to try and get away with wearing some old tracksuit bottoms and an old t-shirt, the main advantage that running clothes have is their ability to evaporate sweat away from the body, keeping you cool and comfortable for the duration of your run.

Cotton clothing holds on to moisture and will over time not only cause it to become heavy with sweat but also irritate the skin as the coarse damp cotton fibres rub on the sensitive skin under your arms and well you know.....down there. #ouch

Spring and Summer Running Clothes

Tops

When the temperature increases, so does your rate of perspiration and it's vital that you wear clothing that keeps your body cool.

This will not only make you feel more comfortable whilst training but also reduce the amount of water you lose through sweat.

In the winter months however, it can sometime be very difficult to know what to wear for a run.

Many runners find that if they wrap up too warm, then despite being at a comfortable temperature for the first mile or two, they can quickly begin to overheat for the remainder of the run.



The general rule of thumb is to dress for the **2nd mile**.

This simply means that you should wrap up in clothes for how warm you think you'll be on your second mile. It might be a little chilly for the first mile, but you'll be just right for the remainder of the run.

Vests – Are very popular choices as they keep the arms free, and keep you very cool. Be aware however that if the sun is shining or UV levels are high, you'll need to slop on some spf 15 to protect your skin (particularly shoulders) from the risk of sunburn.

T-shirts –Are also commonly used and most leading brands will manufacture t-shirts that are incredibly well vented so they keep you both cool and protected from harmful UV light. Make sure they fit well, especially under the arms where they can cause rubbing and friction if you are wearing the wrong size.

Long Sleeve tops – Are popular on mild days when there is a stiff breeze, which can make you feel a bit chilly if you're just in a vest or t-shirt.

Spring and Summer Clothes Contd....

Bottoms

When it comes to what to wear on your bottom half, warm weather options are more often a case of individual preference.

Some runners hate wearing shorts and would prefer to wear trousers as they are simply not confident flashing their bare fleshed pins to everyone.

Although shorts are the best choice, fabrics for trousers these days are so good that heat and sweat is dispersed away from the body incredibly efficiently.

Ultimately, it's your choice. Run in whatever you are comfortable in - be it tights, shorts or compression shorts.



Trousers– There are a wide range of trousers available for warm conditions ranging from full length ones to $\frac{3}{4}$ length ones. Again, personal preference and comfort should ultimately guide you but make sure they fit well. Too loose and they'll migrate south as you run, too tight and they'll rub in places you'd rather they didn't!

Shorts – From compression shorts to “lined” racing shorts, there is something for everyone in this department so take your time to choose wisely. Some brands/ makes have pockets for you to put keys or ipods in, but with the popularity of “armbands” to carry such things, these days pockets are becoming a rarity. Fit is vital, so follow guidelines and choose a size which will give you optimum comfort.

Compression shorts – Often worn underneath running trousers, compression shorts (particularly for men) keep “everything in place” and ensure you can run in comfort. Some runners will choose to wear just compression shorts in races or on hot days – that's of course your choice though!

Autumn & Winter Clothing

Tops - underlayers and outerwear

Regardless of the time of year you're running, sadly there are going to be days when it's pouring with rain and your schedule is telling you that you've got to take on a long run.

Waterproof running jackets can be a worthwhile investment to keep you dry, but make sure they are lightweight and fit well. Different jackets (at varying budgets) have

If you anticipate running at night, popular brands make a very good range of high visibility waterproof jackets, which are highly reflective and visible when running in low light.



Baselayer – A baselayer is a tight top which is highly effective at keeping you warm whilst at the same time wicking sweat away from your skin quickly, so that you can avoid the wind causing a chill. They are very comfortable to wear and strongly recommended in cooler and/or windy conditions.

Long Sleeve Top - If conditions are not too cold or wet (such as autumn), a long sleeve top with or without an under layer may be sufficient to see you comfortably through a training run. Although not as figure hugging as an underlayer, long sleeve tops can be tight or loose and soft to touch making them incredibly comfortable to wear.

Outerwear - More insulating and weather resistant tops than long sleeve tops, are a variety of outerwear tops. These often offer high levels of breathability, wind resistance and sometimes water resistance (but not suitable for heavy sustained rain). If it's fairly dry, then this is the last of the layers you need in cool wintry conditions.

Autumn & Winter Clothing Contd.....



Winter Trousers

If you want to wear shorts on those long, wet cold winter days then by all means be my guest, but I'm guessing that the overwhelming majority of runners would rather opt for a more comfortable pair of trousers or "running tights"

The choice available for trousers is fairly narrow when it comes to winter running.

The only slight variance is that in very cold conditions, running trousers are available with a thermal inner, which keeps your legs warm for the duration of your run. As useful as thermal trousers are, there is a risk that your legs can get too warm and you can end up sweating excessively - making your long run in the cold pretty uncomfortable.

Most winter running trousers have a small pocket (usually at the back above the bum) where you can store your keys, cash or iPhone.



Accessories

Once you've got your main kit sorted, then you've got to start thinking about what accessories you think might come in handy.

Like many things when it comes to running kit, personal preference on running accessories is the key decider as to whether it's worth spending the money on, but there are some things that will necessary.

Check out the list below and my view on their importance.



Sunglasses (high priority) - regardless of the time of year you're running, wearing eye protection on sunny days is essential. In the summer when the sun is strong they're needed and in the winter when the sun is low in the sky, sunglasses are an essential safety accessory that supersede their "fashion" status.

Hat / beanie (medium priority) - Some runners find it uncomfortable to run in a hat, but they are very helpful to keep the sun off your head and out of your eyes. In the winter, a beanie hat can help retain heat and keep you warm.

