



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 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 race to be a runner. You just need to start running again.

Here is how to speed your post-marathon recovery if you are an Intermediate runner, or followed the Intermediate I or Intermediate II training schedules for the marathon. (There is no distinction between the training for those two levels during the post-marathon period.) Even if you are an Intermediate planning to move to become an Advanced runner, don't make the shift too fast. Follow this schedule below for the next four weeks.

<h2>Post Marathon Training: Intermediate</h2>							

Week	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
<u>1</u>	Cross 30 min	3 m run	3 x mile (mar pace)	3 m run	Rest	Tempo 30 min	45-75 min
<u>2</u>	Cross 30-40 min	4 m run	3 x mile (10-K pace)	4 m run	Rest	Tempo 35 min	60-90 min
<u>3</u>	Cross 30-50 min	5 m run	3 x mile (5-K pace)	5 m run	Rest	Tempo 40 min	90 min
<u>4</u>	Cross 30-60 min	5 m run	Tempo 30 min	3 m run	2 m run	Rest	<b>Race</b>

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 45-90 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:** I'd like to introduce you to tempo runs. In my 18-week marathon training schedule, only the Advanced runners did tempo runs, 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. For Intermediate runners, 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. That doesn't sound like too intimidating a workout, does it? 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:** Oops, I'm also suggesting a new type of training for Wednesdays: Repeats. In the

18-week marathon training schedule, only the Advanced runners did 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 the repeat miles at 10-K and 5-K pace. That gets tougher, but by then your body should be well on its way to recovery--plus you want to do a bit of speedwork to prepare for the 10-K or 5-K race on the final day of this training program. You'll also find an entire chapter on repeat training in [Run Fast](#).

**Cross-Training:** Continue the type of cross-training you did during the marathon build-up, whether swimming, biking, walking or whatever. I suggest that in the next four weeks you begin with 30 minutes and build gradually to 60 minutes of cross-training. (I've left some leeway between 30 and 60 minutes in the schedule above to allow you to choose how much time you want to spend each Monday.) Begin to consider whether there might be some *new* forms of cross-training you might want to try when you resume full training after the post-marathon period. If you ran a fall marathon and winter is approaching, you might try cross-country skiing, one of my favorite sports. Also, if you don't strength train, now is the time to add that to your workout routine. I recommend strength training at least two to three days a week for Intermediate runners. Overall muscle strength is good for your health and will compliment your running.

**Maintenance:** Most of the mid-week training is for maintenance: staying in shape. For general fitness, you need to run at least three to four days a week. The Tuesday and Thursday workouts in this schedule are mainly for maintenance. I've prescribed slightly different distances on different days mainly for variety. Don't be afraid to speed up or slow down on different days. Too many novice 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:** Do you need to race to consider yourself a runner? Not really. A lot of people run a single 5-K, or single marathon, during a running career of many years and never go near another starting line. But racing can be fun--as you probably found out. More important, racing can *motivate* you to stay in shape, or can push your fitness to a higher level. I suggest that you do a 5-K (or 10-K) race at the end of the four-week post-marathon schedule for two reasons: 1.) to motivate you to train, and 2.) to serve as a measure of your post-marathon recovery. 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](#).

<b>Intermediate</b>				
<a href="#">Week Zero</a>	<a href="#">Week 1</a>	<a href="#">Week 2</a>	<a href="#">Week 3</a>	<a href="#">Week 4</a>

[Marathon: The Ultimate Training Guide](#)

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