

Plus Ultra 12-Week Half Marathon Training Plan

Your path to your first half marathon

This plan is intentionally straightforward. It is made for anyone who prefers a self-guided approach and wants a clear path without feeling overwhelmed. It will not tell you exactly what route to take or how fast to run every mile. Instead, it provides structure while leaving room for your own experience to shape the journey.

A half marathon is a meaningful step beyond a 5K or 10K, but it is far more achievable than most people realize. Terrain, weather and fitness vary from person to person, so your job is to listen to your body and make thoughtful adjustments as you go. This framework is designed to help you stay consistent, build endurance, grow your confidence and keep moving toward your next finish line.

If you ever decide you want more support, my coach offers one-on-one guidance and can help you build a plan that fits your specific goals. Reach out at hello@goplusultra.run if you want a program tailored to your training, fitness level and race. You are also welcome to join the Plus Ultra community on Reddit at r/PlusUltraLife where runners share questions, wins and lessons from the trail.

What Changes When You Train for a Half Marathon?

A half marathon is often the distance where running starts to feel different.

Not because it becomes impossible.

Because it becomes longer.

You spend more time with your thoughts.

You learn patience.

You learn consistency.

You discover that confidence is built one run at a time.

Most people are capable of more than they realize. The challenge is rarely talent. More often, it is having the patience to discover what is already there.

Every mile teaches you something.



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Week	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
1.	Rest	Run 1, 30 min easy	Cross train	Run 2, 30 min easy	Rest	Long run, 4 mi easy	Optional stretch
2.	Rest	Run 1, 30 min easy	Box step ups (2×10 / leg)	Run 2, 35 min easy	Rest	Long run, 5 mi easy	Walk or light hike
3.	Rest	Run 1, 35 min easy	Hill session, 5×30 sec climbs	Run 2, 35 min easy	Rest	Long run, 6 mi easy	Mobility or foam roll
4.	Rest	Run 1, 30 min easy	Cross train	Run 2, 30 min steady	Rest	Long run, 5 mi easy	Optional walk
5.	Rest	Run 1, 35 min easy	Hill or incline walk, 20 min	Run 2, 35 min easy	Rest	Long run, 7 mi easy	Light stretch
6.	Rest	Run 1, 40 min easy	Cross train 30 min	Run 2, 35 min steady	Rest	Long run, 8 mi easy	Yoga or rest
7.	Rest	Run 1, 40 min easy	Hill session, 5×30 sec climbs	Run 2, 35 min easy	Rest	Long run, 9 mi easy	Optional walk
8.	Rest	Run 1, 35 min easy	Cross train	Run 2, 30 min easy	Rest	Long run, 7 mi easy	Light mobility
9.	Rest	Run 1, 40 min easy	Cross train or rest	Run 2, 35 min easy	Rest	Long run, 10 mi easy	Light mobility
10.	Rest	Run 1, 40 min easy	Hill session, 5×30 sec climbs	Run 2, 35 min easy	Rest	Long run, 11 mi easy	Optional walk
11.	Rest	Run 1, 30 min easy	Cross train or rest	Run 2, 25 min easy	Rest	Long run, 8 mi easy	Stretch and visualize race
12	Rest	Run 1, 20 min easy	Rest	Run 2, 15 min easy jog	Rest	Race Day	Celebrate and reflect

- **Effort scale:** Easy = conversational pace, you could speak in full sentences. Steady = focused but sustainable; breathing is heavier but controlled.
- **Terrain:** Use trails when possible, focusing on soft surfaces and natural terrain.
- **Hill sessions:** If you live in a flat area, substitute with box step ups, stair machine or incline treadmill.
- **Rest:** Take at least two full rest days each week.
- **Fuel and hydration:** Begin testing your race day nutrition and fluids during your longer runs. Nothing new on race day.

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This plan is a general training guide only and is not a substitute for medical advice. Consult a physician before beginning any exercise program.

Half Marathon Gear Essentials

If you're reading this, you've already spent enough time running to know that gear is rarely the thing that determines success. You've probably discovered that some products work well, some don't and most runners eventually find their own preferences through experience.

As my runs grew longer, I found that a few pieces of gear became genuinely helpful. Not because they made running easier, but because they helped me stay comfortable, carry what I needed and spend more time focused on the experience instead of the distractions.

Every item here is something I have personally tested. If you choose to buy through the affiliate links, it supports Plus Ultra at no extra cost to you.

Since brands release new models often, some links may take you to the latest version that differs from what I originally used. The heart of the recommendation remains steady, a tool meant to keep your progress simple and clear.

The Core Three

1. Moisture-wicking socks

In my early days, I used Injinji toe socks paired with Mudgear compression socks. They were recommended for obstacle races and they kept my feet comfortable while reducing friction on long, wet courses. This combo is still my go-to because trails can be unpredictable and wet feet happen.

Injinji toe socks

Mudgear compression socks

2. Anti-chafe balm

You learn quickly how essential this is. I learned the hard way when I was in the shower after a long run, yikes! :) I started with Body Glide because it was easy to find and worked well. I eventually switched to Squirrel's Nut Butter because the natural ingredients felt gentler on my skin and it lasted longer. Both work well; preference guided the change.

Body Glide

Squirrel's Nut Butter

3. Basic GPS watch

When I first began, I bought a used Polar M400 from eBay so I could track my runs without carrying my phone and getting it soaked in sweat. It worked well and gave me the basics I needed. The M400 is older now and usually only found on resale sites, but any simple GPS watch can fill the same role.

What Became Helpful As My Runs Grew Longer

Hydration vest with soft flasks

Once my runs got longer, a vest became one of my most reliable pieces of gear. I use a USWE vest with two 500 ml soft flasks. It stays secure, carries enough water and remains comfortable on long days. It has become my go to setup. It has storage for personal items and nutrition and it can hold a hydration bladder, which makes it very future proof.

USWE hydration vest

Sun hat

The Louisiana sun can be brutal on pasty skin. I don't score any cool points, but it gets the job done. :)

The North Face sun hat

Take the Trail With You

Sometimes the miles leave you with more than tired legs.

The Plus Ultra Trail Companion is a quiet place to talk through what challenged you, what surprised you and what you want to carry forward.

Start Reflecting →