Ipod/ipod case (medium/low priority) - Very much an individual preference and an option which divides opinion in the running world. Some runners can't bear the idea of running without music, whilst others enjoy the peace and serenity of running in silence. Care must always be taken when running with headphones as your awareness of traffic and other factors is significantly reduced - so always be careful.

Water bottle (medium/high priority) - If you are running long distances, even in moderate heat, it is essential that you replace lost fluids (see nutrition chapter). If you are unable to drop water bottles at set places on your planned route, then you must carry the water/sports drink with you in a special running bottle.

Foam Rollers - Every Runner's BFF



Foam rollers should be just as much a part of your training gear as your running shoes.

Regular use of a foam roller on your muscles every week will help to keep your muscle fibres elongated and free from little "notches" which if left untreated can lead to muscle tightness and injury. They are great to help release tension in connective tissue and help to prevent muscles tightening up, which can often lead to injury.

I'd be lying if I said that foam rolling (or "self myofascial release" as it is clinically known) is a pain free and pleasant experience, but trust me – it's well worth doing.

Head over to the [GH Training Running Hub](#) for a few video tutorials on how to release certain muscles and how a foam roller can help you, in a little more detail.

In the Video Library, there are several foam rolling videos, so choose which one is most applicable to you.

Roll..... then stretch

As beneficial as foam rolling is for your muscles, it is even more effective if you combine it with stretching.

So, next time you foam roll your key running muscles, such as your quads, hamstrings, calves or adductors - make sure you give them a good stretch afterwards too. More advice is available on the GH Training Running Hub.

(Ask your Charity for the Running Hub Login details)

HEART MONITORS TRAIN SMARTER



EXPENSIVE LUXURY?

Are they necessary or just a gadget
for serious runners?
The answer might surprise you.

TRAINING SMARTER

It's not always how hard you train -
it's how smart you train

YOUR HEART- YOUR RULES

We're different - and so are our heart
rate when running Learn how to
work out your training zones

Running Hub - Should I use a Heart Rate Monitor?



Heart rate monitors - Loved and obsessed over by some - but ignored by many.

So are they useful and can they help you with your training?

Often viewed as a gadget reserved for “serious” runners, it’s a common misconception that heart rate monitors are an expensive luxury.

In fact, they are quite the opposite - these days that are relatively inexpensive and essential for anyone training for a marathon.

Search up “Heart monitors” in the [Video Library](#) to find out more.

GH Training Running Hub

The [GH Training Running Hub](#) is packed full of a wide range of Videos and Vlogs, helping to answer some of the most common questions runners have when in training for an endurance run.

Heart rate monitors

Before smart phones came into existence, the only way you could keep track of your heart rate whilst running was by using a chest strap and a watch which picked up the heart rate signal.

Although this form of heart rate monitoring remains the most convenient way to monitor your heart rate, if you're on a budget, then all you need to do is buy a heart rate strap (£50), download one of a dozen or so apps and hey presto, you can monitor your heart rate via your smart phone.

Putting the technical aspect of heart rate monitoring to one side for a moment if you are new to running, you may be wondering why the need to monitor your heart rate at all whilst training.



Why does it matter what your heart is doing?

It matters big time - and once you know how to monitor it properly you'll soon notice just how important it can be to help improve your fitness and give you peace of mind that you are not running too slowly - or too fast.

Working out your maximum heart rate

Before you can monitor your heart rate effectively, you first need to work out what your maximum possible heart rate is.

The formula to work this out used to be 220 minus your age, however, this has been found to be quite inaccurate, particularly for women. So, as a rough guide use the following formula:

For Men:

$220 - \text{age} = \text{maximum HR}$

Eg. If you're 40:

$220 - 40 = \text{MaxHR of } 180$

For Women

$226 - \text{age} = \text{maximum HR}$

Eg. If you're 40:

$226 - 40 = \text{Max HR of } 186$

Train Smarter - Not harder

Once you know your maximum possible heart rate, you are now in a position to learn how hard you need to push yourself on certain types of training run.

Although we'll cover the different types of training later on, to give you a rough idea how hard your heart should be working whilst out running, first you need to work out which "training zone" you should be in when undertaking certain types of run.

It's worth saying at this juncture that heart rate training is not always the same for everyone, as some people are able to train at different intensities for different lengths of time.



This can be due to a variety of factors such as fitness levels, gender and individual genetics.

So, although the following information is generally accurate, please be aware that some of you may not function well in the following zones and may need to adjust the heart rate zones accordingly.

Long run heart rate – 70-80% HRM

For your long, slow runs which are usually done on the weekend, you should try to keep your heart rate at about **70-80%** of your heart rate max (HRM)

So, if you're a 40 year woman, you can work it out as:

$$226 - 40 = 186$$

$$186 \times 70\% = 130 \quad 186 \times 80\% = 149$$

Therefore you should try to keep your heart rate:

Above 130 but below 149.

Tempo run heart rate – 80-85% HRM

For a faster training run, such as a “Tempo” Training run which helps encourage the body to be able to tolerate running at a faster pace, you need to train in a higher heart rate zone.

It’s harder than a long, slow run pace but not so exhausting that you have had enough after 5 minutes. So if we use the previous example of a 40 year old woman your heart rate can be calculated like this.....

$$226 - 40 = 186$$

$$186 \times 80\% = 149 \quad 186 \times 85\% = 158$$

Therefore you should try to keep your heart rate:

Above 149 but below 158.

“The zones for tempo running can vary hugely, so if you feel you can handle running at a higher intensity, feel free to adjust the zones to suit your heart and your ability”



Interval Training – 85-90+% HRM

For tough, high intensity sessions such as kilometre or mile repeats, you should be looking to get your heart rate up to the **85 -90+%** bracket.

These sessions are tough going and it may take you a while to build up a good enough level of fitness to be able to tolerate them, so don’t rush.

