MARATHON Handbook 3:30 MARATHON TRAINING PLAN GUIDANCE NOTES

INTRO

Hey there - Adam from Marathon Handbook here. Thanks for taking the time to grab a copy of this plan!
As the name suggests, this plan has been backwards-engineered around the goal of running a sub 3:30 marathon.

For a full breakdown of the strategy I recommend, check out this article covering the sub 3:30 marathon approach:
The Sub 3:30 Marathon: Essential Guide + Training Plan

CUSTOMIZING THE PLAN

No two runners are the same, and there's no such thing as a one-size-fits-all plan. That's why I make all my plans easy to customize:
use the Google Sheets or Excel version of this plan to move things around to suit your weekly schedule, shorten or extend the plan, and mix
up the workouts to suit your ability level.
In order to edit the file, please download it or make a copy (File>Make a Copy)

MEDICAL DISCLAIMER

This plan is for informational purposes only: it is not a certified exercise / health / wellness regime. Partake in run training at your own
risk, always consult a doctor before starting a new exercise regime, and don't do anything stupid. Now let's get on with the details...

BREAKDOWN OF TRAINING WORKOUTS

Training Runs

These are the foundation of your training: they build up your weekly mileage and get your body accustomed to running.
For this plan, I've specified that these runs be performed at the target race pace. Why? To get your body accustomed to that pace,
which you should be able to sustain at a 4 out of 10 Rate of Perceived Exertion.
If you do the first couple of weeks and find you can't maintain the pace, I would recommend a less aggressive marathon goal and following one of
my less intense marathon training plans.
It is fine to occasionally do these runs at a slower pace (i.e. 2-3 out of 10 RPE) if you feel fatigued or that you've been pushing too hard.

Intervals

Speed work is a core part of a training plan with a time-based goal, and intervals are a nice, structured way to do this speed work.
My recommended intervals workout:
Include a 2 mile / 3 k warm-up and a 1 mile / 1.6k cool-down either side of the speedwork (note these distances are included in the weekly mileage calculation).
Run the 2mile intervals (8 laps of a track) at 6-7 out of 10 RPE - which should be your half marathon pace.
Cool down with a mile jog between each rep. So if you have 2x2 mile, you will run 2 miles at half pace, 1 mile jog recovery, 2 miles at half pace.
Repeat as per the plan.
For the CV (critical velocity) intervals, you will run 6x1000m (2.5 laps around a track) with a 2 min walk/jog recovery. You can find your cv pace here.

Tempos

Include at least a 2 mile / 3k warmup and 1 mile / 1.6 k cooldown for the tempo runs. The miles shown do not include this.
So on a day you are doing a 3 mile tempo, you will run 6 miles total (2 warmup, 3 tempo, 1 cooldown.
Tempo runs should be done at a 6-7 out of 10 RPE - which should be your half marathon pace.

Want to try different speedwork sessions?: Here's info on hill running, fartleks, hill sprints, and Yassos.

Strength Training

Many runners simply neglect cross-training - but the benefits have such a huge impact on your running game, it's hard to ignore.
Strength training has a massive impact on your running economy (essentially your miles per gallon as a runner), your speed, and
- perhaps most importantly - injury prevention. While "cross-training" can mean almost any form of activity which complements your running,
I highly recommend strength training - and specifically weightlifting if you can, it's simply where you get the most bang-for-your-buck as a runner.
Here's our complete guide to weightlifting for runners.
Can't stand the gym? Then at-home bodyweight workouts, yoga, or pilates are good alternatives.
Strength train after your hard days on Wed and Sun so you are recovering on your easy days.

Long Runs

Some of the long runs will be at an easy pace. Others will give you a certain number of miles to run at goal pace. For instance, week 4 has 3 miles at goal pace.
The best way to run these is to run them at the end of the long run so you get used to running at goal marathon pace (7:50 per mile) on tired legs.
However, you want to save the last mile and use it as a cool down. Here's an example of what this would look like for week 8.
Week 8 has a long run of 15 miles with 4 at goal marathon pace. So you would run 10 miles easy, 4 miles at 7:50, and a 1 mile cooldown.
LONG RUNS: Training Tips, Pace, Distance, How To Fuel + More!
The plan includes one Half Marathon at race pace on week 10: you can either run a real half marathon race, or just do it in training.
Either way, this workout is a great chance to do a 'dress rehearsal' or tune-up race to test your gear and strategies prior to your big race day.

Rest Days

Rest means no strenuous activity! Focus on restful and pleasurable activities: walks in nature, time with family, enjoying good food, watching movies.
This may seem indulgent, but these activities send your body into 'rest and recover' mode (vs fight or flight mode) and your body will focus on healing.

THE MARATHON TRAINING MASTERCLASS

Take your training further with my Marathon Training Masterclass. With over 6 hours of exclusive video tutorials and loads of bonus
downloads, I've poured everything I've learned about marathon training over the years into this course. Whether it's injury-prevention,
nutrition, or some race day strategies and road-tested tips, I've squeezed everything in here.
Check Out The Marathon Training Masterclass!

Questions?

Check out our Marathon Handbook Facebook Group, it's an awesome community of runners sharing their knowledge, frustrations, and wins!
Unfortunately I can't respond to individual queries these days, but the FB group is probably an even better source of running wisdom!

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