Carrots 'N' Cake

3-Days Per Week

Marathon Training Plan

MY STORY

I always wanted to run the Boston Marathon, so when a sponsor approached me about running it, it was an opportunity that I just couldn't refuse. I was only 3-months postpartum and running just a few miles at a time– often with lots of walking breaks mixed in– so I really didn't think I could run 26.2 miles. Obviously, physically, it was going to be a challenge, but, as a brand new mom, making time to properly train definitely wasn't going to be easy. In the end, it took a village for me to run the Boston Marathon, but what ultimately helped me run a good race (injury-free!) was my training plan.

Prior to beginning my 14-week marathon training plan, I was running at least two times per week with a jogging stroller (2-4 miles) and then once without, which was typically a longer 60 to 90-minute run. I also did cross-training classes, including CrossFit and spinning, 2-3 times per week.

My marathon training plan included three days devoted to running with a few days of cross-training workouts. The runs were time-based and included a mix of long runs, medium-length tempo runs/Yassos/hill workouts, and shorter runs. The 3-times-per-week schedule allowed me to train without injury and in a way that didn't require me to rearrange my entire life, which was especially important as a new mom with a tiny baby at home. Basically, running 3 times per week was totally do-able, so I stuck with it and felt completely prepared for race day.

ABOUT THIS TRAINING PLAN

This training plan is easy to follow whether you are a seasoned runner looking to PR or a newbie runner hoping to just cross the finish line in one piece.

This training plan is for you if:

- You have been running consistently leading up to the first week of the program
- You have built up to a 90-minute long run
- You have medical clearance to train
- Are consistent with your training

The program is based on three days of running per week. The days consist of a long run, hill or speed work, and a tempo run. The days of the week can be adjusted based on your schedule, keeping the three run days spread out through the week. You can also cross-train on off days - just keep in mind that you are training for a marathon and your runs are most important. Don't kill it at a CrossFit workout the day before a hard run day and vice versa.

Super important: REST DAYS. Please use them wisely.

Also important: My mileage notes throughout the plan are just estimates. I hope they guide your training, but they are not the "be-all end-all" of marathon training. Be sure to listen to your body and do what's best for YOU!

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TINA
2015 BOSTON MARATHON
John Hancock

TYPES OF TRAINING RUNS

Tempo: In my training plan, if the tempo run is written as 15/20/15, it means you warm up and cool down for 15 minutes and then use the middle number as the duration in minutes of your tempo workout (20 minutes). The pace for the tempo workout should be faster than your marathon pace, but slower than your 10k pace. It's running at a comfortably hard pace, but a pace that you can hold for the duration of the workout (20 minutes in this case).

Hills: If the hill workout is written as 15/6 hills/15, it means you warm up for 15 minutes and then do 6 hill repeats, followed by a 15-minute cool down run. Just about any hill will work, but I recommended one with about a 6% grade and that is about 60-90 seconds long. After each hill incline, you recover by jogging easy down the hill, totaling about 3 minutes of running between hill repeats.

Yassos: The premise is that you can predict your marathon time based on how long it takes you to run 800 meters. In theory, you should be able to run the prescribed number of Yasso 800 meter runs in the min:sec time that you would expect to complete a marathon in hour:min time. For example, if you want to run a 4:15 marathon, you should do your Yassos in 4 minutes and 15 seconds. The key is to be able to hold that pace for ALL of the Yassos prescribed. They're tough, but essential to this training plan. Don't skip them!

Long: The long run is the base of any marathon training program. You don't want to race this run, but rather keep yourself at a "comfortable" pace – meaning you are able to hold a conversation while you run. The purpose of long runs is to teach your body to use its resources for the time designated without burning out and getting injured. This run should be at :30- 1 minute slower than your race pace. Keep in mind that you are running this long run with a week of stressful training leading up to it. On race day, you will be well-rested and not in the middle of tough training. Be sure to practice your fueling and hydration on any run over 1:30. Teach your body to fuel on the run!