Some people may be able to tolerate a heart rate of up to 95% in the final stages of these sessions, but do not go out purposely to see how high you can get it – always run within your ability

So, if you are a 40 year old man, you can work it out as:

$$220 - 40 = 180$$

$$180 \times 85\% = 153 \quad 180 \times 90\% = 162+$$

Therefore you should try to keep your heart rate:

Above 153 but below 162.

Your heart - your rules

As beneficial as heart rate monitors are, training in tune with your heart is tricky to do well and it can take several weeks before you are familiar with how your heart responds to training and if your training zones need adjusting.

Stick with it though and you'll never want to head out for a run without a heart monitor ever again.

When you get familiar with your training heart rate and how beneficial it is, you'll feel naked without one so make sure you always have it to hand whenever you head out of that front door.



Ready to get cracking?

Before you start, take a look at the following tips on how to get the most out of heart rate training.

True maximum heart rate - The "226 or 220 minus your age" formula to work out your HR max can sometimes be inaccurate, so a "true HR max test" is often required. There are several ways to find out your true maximum heart rate but the safest way is under the guidance of a qualified personal trainer, as you need to push yourself to your limit of physical exhaustion.

It's your heart - Copying someone else's heart rate and working in similar zones may be tempting, but it must be avoided. Comparing your training heart rate to someone else's is like comparing personality types – they are likely to be very different. Even if you are the same age as a running buddy, there is every chance that their heart rate at a steady pace could be 140 and yours 160 – despite you both running at the same intensity! It's your heart – train in tune with it!

Resting Heart rate - Your resting heart rate is a fantastic indicator of your fitness level. When you first begin training, make a note of your resting heart rate first thing in the morning (when still in bed) and re-test it after a few weeks. You'll find that it will get lower the fitter you get, which is a great comfort, knowing that all your hard work is worth it. However – if you find that your resting heart rate is higher than normal it may indicate that you are either over training OR you have a cold on the way. So, either ease back on the miles or grab some Vitamin C.

Heart Rate Watches



Heart rate monitors have gone through a revolution in the last 5 years.

Only a few years ago, heart monitors with all the bells and whistles on with features such as GPS functionality, a wealth of heart rate data, blue-tooth connectivity and biometric data etc cost the earth -

These days you can pick them up for just a couple of hundred pounds. And that's for top of the range.

Heart monitors with the basic features of heart rate, GPS, timer and blue-tooth can be bought for well under a hundred pounds. Incredible value for the benefit that they give you and your training.

For as little as £30, you can pick up a monitor, which will give most runners all they need, so before you think that they are an expensive and unnecessary luxury, it's time to think again.

Which Brand?

There are many brands out there which offer a wide range of monitors for every budget, but perhaps the two leading brands and ones which I suggest you consider are Polar and Garmin.

[Garmin](#) are slightly more expensive than Polar and have the greatest market share. They manufacture excellent products and have a model for all needs and Budget.

[Polar](#) however have been resurgent in recent years and have produced some excellent value heart monitors which may, for the financially conscious of you, make them a little more appealing than Garmin.

Heart Training with Smartphone Apps

Although most mid range heart rate monitors have GPS functionality built in, they are still expensive and out of the reach of many runners.

There is an alternative though.

Perhaps the most cost effective form of GPS tracking is by downloading a free running app to your Smartphone.

For an additional annual fee, you can usually upgrade the app to increase its functionality, but often this isn't necessary and you can get away with the free version.



Heart rate compatible

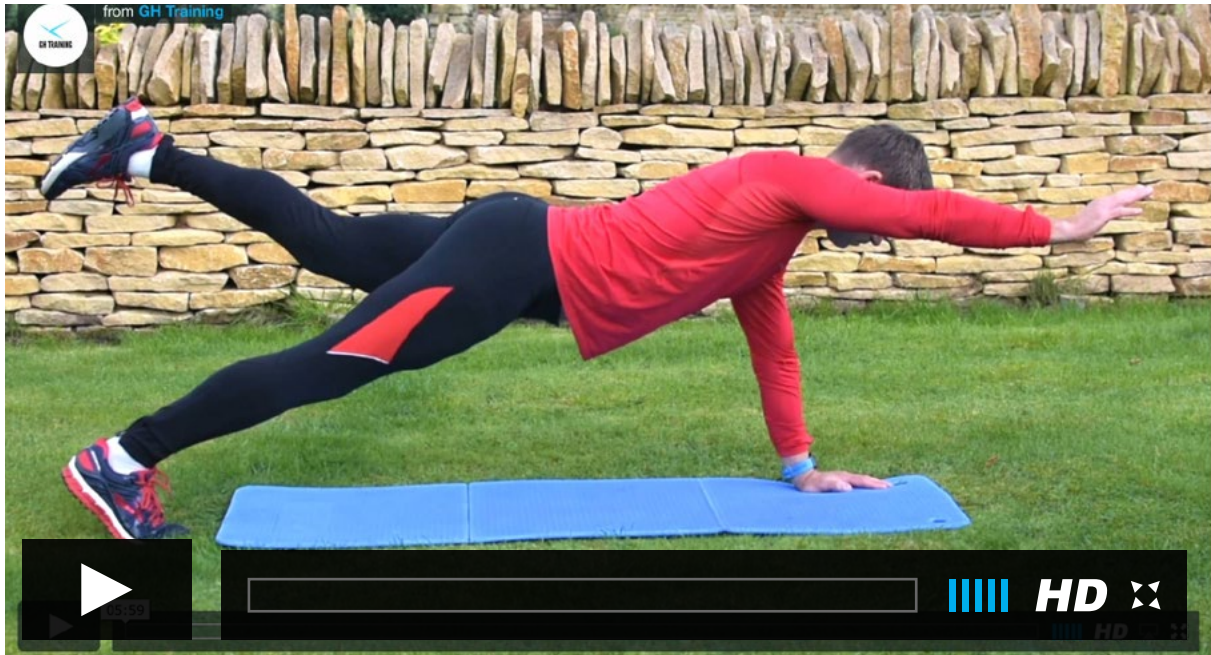
With the added advantage of being able to purchase a compatible heart rate strap you can also keep an eye (or ear more accurately, as most apps give voice feedback on your pace and heart rate etc. to you every minute or so) on how your heart is tolerating the run.

