



After a week of little-or-no running, your sore muscles should have begun to recover. Your glycogen stores should have begun to rebuild. Psychologically, you should be about ready to begin training again, maybe to begin contemplating another marathon--or a race at some intermediate distance.

Notice my qualifying use of the word begin. Only *you* can tell when you're ready to start training again. Take another week or two off if you feel you need it--even a month off, if necessary.

The following four-week, Post-Marathon Training Guide is a near mirror image of the training you did toward the end of your marathon build-up. It allows you to build your body back to the level it was at before you started your 18-week marathon training program. There is a suggested 5-K (or 10-K) race at the end of this short, training tunnel mainly to offer some incentive to continue training and also give you a fix on your fitness level. But you don't need to focus on a race; you just need to start running again.

Here is the route to post-marathon recovery if you are an Advanced runner, or followed the Advanced training schedule for the marathon. Follow this schedule below for the next four weeks. (If you feel you need more than four weeks, repeat some of the weeks before moving to the next level.)

Post Marathon Training: Advanced							
Week	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
<u>1</u>	3 m run	4 x 400 (5-k pace)	3 m run	3 x mile (mar pace)	Rest	Tempo 30 min	60-75 min
	4 m run	6 x 400	4 m run	3 x mile	Rest	Tempo	75-90 min

2		(5-K pace)		(10-K pace)		35 min	
3	5 m run	8 x 400 (5-K pace)	5 m run	3 x mile (5-K pace)	Rest	Tempo 40 min	90 min
4	5 m run	3 x 800 (5-K pace)	5 m run	Tempo 30 min	3 m run	Rest	Race

Here are some explanations for the training above:

Rest: Rest is an important factor in *any* form of training--as you probably discovered during the 18-week build-up to the marathon. As during that build-up, rest is indicated for Fridays. Take more days off if you think you need them. You're trying to *ease* your way back to a steady state of fitness, not *fight* your way back.

Long Runs: Running long once a week is always a good training strategy. But you don't need to do those *really* long runs of 10-20 miles you were doing during your marathon build-up. During the post-marathon period, I suggest you think *minutes*, rather than *miles*. I don't care how fast you run or how far you run, but just get out and do something! I'm prescribing a broad range of 60-90 minutes, because everyone recovers differently. Use your best judgment concerning what is right for you. And don't be afraid to *walk* at any point during the run, or even for the whole length of the workout. Be easy on yourself. You deserve it. (Although the schedule above prescribes long runs on Sundays and tempo runs on Saturdays, you can flip-flop workout days for your convenience.)

Tempo Runs: During my 18-week marathon training schedule, the tempo run was a key part of your training. It's a useful workout where you start easy, build in the middle to *near* your 10-K pace, then finish easy. Tempo runs are usually refreshing, plus they're an excellent way to improve your anaerobic threshold, which translates into faster race times. But tempo runs do not need to be hard. During this recovery period, I'm going to suggest that you build only to marathon pace during your modified tempo run. In a 30-minute workout, run the first 10 minutes at an easy pace, then during the middle 10 minutes gradually accelerate to marathon pace, then spend the final 10 minutes cooling down. At your level, that should be a relatively easy workout. But it can be a stepping stone to a higher level of fitness as you move past the post-marathon period. For an entire chapter on tempo training, see my book, [Run Fast](#).

Repeats: In the 18-week marathon training schedule, repeats were another important form of speedwork, both 800s on the track or road and hill repeats. In this form of training, you run a set distance (usually between 200 meters and 2 miles) at a relatively fast rate of speed. Then you rest briefly, walking or jogging. For most repeat workouts, I recommend a rest of 3 to 5 minutes. Then you *repeat* the fast distance (sometimes called by track coaches a "rep," as in repetition.) For the post-marathon training period, I suggest you do a 3 x mile repeat workout--and you can do this workout on the road, rather than a track. The first week, run a mile at marathon pace, walk or jog, run another mile same pace, walk or jog, then finish

with a final repeat. Marathon pace isn't that fast; you can do it. But for the second and third weeks, I suggest you run repeat 400s miles at 5-K pace, doing 4 of them in the first week, 6 in the second, 8 in the third. In the fourth week, increase the distance of the repeats to 800, but do only 3 at 5-K pace. By then your body should be well on its way to recovery and ready (following a mini-taper) to cap the four-week recovery schedule with a 10-K or 5-K race. You'll also find an entire chapter on repeat training in [Run Fast](#).

Cross-Training: Unlike Novice and Intermediate runners, I normally don't recommend cross-training for Advanced runners. If you're near the top of your sport, you have to focus most of your energy on the activity that is most specific to that sport: in other words, running. However, I do believe in strength training for *all* levels of runners. And the best time to do strength training is during a period of the year when you're not in your marathon mode, which consumes a lot of your energy. So don't suddenly run to the gym and begin pumping iron for an hour--otherwise you'll need to be lifted out of bed with a crane the next day. Instead, begin to phase strength training back into your regular schedule, beginning with light weights and few repeats and increasing both as you move out of the post-marathon period into regular training. Good days for Advanced runners to do strength training would be Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. If you want to save Friday as a complete day of rest, strength train on Saturdays--*after* your tempo runs. (It's always a wise idea to strength train after, rather than before.) I recommended to both the Novice and Intermediate runners that they consider cross-country skiing as an ideal cross-training activity for winter; however, if you're a hard-core Advanced runner, you probably want to do nothing else but run--and I don't disagree with that approach, as long as you can stay healthy and remain injury free.

Maintenance: The Monday and Wednesday workouts are for maintenance: staying in shape. I've prescribed slightly different distances on different days partly for variety and partly to offer a slight mileage boost. Don't be afraid to speed up or slow down on different days. Too many runners get in the habit of running the same distance at the same pace day after day after day. Learn to be innovative--even if it means deviating somewhat from my schedule.

Races: If you're an Advanced runner, you probably race fairly frequently, even during your marathon build-up as a test of your speed and fitness. You probably don't want to return to racing too soon immediately after an all-out marathon. That's a recipe for injury. I've suggested a 5-K or 10-K race at the end of the five-week period that includes Zero Week plus four weeks of Post-Marathon Training. Can you return to racing sooner? Possibly, depending on your fitness level. I don't recommend racing until at least three weeks after the marathon, however. If you want to know how fast you should expect to run based on your marathon finishing time, there is a very good prediction calculator on the [Runner's World Web site](#). Or, check the prediction chart in my [Marathon: The Ultimate Training Guide](#).

Once you finish this four-week post-marathon training program, you are ready to consider

other running possibilities: whether just maintaining your fitness level or training for another race from the [5-K](#) to even an [ultramarathon](#). Training schedules for many popular distances will continue to be available on my [Web site](#).

Advanced				
Week Zero	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4

[Marathon: The Ultimate Training Guide](#)

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