TIPS & ADVICE

COMMIT to your training plan

Obviously, this is easier said than done, but two things in particular helped me stick to my training plan. 1) Remember that race day is going to SUCK if you don't train well. Running 26.2 miles is no joke. It's hours and hours of time on your feet, and it's going to be really rough if you're not prepared for it (been there, done that). When you're only running 3 days per week, every training run is important to your success on race day. 2) Do everything in your power to make committing to your plan possible. More on this below…

Schedule your training runs and ask for help (if you need it)

These two things went hand-in-hand for me since I was a new mom and couldn't just head out to run whenever I wanted. To ensure that I stuck to my plan, I scheduled my runs on a shared Google calendar with my husband, so we were both on the same page when it came to my training. I also made sure to stick to a fairly consistent schedule each week, so my training didn't take over our lives and my husband was still able to live his own life. For instance, on Tuesday nights, I was always running on the treadmill at the gym (because there was 8+ feet of snow outside – no joke) while my husband watched our little guy at home. Again, fitting in my 3 training runs every week was essential.

Be aware of over-training

Even though I was only running 3 days per week, I ended up over-training at points during my marathon preparation. At one point, I was running three days a week and doing cross-training workouts three days a week, which was just too much for me. Thankfully, I didn't get injured, but I constantly felt tired and sore. Obviously, this training schedule didn't give me enough time to recover, so I listened to my body, took more rest days, and prioritized my running. I ended up cutting back on my cross-training workouts to twice a week and then just once a week during the really high mileage times in my training plan to ensure that my body was both happy and healthy. At the end of the day, be sure to LISTEN to your body. The last thing you want to happen is an a injury!

Week 1

- Sunday: Off
- Monday: 75-minute long run
- Tuesday: Off
- Wednesday: Cross-training
- Thursday: 45-minute run
- Friday: Off
- Saturday: 15/20/15 tempo run

Total mileage: 18.3

LANE
BIKE
BOSTON MARATHON TRAINING
Weeks 1 & 2
Running
9.58 Miles • Duration: 01:35:00 • Pace: 9:54
25 degrees!

Week 2

- Sunday: Off
- Monday: Cross-training
- Tuesday: 15/25/15 tempo run
- Wednesday: Cross-training
- Thursday: 90-minute long run
- Friday: Off
- Saturday: 15/6 hills/15

Total mileage: 21.7

Week 3

- Sunday: Off
- Monday: Cross-training
- Tuesday: 15/7 hills/15
- Wednesday: Cross-training
- Thursday: 60-minute long run
- Friday: Off
- Saturday: 30-minute run

Total mileage: 15.6

BOSTON MARATHON
TRAINING Weeks 3 & 4

Week 4

- Sunday: Off
- Monday: 20/25/15 Tempo
- Tuesday: Off
- Wednesday: Cross-training
- Thursday: 1:45 long run
- Friday: Off
- Saturday: 15/8 hills/15

Total mileage: 22.4

Week 5

- Sunday: Cross-training
- Monday: Off
- Tuesday: 2:00 long run
- Wednesday: Cross-training
- Thursday: Off
- Friday: 15/9 hills/15
- Saturday: Cross-training

Total mileage: 19.2

BOSTON MARATHON
TRAINING weeks 5 & 6

Week 6

- Sunday: 20/6Yassos/20
- Monday: Off
- Tuesday: 1:10 long run
- Wednesday: Cross-training
- Thursday: 25/30/15 Tempo run
- Friday: Off
- Saturday: Cross-training

Total mileage: 22.8

Week 7

- Sunday: Off
- Monday: Cross-training
- Tuesday: Tempo30/30/15
- Wednesday: Off
- Thursday: 20/8 Yassos/20
- Friday: Off
- Saturday: 2:30 long run

Total mileage: 32.5

8 7 6 5
4 3 2 1
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ON
SUNSHINE
Boston Marathon
Training
Weeks 7 & 8
PRO-FORM
KFIT BOOTCAMP