With such a wide selection to choose from, it's hard to know which app will suit you, but by choosing one of the most popular ones such as RunKeeper, Runtastic, Strava or Mapmyrun you can't go far wrong.

Benefits – Cheap, (once you have purchased the smartphone) accurate and easy to recall data/stats from previous runs.

Drawbacks – Difficult & impractical to view your heart and pace data “on demand” and have to rely on feedback through headphones. Draining on the battery.

Core Strength - Building good foundations



It goes without saying that the overwhelming majority of your training should be road running, in order to get your legs accustomed to running long distances on hard surfaces.

However, there are times when other forms of training should be done to help prevent injury and keep training interesting.

Cycling and swimming for example are good forms of “cross training” which should feature in your plan somewhere, but equally as important is “**Core Training.**”

Core Training - it's more than just the plank.

I'm sure at some stage in the past few years, you've done “The Plank” - one of the most common “core” exercises, but now you're training for a running event, it's time you try a few more running specific exercises.

Just click on the image above and head over to the [Video and Tutorial section of the GH Training Running Hub](#) where you'll find more training videos and more information on running specific core exercises.

THE TRAINING



KEEP IT VARIED

Doing the same run time and time again can get a bit tedious. Learn how to spice up your sessions.

HOW HARD TO PUSH

Knowing how fast you should be running for each session is not easy. We tell you how to get it right

FAQS

Every runner has loads of questions about training. We answer some of the most common ones.

The Training



Getting down to Business

Once you've got the kit and the gadgets, all that's left now is to get some miles in your legs to get you into race shape.

This prospect however, is when the realisation of what lies ahead can kick in and you start having doubts about your ability to see this challenge through to the end. After all, 26.2 miles is along way to run - but it is far from impossible.

If you're nervous or have a few worries about what lies ahead, just remember **RUN!**

R – Rest and Recovery are two of the most under-rated aspects of training. Every year, runners put unnecessary pressure on themselves to run too far, too fast and too much which more often than not results in burn-out, injury and ultimately failure to make the start line. Rest and recovery are effectively what makes you fitter – training breaks your body down and it's during the rest and recovery time that your heart and muscles adapt to the stress and make you fitter and stronger. So, DO NOT forget to rest and recover after hard training.

U – Understand your limits and accept that you are who you are. If you can do this, then you'll enjoy training so much more and you'll be able to relax. When it comes to endurance running, there are so many things which are beyond your control, particularly your genetic ability and this is something many runners find difficult to accept. We are all different and have different genetic ability, so if you are finding during training that you can't hit the splits you had hoped for despite quality training, do not blame yourself but accept you are who you are. If you can do this, you'll take pressure off yourself and enjoy training far more.

N – Never run on an injury. Never. As tempting as it might be to try and ignore a muscle or tendon niggle, you are likely to make it far worse by running on it and possibly end up missing weeks of training. Injuries ruin runner's dreams every year, so please don't be a statistic – get your injury seen to or check your symptoms later on in this guide.

Varying your Training

One of the most common mistakes runners make when training for a long distance race is forgetting – or not bothering – to mix up their training runs.

Performing every training run at the same speed and on the same route may well help to build your endurance up sufficiently to give you the fitness to complete 26.2 miles, but there are several things you can do in training to not only make it a bit more interesting - but more importantly boost your fitness immeasurably, making you a faster and stronger runner.

Keep it Simple

If you have spent some time trawling the internet on how to improve your endurance, there's a good chance that you may have been overwhelmed with information on the best ways to catapult your fitness to new heights.

There are well over a dozen types of training you can do to improve your running fitness, but with just 7 days in the week it's simply not possible to include them all.

So, in this guide we have decided to keep things nice and simple and we advise you stick to the training sessions we have used with hundreds of runners which we know work – and work incredibly well.



Training Intensity - Get it Right

Getting your training intensity right is not always as easy as you might think.

Many people new to running find it difficult to know how hard they should be pushing themselves in each training session in order to get the right training response and stimulus.

It's a tricky balance and one which, to a degree, requires a little bit of guess work and a need to "listen to your body" and see how it responds and feels after a series of training runs.

The trouble with training intensity is two fold:



Too Easy – if you don't push yourself hard enough during a training run, then you will not have stimulated the body sufficiently to adapt to training. Although this won't do you any harm or necessarily cause injury, by the same token, it wouldn't have pushed your heart, lungs and legs hard enough to encourage an adaption. As a result, your fitness will not have been improved as much as it could have done and you have wasted an opportunity to really boost your fitness.

Too Hard – If you push yourself too hard, either by running too fast, too often or too far on training runs, then you are at risk of overloading the body and over stressing it. Pushing yourself too hard **CAN** result in injury, so it is arguably more important that you are careful not to push yourself too hard.

Excessively hard training sessions can also mean that you suffer from muscle soreness and stiffness for a few days after training, meaning that you may have to miss a training run.

If this is the case, there's a good argument to say that all that hard work in one session was a waste of time if it means you're under performing or being forced to miss subsequent sessions.

Rate of Perceived Exertion

If you don't own a heart rate monitor, then the next best alternative is to use the scale of "Rate of Perceived Exertion." This scale is an excellent way to ensure you are performing every training run at the correct intensity.

