

# Marathoning for Mortals

## By John Bingham & Jenny Hadfield

### Anatomy of a Long-Distance Training Program

**Warmup** – every workout, long or short, begins with an easy 5 minute walk to get your blood flowing and cold muscles warmed up.

**Workout** – each type of workout session has a specific purpose in mind.

**Cooldown** – every workout,, long or short, should end with a gradual slowing of pace and intensity. Take 5 minutes to slow your pace, to let your body come back to reality.

**Stretch** - Save the stretching to the end of the cooldown when your muscles are still warm

### Types of Workout Sessions

**The Endurance Workout** – your long walk prepares your body for the mileage on race day. You will gradually increase your long workout in distance and time each week.

**Shorter workouts** – are maintenance and recovery workouts and aid in recovery from the long workouts.

**Cross-Training** – referred to as active rest because it allows your long-distance muscles a rest while activating the often neglected opposing muscles.

**Tempo Workouts** – a.k.a. Interval Training

- Will improve your speed, efficiency and form.
- Run all tempo workouts just below your anaerobic threshold to burn a higher percentage of fat for a longer period of time.

**Form Drills** – will help you improve your running/walking mechanics

**Rest days** – They allow your tattered muscles to repair and your total body to grow stronger. Rest days are just as important as all other workouts.

## The Three Rules to Training

**The 10 percent rule** – Add no more than 10 percent to your total time or distance from one week to the next.

**Workout Sequence** – adhere to the sequence of workouts even if you miss one. If you miss a workout, don't try to make it up later. Just skip it and go on.

**Taper** – is when you start backing off your mileage and intensity in preparation for the big day, usually the last 3 weeks.

## Elements of Effort and Intensity

**Maximum Heart Rate** – the fastest your heart will beat under any circumstance.

**Resting Heart Rate** – the minimum number of beats per minute that your heart uses to keep you alive.

**Cardiac Reserve** – the difference between your maximum heart rate and your resting heart rate.

**Aerobic zone** – when your heart is beating below 80% of your maximum. This is the zone you where all the fat burning takes place. This is also the zone in which you can maintain effort over a longer period of time. Go above it and you'll hit the wall.

**Anaerobic zone** – when your heart is beating above 80% of its maximum. In this zone your body switches from using a higher percentage of fat and begins to burn off precious glycogen. You don't want to spend much time in this zone.

## The Training Pyramid

### Phase I – Endurance (60 to 75% of your max)

- Low intensity/high duration workout
- These train your legs w/o putting a strain on your heart or lungs
- These are fat burning workouts
- These build your aerobic base

### Phase II – Stamina (75 to 85% of your max)

- Great for your heart

- These workouts allow you to run or walk at a higher effort

### **Phase III – Economy (85 to 95% of your max)**

- Interval training
- These training sessions teach you how to go faster with the same effort or just as fast with less effort.

### **The Marathonning for Mortals Training Program**

- Each program schedule week starts on Monday and ends on Sunday
- Each workout falls on a specific day of the week
- Each sequential session encourages your body to respond to the rhythm of progressively harder work, recovery and adaptation
- The training pattern is 2 days “on,” 1 day off, 3 days on, and 1 day off.
- If you miss a day, don’t catch up, just move on to the next day’s training.

### **How to Take Care of an Injury - RICE**

- **R is for Rest** – at the onset of an injury stop what you are doing and rest. Take 3 full days of rest. If it doesn’t respond, take 3 more days off. If it still hurts, it’s time to get professional help.
- **I is for Ice** – get ice on the injury as soon as possible. Keep ice on the injury for 10 to 20 minutes. After 20 minutes, take the ice away and let the area warm up completely. Repeat this cycle for 2 or 3 times a day for the 3 days that you are resting.
- **C is for Compression** – wrap your injury. It will squeeze out inflammation, preventing fluids from accumulating. Compression only provides a short-term solution.
- **E is for Elevation** – most injuries for distance athletes won’t require elevation. The sprained ankle provides the most obvious exception.

