

<p>Hal Higdon's POST- MARATHON TRAINING GUIDE</p>	<p>Novice Schedule</p>
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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 race to be a runner. You just need to start running again.

Here is the route to post-marathon recovery if you are a Novice runner, or followed the Novice training schedule for the marathon. Even if you are a Novice planning to move up to become an Intermediate runner, don't make the shift too fast. 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: Novice							
Week	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
<u>1</u>	Rest	2 m run	4 m run	2 m run	Rest	30-60 min	Cross
<u>2</u>	Rest	3 m run	4 m run	3 m run	Rest	45-60 min	Cross

<u>3</u>	Rest	4 m run	5 m run	4 m run	Rest	60 min	Cross
<u>4</u>	Rest	5 m run	5 m run	3 m run	Rest	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 Mondays and 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 30-60 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 Saturdays and cross-training on Sundays, you can flip-flop workout days for your convenience.)

Cross-Training: Continue the type of cross-training you did during the marathon build-up, whether swimming, biking, walking or whatever. However, 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 days a week. 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, Wednesday 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](#).

Novice				
Week Zero	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4

[Marathon: The Ultimate Training Guide](#)

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