So, take a look at the table below and get familiar with the different levels of exertion.

Then, when you read the next few pages on the different types of training run you'll notice an **R.P.E scale** next to each one. If you're unsure what intensity it is, feel free to refer back to this page.

R.P.E SCALE	HOW YOU FEEL	%HR MAX
1	Chilling. Sitting down, feet up watching a movie.	30-40%
2	A walk to the shops to get more popcorn.	45-55%
3	A light jog.	60-70%
4	A perfect sociable pace. Quicker than a jog but able to have a chat.	70-75%
5	Pretty comfortable. Got a good sweat on and you feel great.	75-80%
6	Comfortable -ish. You feel like it's good paced run.	80-85%
7	Talking getting difficult. Possible - but not very easy.	85-90%
8	Only short answers to important questions possible.	90-95%
9	Talking all but impossible.	95%+
10	Talking is impossible. You can only keep this intensity up for 10-15 seconds or so.	N/A

Steady Paced Run

(RPE 3-4 or 75-80% HRmax)

A steady pace is just that! A pace which you feel is steady and one which you can maintain for a long time.

Steady paced runs will form a large part of your training, as this is the pace you should run all of your long weekend runs at, as well as a good chunk of your mid-week runs too.

There is no precise pace which can be labelled to a “steady run”, as everyone is different but if you feel comfortable and are able to hold a conversation with someone at this pace without having to gasp for air every other word, then you’re pretty much spot on.



As you get fitter, you’ll find that you’ll be able to run at a steady pace for longer without fatigue, so it’s important that you condition your body to be able to tolerate this pace, simply by getting the miles in those legs.

Tempo Paced Run

(RPE 5-6 or 80-85% HRmax)

A Tempo based run is run at a pace which is a stage quicker than a steady pace. At this intensity, talking is just about possible but you should only be able to manage “shortish” sentences before needing to take a breath.

The length of time that you are able to maintain a tempo paced run varies depending on your fitness level.

Beginners may initially find that a one mile tempo run is tough going but a good runner may be able to maintain tempo pace for a good eight to ten miles and far beyond.

As your fitness levels improve, you will find that tempo runs gradually become easier to maintain for longer periods.

Fartlek

(RPE 6-8) or 85-90+% HRmax

In short, fartlek runs are steady paced runs mixed up with periods of faster, harder running. These intense bursts of speed (performed at RPE 6-8) can vary in length and the number of times you perform them during a run. An example might be to increase your pace to a certain landmark such as a post box or park bench, or even more structured such as do them for a certain length of time.

Set the number of "fartlek intervals" you plan to do before your run, eg. 5 mile steady paced run with 8 fartlek intervals of approx 2 mins each. This keeps it easier to stick to when the going gets tough.



Intervals

(RPE 7-9 or 90+% HRmax)

Intervals are very similar to fartlek training, with the main difference being that they are more structured.

An example of an interval training session would be to jog gently for 10-15mins, gradually increasing your pace to a tempo run towards the end to make sure you are warmed up well. After a stretch, your interval session might look like this:

4 x 1 mile with 5 minutes rest in-between intervals.

OR

8 x 800m with 3 mins rest in-between intervals.

OR

12 x 400m with 2 mins rest in-between intervals.

It's a good idea to record your heart rate, pace and times for each interval so that you can track your progress – these sessions will get easier the more you do them.

FAQS on Training Intensity

Over the years, when it comes to training and choosing the right intensity, the same questions keep cropping up from runners keen to just get it right and make the most out of training.

Here are a few of the most **FAQs** I have been asked over the years and hopefully they will help clarify a few things if you're still a little unsure about how to best your training intensity.

How often should I do intervals or fartlek training?

You should not do more than 2 interval/fartlek sessions a week and make sure you leave at least 48 hours in between sessions.

These are intense sessions and it takes a while for the body to recover from them.



How do I know how much rest to have in between intervals?

This is not always easy but start off being quite generous with your rest periods. In the early stage of training, start with a ratio of 1:1 (eg. 5 mins of running = 5 minutes rest)

As your fitness and your ability to recover improves aim to reduce the rest period by 30-60 secs at a time and see how you feel.

Do I need to include hill training?

Hill training is a fantastic way to propel your fitness levels to new heights but don't bust a gut to include them in your weekly schedule. As effective as hills are to improve your leg and cardio-vascular strength, they also increase your risk of injury so unless your upcoming race has lots of hills in it, don't worry if you leave them out of your training schedule.

The GH Training Marathon Plans

At the back of this guide, you'll find two training timetables for beginner, intermediate and advanced runners.

The **beginner's guide** is suitable for people who are new or novice runners and are looking at finishing the race in around 5hrs.

However, if you are finding that the plan is not quite challenging enough or you fancy pushing yourself a bit more, then by all means dip into the more advanced plan.

You don't need to make a permanent switch, but by integrating a tougher session here and there, it will do wonders for your fitness.



The **Intermediate & advanced** guides are suitable for people who already have a fairly good fitness base, have been running for a few months and are looking to break the magical 4 hour barrier.

The key point to remember about these guides is that they are not the Gospel and they should be treated very much as a guide, rather than a definitive timetable which should be followed to the letter week in and week out.

Strong Glutes - Keeping you injury free



In the [“Importance of pre-hab” video](#) on the [GH Training Video Library](#) you will see what effect weak glute muscles have on the pelvis and how the instability they cause, can disrupt the delicate biomechanics of the body.

Weak Glute (bum) muscles can ultimately cause a range of injuries which you could do without as you prepare to train for the race of your life in a few months time.

So, if you think or know you are weak in this area what can you do about it?