## **Nutrition for Workouts That Last Longer Than 1 Hour**

- **Fluids**
  - Consume 8 to 12 ounces every 15 minutes from the very beginning to the very end your workout.
  - Set timer to go off every 15 minutes to remind you.
  - Switch from water to sports drinks which provides sodium, electrolytes and energy in the form of fast-absorbing carbohydrates.
  - Consider training with the same sports drink that will be served on the racecourse.
  - If you can't drink the sports drink that is going to be provided you'll have to carry some with you on race day.
- **Gels**
  - Recommends eGel from CrankSports.com
  - To dilute, wash down the gel with water or sports drink.
  - Consume 1 gel pack per hour
- **Recommended calories to consume – 100 to 200 calories every hour either by consuming gel or a sports drink.**

## **Gear for Marathoners**

- **Shoes** – replace every 300 to 500 miles or every 6 months whichever comes first.
- **Socks** – cotton kills. Buy synthetic either well padded like Thorlo or Smartwood or thin socks like DeFeet and Patagonia. Wear the socks you train in when buying new shoes.
- **Shorts** – either running shorts or compression shorts
  - **Running shorts** with a wicking brief and microfiber outer are more comfortable.
  - **Compression shorts** eliminate chafing and provide some measure of support for your hamstrings. Wear underneath whatever makes you comfortable.

- **Tops** – the only rule is: Cotton kills. Buy a polyester-based fabric that is designed to wick the moisture away from the body.
- **Heart rate monitors** – get one with GPS so it measures speed, pace and distance as well as heart rate and heart rate zone.

### **Race Strategy, Goals & Objectives**

If you're a first-timer, you can't even begin to develop a strategy based on anything other than pure speculation. That said there are a few things to keep in mind:

- **Stay hydrated – how will I meet that objective?**
  - Determine if you're going to drink the sports drink provided at the race or bring your own. If you bring your own how much will you take with you.
  - Determine how much water and sports drink will you consume at each fluid station.
- **Stay well-fueled – how will I meet that objective?**
  - Determine what gel to take and how many you'll need and when. The general rule of thumb is that you'll need to suck one down about every hour.
  - Determine how you will carry them.
- **Decide your pacing strategy**
  - The pace at which you begin the race will quickly determine the outcome of the journey. The tendency is to start way too fast which ultimately ends in disaster.
  - Make your goal to conserve energy in the first half of the race so that you can finish strong at the end.

### **Race Preparation**

- **Tapering** – begins 3 weeks before race day. Volume of mileage decreases gradually, allowing your body to recover. Avoid the urge to train harder during these weeks as this will only hurt your performance.

- **1 Week and Counting** – pay close attention to what you're eating.
  - Eat what makes you feel good
  - If you develop a nervous stomach prior to the race, try eating smaller amounts of food more often.
  - Try to maintain the best eating habits you can.
  - Stay well-hydrated during the final week. Begin sipping on a sports drink to keep your electrolyte stores filled to capacity.
- **Race Day**
  - Eat what you normally eat for breakfast but eat only about half as much.
  - Get to the race site early.
  - When you get to the race site, immediately get into a portable toilet line. Get back in line again. Stay in the portable toilet line until you have to line up for the race.
  - Make sure you line up in the right place. Avoid being too far forward with the faster runners/walkers or too far back with the slower walkers.

### **Postrace Day Tips**

- **Right After You Cross the Line**
  - As soon as you can, replace what your body has lost. Start sipping on water and a sports drink.
  - Eating something salty, like pretzels or potato chips will get some sodium back into your system.
  - An hour after the race, start eating protein: yogurt for example. It's not a matter of eating a lot.
  - Later start eating higher protein sources like meat, chicken or fish. Eat in pure form without sauces.
  - Avoid anything that will make your body swell up. No hot showers. Standing in a lukewarm shower is fine, but sitting in a cool tub is even better.

- **Postrace Workouts**

- Stick with the post-race recovery workouts. Listen to your body and let your pain be your guide.
- Add mileage and time gradually.
- Keep your intensity easy. Don't push yourself.
- You'll need up to 6 weeks to recover from the race.