

# NEXT LEVEL

If you have completed a marathon or multiple half marathons and are looking to increase the intensity of your performance, this training program is for you.

Everyone is an individual and your base level of fitness may vary. For those who already have been doing some running, this general program should give you increased speed and endurance so that you can push to the next level!

This 12-week training guide is just that, a guide, so feel free to be a little flexible with it so that it works for you.

Here is an explanation of the terms used in the Marathon 'Next level' training guide:

**Long runs:** The key to the guide is the long run on weekends, which ranges from 13km to 32km. Consistency and quality is the goal of these long runs – run at a comfortable pace, find your rhythm and enjoy building your endurance.

**Run slow:** Do your long runs at a comfortable pace, one that would allow you to converse with a training partner, at least during the beginning of the run. If you finish the long run at a pace significantly slower than your early pace, you need to start much slower. It's better to run too slow during these long runs, than too fast, the purpose is covering the prescribed distance.

**Walking breaks:** It is okay to walk during the marathon – it's a long distance so listen to your body. You can walk during training runs too. In a race the best time to walk is entering a drinks station, that way you can drink more easily while walking as opposed to running.

**Cross-training:** Mondays in the training guide are for cross-training. The best cross-training exercises are swimming, cycling or walking. You don't have to cross-train the same each week, feel free to mix it up. And you could even combine two or more exercises: walking and cycling, jogging or swimming and riding an exercise bike in a gym. Cross-training on Monday will help you recover after your Sunday long runs – so make sure you treat it as a recovery session.

**Midweek training:** Sessions during the week should be done at an easy pace.

**Pace:** This is defined as the pace you need to run to take your running to the next level. If you are aiming to achieve a 3:30 marathon time then your pace would be 4:58/km. Therefore when you run your pace runs you need to run them at this speed.

**Rest:** Days designated to rest are very important. Muscles actually regenerate and get stronger during rest and rest helps prevent injury. The key to this guide is consistency – so if you are feeling particularly tired at any stage, take an extra rest day and get your energy back to keep going.

WEEK	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN
1	1hr x-train	5.0km run	8.0km run	5.0km run	Rest	8.0km pace	13km run
2	1hr x-train	5.0km run	8.0km run	5.0km run	Rest	8.0km run	15km run
3	1hr x-train	5.0km run	10km run	5.0km run	Rest	10km pace	18km run
4	1hr x-train	5.0km run	10km run	5.0km run	Rest	10km run	20km run
5	1hr x-train	7.0km run	11km run	7.0km run	Rest	11km pace	22km run
6	1hr x-train	7.0km run	11km run	7.0km run	Rest	11km run	24km run
7	1hr x-train	9.0km run	13km run	9.0km run	Rest	13km run	29km run
8	1hr x-train	9.0km run	13km run	9.0km run	Rest	8.0km pace	32km run
9	1hr x-train	9.0km run	8.0km run	9.0km run	Rest	13km run	<b>20km run</b>
10	1hr x-train	9.0km run	13km run	9.0km run	Rest	8.0km pace	32km run
11	1hr x-train	7.0km run	8.0km run	7.0km run	Rest	5.0km run	13km run
12	1hr x-train	5.0km run	6.0km run	Rest	Rest	3.0km run	<b>Race day</b>



**Fact:** The training guide is just that, a guide – it is important to make it work for you. If you want to do long runs on Saturday rather than Sunday, simply change the days. Or if you miss a run you can make it up on one of your rest days.