Firstly, you can of course make an appointment with a well-qualified sports therapist or physiotherapist who will assess your whole body and make recommendations on which muscles you need to stretch and / or strengthen to keep the body balanced and more resistant to injuries.

If budget does not allow this, then try including all of the glute exercises in the [GH Training Video Library](#) into your weekly routine.

Performing these exercises may well be just the tip of the iceberg, but it is a very good place to start and will do no harm at all - especially if you are now doing higher intensity training sessions such as intervals and fartlek.

GH Training Running Hub

Keep a look out for updates in the [Video Library](#).

We're uploading new videos all the time. to help you choose a range of exercises to help condition your muscles and prevent injury

STRETCHING PREPARING FOR A RUN



IS IT NECESSARY?

Is it important to stretch or can you get away with not stretching at all?

TYPES OF STRETCHING

Stretching isn't as straight forward as many think. Learn which stretches to do and when

VIDEO LIBRARY

Visit the [GH Training Video Library](#) to view a range of stretches to help you prepare for a training run and avoid injury.

Running Hub - Do you HAVE to stretch before a run?



Learn how to stretch - properly.

Knowing it's important to stretch is one thing, but knowing how to stretch properly is another.

Stretching is a science and if performed incorrectly can actually do more harm than good in some cases. Watching people stretch before a run is, at times, cringe worthy, so we have pleasure in being able to show you exactly how each stretch should be performed.

With the help of the new [GH Training Video Library](#), you have full access to a wide range of stretches , accompanied with explanations on why they should be done and when you should do them.

New videos are being added to our library all the time, so keep coming back and learn more about the importance of stretching and how to perform ones that are specific to you.

Login to the [GH Training Video Library](#) and learn all about the importance of Static and Dynamic stretches and how they can help make a huge difference to your running.

Run Preparation

Preparing for a run by mobilising the joints and stretching the muscles may not be a big deal for recreational runners with no specific goal, but it's criminal if you're training for an event such as a marathon, half marathon or a 10k.

The length of time and areas you stretch will vary from one person to another.

For example, some runners will find their calves are always very tight and need to be stretched incredible well before a run.

Others may find their calves are fine, but need to spend more time on their hamstrings.

It's important that before every training run you follow these three steps:



Mobilise - Particularly important for early morning training, mobilising the joints before activity is essential. Moving joints through a progressive range of movement (ROM) encourages the secretion of synovial fluid, which act like a lubricating oil for your joints. Focus on ankle, knee and hip movement in particular.

Warm up - Encouraging blood flow to the muscles is the next step after joint mobilisation and vital to do before you begin stretching.

Muscles are far more pliable when warm and filled with blood. This makes them more responsive and far safer to stretch without risking injury. A brisk walk or very light jog for 5 minutes is the ideal intensity and time to encourage blood flow.

Stretch - Once mobilised and warmed up, only then can you begin stretching.

Every runner has very different stretching needs, so it's important to focus on the muscles that you feel are especially tight.

NUTRITION TRAINING FUEL



WHAT SHOULD YOU EAT?

Nutrition is a complex subject at the best of times, so we break it all down and tell you the basics of endurance nutrition.

CARBOHYDRATE

You may have heard you need to up your carb consumption, but by how much and how much is too much?

HYDRATION

Learn how to find out your individual hydration needs and why proper hydration is so important..

Nutrition - Training Fuel

They say you are what you eat and when it comes to fuelling your body for an endurance event, then that phrase couldn't be more true.

In years gone by, nutrition and the role it plays in forming a successful training regime has not been taken hugely seriously but we know now just how important it is, if runners want to train and race to their full potential.

Although the science of sports nutrition can get incredibly complex, the basics are actually fairly simple and to save you from getting a headache with information overload – it is the basics that this nutrition chapter will cover.



Like all training topics, nutrition is very individual, so although the advice in this chapter will apply to the vast majority of people, do not feel you have to follow it if you have certain dietary restrictions or requirements.

Get the right Fuel

The fuel you use to supply your body with the energy to run is no different than filling your car with fuel – Diesel doesn't let an unleaded engine go very far.

Every year entrants make the same mistake with their fluid intake, bad timing of carbohydrate consumption and worst of all copying what a friend eats.

Find out early on in your training what foods agree with you and which foods don't; so that you know right from the start which foods you can tolerate. A perfect example of this is pasta.

Generally regarded as a runner's "best friend," many people use pasta as their preferred source of carbohydrate to fuel their runs. This is a good idea in principle, but for those individuals who have a wheat intolerance; pasta could cause major discomfort and embarrassment on a long run.

Therefore, if certain foods cause you bloating or give you a sensitive stomach ignore what other people are eating and accept that some foods are off the menu.

How Much Fuel?



The energy used whilst on a run varies enormously depending on speed, distance, gender, muscle density etc.

It is impossible to give accurate information without knowing a great deal about an individual, but to give you an idea, according to leading sports scientists Wilmore and Costill:

A 13 stone male running at 7.5mph will burn approx 14 calories a minute and a 10 stone woman running at the same pace will burn approx 11 calories a minute.

Time to Carb up!

Biologically, carbohydrates are fairly simple structures.

Stored in the body as a substance known as “glycogen,” they can be used at short notice to supply the body with energy.

It is for this reason that they are the body’s “go to” energy source during activities such as running. The problem marathon runners face, is that there is limited space available in the liver and muscles to store glycogen. Your body can only store enough glycogen to take you up to **18-20 miles**

This relative lack of storage space means that marathon runners have to be extra vigilant about their carbohydrate nutrition:

Eat too little - You won’t be able to meet the energy demands of training.

Eat too much - Despite clocking up plenty of miles in training, you could put on weight.

How much Carbohydrate?

Everyone's individual carbohydrate needs varies massively.

We are all so different in terms of size, gender, how much we exercise, how fast we run and of course our individual genetic make up.