Week 8

- Sunday: 30-minute run
- Monday: Off
- Tuesday: 15/8 Yassos/10
- Wednesday: Cross-training
- Thursday: Tempo 30/30/20
- Friday: Cross-training
- Saturday: Off

Total mileage: 20.9

Week 9

- Sunday: 2:30 long run
- Monday: Off
- Tuesday: 15/8 Yassos/15
- Wednesday: Off
- Thursday: 3 miles
- Friday: Cross-training
- Saturday: 1:15 long run

Total mileage: 36.6

BOSTON MARATHON
TRAINING
Weeks 9 & 10

Week 10

- Sunday: 3 miles
- Monday: Off
- Tuesday: 20/30/15 Tempo run
- Wednesday: 40-minute run
- Thursday: 2:50 long run
- Friday: Cross-training
- Saturday: Off

Total mileage: 31.2

Week 11

- Sunday: Off
- Monday: 15/8 Yassos/15
- Tuesday: Off
- Wednesday: Cross-training
- Thursday: 3:00 long run
- Friday: Off
- Saturday: 8.5 miles

Total mileage: 38.5

BOSTON MARATHON
TRAINING WEEKS 11 & 12

Week 12

- Sunday: Off
- Monday: Cross-training
- Tuesday: 15/9 Yassos/15
- Wednesday: Off
- Thursday: 30/40/20 Tempo
- Friday: Cross-training
- Saturday: Off

Total mileage: 20.6

Week 13

- Sunday: Off
- Monday: Off
- Tuesday: 15/8 Yassos/15
- Wednesday: Cross-training
- Thursday: 8.25 miles
- Friday: Off
- Saturday: 3:00 long run

Total mileage: 38.4

FINISH
176
86
Boston Marathon
Training Weeks 13 & 14
Stonyfield
2015 BOSTON MARATHON
Runner Passport
WELCOME

Week 14

- Sunday: Off
- Monday: Off
- Tuesday: 8 miles
- Wednesday: Cross-training
- Thursday: 11 miles
- Friday: Off
- Saturday: 3 miles

Total mileage: 22.2

PRE-RACE STRATEGIES

Make a kick-butt playlist

During my training,any song that I really liked, I made sure to take note of it.Leading up to the race, I had a list of 33 songs, totaling 2 hours and 2 minutes of music (here's my playlist), which you probably realize is not enough music for a marathon. Well, during my training, I listened to a lot of podcasts, especially on my long runs. I would usually run out of new material toward the end, so I would switch to Pandora. The music would pump me up and motivate me to run at a faster pace. On marathon day, I listened to a couple of my favorite podcasts from mile 1-13.1 and then turned on my music for the remainder of the race.It definitely motivated me through the tough miles at the end!

Pick out your outfit

Around 4 days out from race day, I was getting super nervous. I decided it was time to focus on the things that I could control (and stop obsessively checking the weather), like my OUTFIT for race day. I made sure to pick items I'd trained in before, felt comfortable in, and, most importantly, gave me that extra boost of confidence on race day. You can check out some of my must-have marathon training gearhere.

Find fun ways to relax before the race

It's easy to get in your own head the days leading up to a big race, so a little distraction can be welcomed. I enjoyed a fun brunch with friends, a family-filled day at the expo, and then let my legsrest. At this point, you've put in the work, so embrace the experience and feel proud of how far you've come!

FURTHER READING & RESOURCES

Marathon Training: Why I Didn't Gain Weight This Time

www.carrotsncake.com/2015/04/marathon-training-why-i-didnt-gain-weight-this-time.html

How to Balance CrossFit & Running

www.carrotsncake.com/2016/08/balancing-crossfit-and-running.html

4 Tips to Fuel Your Marathon Training

www.carrotsncake.com/2017/10/4-tips-combat-marathon-half-marathon-training-hunger.html

My Boston Marathon Race Recap

www.carrotsncake.com/2015/04/2015-boston-marathon-race-recap.html

You've got this!