It would be great to be able to give all runners training for an endurance event an exact figure of how much carbohydrate they should be consuming everyday - but sadly this is just not possible.

If you are fairly new to distance running a degree of experimentation will be needed to get your carbohydrate consumption right.



For a rough guide however, the table below will give you a good idea of how much you'll need to be eating on a daily basis.

Please note this is a rough guide and a lot of tweaking may be needed to these figures, so be prepared to consume more or less depending on your needs.

TRAINING VOLUME	CARBOHYDRATE PER KG OF BODY WEIGHT
3-5 hrs / week	4-5 g
1-2 hrs / day	6-7 g
2-4 hrs a day	7-8 g

As a general rule, the higher the intensity you exercise at, the higher the percentage of carbohydrates is used.

Therefore, during the higher intensity Fartlek and interval training, your body will call upon a very high percentage of carbohydrates to meet the energy demands.

During longer, lower intensity runs your fat stores are called upon more. This however, does not mean that you stop burning carbohydrates; you simply burn a slightly lower percentage.

Running Hub - Play your carbs right



Carbohydrates - Running fuel.

Knowing much carbohydrate you need to be eating to fuel your training is one of the most common nutrition questions asked by people training for a marathon.

In the early stages of training, there is no real need to alter your diet, as it's likely that'll be consuming sufficient amounts of carbohydrate to fuel your training by eating "normally"

However, when the miles get longer and your running regularity increases, then you're going to have to start reviewing how much you eat.

Type in "carbohydrates" in the Video Library Search bar to find out how much carbohydrate you should be looking to eat on a daily basis when those miles get longer and the energy demands on your body increase.

GH Training Running Hub

The [GH Training Running Hub](#) features the Video Library which is packed full of a wide range of Vlogs to help answer some of the most common questions runners have when in training for an endurance run.

Hypoglycaemia

Hypoglycaemia occurs when blood sugar levels drop too low and you begin to feel dizzy, fatigued, heavy legged and generally incredibly tired.

There are a variety of levels of hypoglycaemia, the worst of which, although you are unlikely to experience during your marathon race provided you have followed the outlined carbohydrate intake guidelines - can still happen!

The following guidelines should not just be adhered to for the race itself, but also during your longer distance training runs.



Pre-run meal

In the days leading up to a distance run, you need to consume plenty of carbohydrates to ensure your glycogen stores are sufficiently full.



There is no need to eat a huge bowl of pasta before your run, as it is the days leading up to it that are important.

After all, you're not going to be eating a bowl of rice at 7am on race day! Depending on the time of your run, leave at least 2 - 3 hours before your big last meal.

Snacking on lights foods such as fruit is fine, as they are easily digested.

Remember though, If your stomach contains large amounts of food as you set off, this can lead to stitches, as your stomach and working muscles compete against each other for blood.

Hydration

The human body is made up of around 60-70 % water, so it is essential that you keep your body well hydrated during your training and the race itself, especially if it is a hot day.

As you exercise, your body heats up just as the engine in a car heats up during a journey.

To stop overheating, water is drawn for blood plasma and secreted from pores in the skin, as sweat, to cool the body down.

However, as the water content of blood decreases, it changes from a free flowing watery substance into a thicker more "treacle" like substance.

This makes it harder for blood to flow through the arteries and veins quickly enough to supply the muscles with the right nutrients to sustain the same level of exercise.

To meet the demands, the heart is forced to pump faster resulting in an increase in heart rate. This ultimately leads to feelings of fatigue and premature exhaustion.

So, the following few pages will help you to understand a bit more about the best ways to stay hydrated and what kind of drinks are best for your training sessions and on race day.



Just a 1% decrease in hydration, will cause around a 5% decrease in performance. A water loss of just 12% of a person's body weight can lead to death.

Water or Sports Drink?

Knowing which kind of fluid is best for your hydration and training needs is often an area of much confusion for runners.

Do you need to re-hydrate with the powerfully and aggressively marketed Sports drinks such as Lucozade or will good old fashioned water do?

The answer is not that straight forward, because there will be occasions in your training when water will suffice and other times when a sugary and electrolyte drink such as Lucozade sport will be more suitable.

To help illustrate when you need to choose water or Sports drink, take a look at the table below. As you'll see, the two determining factors are exercise intensity and exercise duration.



EXERCISE CONDITIONS	TYPE OF DRINK
Running for less than 30 mins	Nothing or water
Light jogging for less than 60 mins	Water
High Intensity for less than 60mins	Sports Drink
High Intensity for more than 60 mins	Sports Drink

Table adapted from "The Complete Guide to Sports Nutrition" by Anita Bean

How much Fluid?



Knowing what you should be drinking is one thing, but knowing **how much** you should be drinking is another.

Once again, due to the individuality of the human body, there isn't one simple answer as it depends on a number of factors.

Although there are many more, here are some of the most common reasons why our hydration needs vary so much from one person to another.

Individuality – some people need more fluid than others due to higher rate of sweating.

Conditions – The warmer the conditions, the more fluid you'll require.

Running intensity – The faster you run the more you'll sweat and the more fluid you'll need to replace.

Gender - Generally, as men have a larger muscle mass, their hydration needs are greater as muscles require a lot of water to function properly.

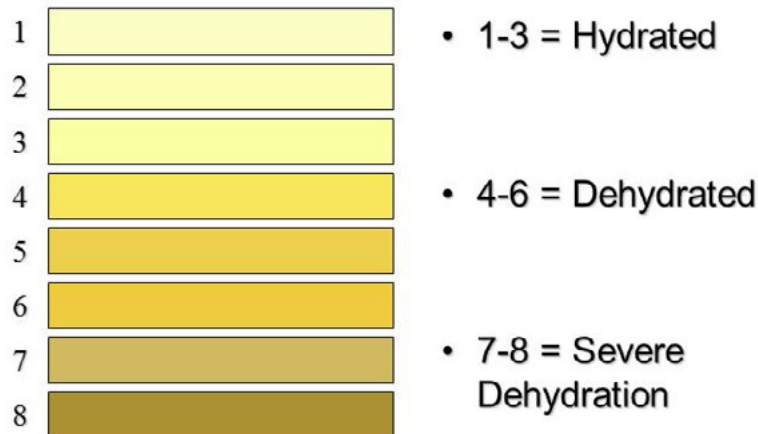
As you can see, offering a "ball park" figure on the amount of fluid you'll need to consume before, during and after training is almost impossible to advise.

The good news though is that there is something you can do at home (and it really is best to do at home) so that you can gauge for yourself if you need to increase (or maybe decrease) your fluid intake.

You only have to do it a few times and pretty soon you'll be able to get a good idea of how much fluid you expend during a training run.....

The wee test

Hydration Urine Chart



Although I accept that this test is easier for guys to do than girls, it is still a very good way to gauge your hydration status.

As a general rule of thumb, you should be drinking enough fluid during the day that every time you “pass water” it comes out either clear or a pale straw colour – number 1-3 in the image above are acceptable.

If you ever find that your urine is the colour of 4 or higher, then you need to get some fluids in you. The only time that it should be this colour is first thing in the morning when you will be naturally dehydrated after sleeping for 6-8 hours.

Wee colour pre and post training

After a run, the first time you pass water will serve as a very good indication of how dehydrated you are and how much fluid you have lost during the session.

In cold conditions and /or short training runs of lower intensity, you’ll find that you’ll lose far less fluid than on a hot day, and your urine may only appear a shade or two darker after a run.

However, following an intense run in the heat or of long duration, you’ll find that your first wee after your run will be a lot darker meaning that you have lost significant fluid – as much as 2 litres is not uncommon for some.

For long runs, it is vital that you replace some of the fluid you’re losing to ensure that your body does not start slowing down due to dehydration and also to prevent your body overheating and expose you to the risks of **hyperthermia**.

Fluid replacement Guidelines

By using the wee test, you will, overtime, begin to understand how much fluid you can lose on training runs of certain distances and intensities in certain conditions.

This will give you a far better idea on how much fluid you should be taking on before, during and after training.

There is another way though.

Weigh yourself

By weighing yourself before and after a run, you'll get a very accurate idea of how much fluid you have lost based on the weight you lose.



As a rough guide, **1lb** of fluid is equivalent to **1 pint** of water, so if you find that after a hard run you've lost 4lbs, then it means that you lost somewhere in the region of 2 litres (around 4 pints).

That's a lot of fluid and enough to impede your performance, so the next time you tackle a training run in similar conditions and at a similar intensity, consider taking on fluids during the run.

Rule of Thumb

If you chose not to use any of the above methods to monitor your fluid loss, then you can use the following rules of thumb as a guide to maintaining a good hydration status during a training run or the race itself:

Aim to replace 150-250ml of fluid every 20-30 minutes.

Hyponatremia

As essential as sufficient hydration is to keep you moving and prevent dehydration, there is a danger of over doing it and causing serious health problems if you drink too much water and train in hot conditions.

A combination of drinking excessive quantities of water as well as excessive sweating, can lead to a significant loss of essential salts (electrolytes) from the bloodstream and cause a condition known as **hyponatremia**.

This loss of electrolytes over a short training run is not generally a problem, as the body has hormonal regulators to balance the salts in our cells to keep them normal.

During longer runs however, salt loss from the body from diluting the blood with too much water as well as profuse sweating, can cause sodium levels to drop too low leading to symptoms of confusion, weakness, disorientation, even seizures.

Luckily, cases of Hyponatremia are rare, **but they do occur every year**.

There is no need to go overboard on salt consumption in the lead up to the race, as we all consume too much salt in our diets anyway, but it is certainly not a good idea to completely avoid salty foods.

During training runs, particularly on hot days, make sure your fluid replacement drink contains both sodium and glucose. If possible, try to leave drinks on your planned route, such as by a tree, so that you don't have to carry heavy bottles with you.

It is important that you practice drinking the sports drinks during your training. This gets you used to drinking on the run and ensures that your system is not intolerant to the drinks



INJURIES PREVENTION AND CURE



INJURY PREVENTION

Prevention is always better than cure. Visit the GH Training Video Library for some excellent injury prevention videos.

DIAGNOSING INJURY

How to spot common injuries early so you can nip them in the bud.

COMMON INJURIES

From ITB syndrome to Plantar Fasciitis, the [Running Hub](#) gives you the low down on some of the most common running injuries

Got a Niggle?

Check out The GH Training Running Hub.



Sadly, injuries are one of the many obstacles that get in any runners ways when training for an event.

From minor knee niggles to crippling ankle pain, injuries have a habit of cropping up just when your fitness is starting to reach new heights.

Although a trip to a physiotherapist is often the best course of action, there are things you can do at home to not only help self diagnose a common injury but also begin treatment before you book that physio appointment.

We've got you Covered

The GH Training Running Hub is there to not only help you self diagnose some of the most common running injuries, but also gives you advice and a series of tests you can do to help spot common imbalances - to prevent injuries from happening in the first place.

Nothing can replace a thorough assessment from a physio - but the [Running Hub](#) is the next best thing.

Disclaimer



"The contents of this guide are to help readers prepare for marathons safely and effectively. It should not be used as a substitute for proper medical advice. If you are in any doubt about whether you are able to tolerate marathon training, always seek proper medical advice.

The author cannot be held responsible for illness arising out of the failure to seek medical advice from a doctor"