

Half Marathon Meal Plans

Nutrition Guidance for Half Marathon Training

Proper nutrition fuels your training and accelerates recovery. These meal plans provide balanced macronutrients to support your half marathon preparation. Adjust portion sizes based on your body weight, training volume, and individual needs.

Daily Nutrition Targets

Macronutrient	Training Days	Rest Days	Race Week
Carbohydrates	5-7 g/kg body weight	3-5 g/kg body weight	7-10 g/kg body weight
Protein	1.4-1.6 g/kg body weight	1.2-1.4 g/kg body weight	1.4-1.6 g/kg body weight
Fat	0.8-1.0 g/kg body weight	0.8-1.0 g/kg body weight	0.8-1.0 g/kg body weight
Hydration	2-3 liters water + electrolytes	2 liters water	2-3 liters + extra sodium

Sample Training Day Meal Plan

Meal	Example	Key Nutrients
Breakfast (2 hrs pre-run)	Oatmeal with banana, honey, and a scoop of nut butter	Complex carbs + potassium
Post-Run (within 30 min)	Chocolate milk or protein smoothie with berries and Greek yogurt	Protein + fast carbs (3:1 ratio)
Lunch	Grilled chicken wrap with quinoa, avocado, spinach, and hummus	Lean protein + healthy fats
Snack	Apple slices with almond butter, or trail mix with dried fruit	Sustained energy + fiber
Dinner	Salmon with sweet potato, roasted vegetables, and brown rice	Omega-3s + iron + complex carbs
Evening	Cottage cheese with berries, or small bowl of cereal with milk	Casein protein for recovery

Sample Rest Day Meal Plan

Meal	Example	Key Nutrients
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Breakfast	Scrambled eggs (2-3) with whole grain toast and avocado	Protein + healthy fats
Lunch	Large salad with grilled chicken, chickpeas, feta, olive oil dressing	Protein + fiber + micronutrients
Snack	Greek yogurt with granola and honey, or handful of nuts	Protein + sustained energy
Dinner	Lean beef stir-fry with mixed vegetables and jasmine rice	Iron + zinc + carbs

Race Week: Carb Loading Strategy

In the 2-3 days before your half marathon, increase carbohydrate intake to 7-10 g/kg body weight. This doesn't mean eating more overall - shift the ratio toward carbs while reducing fat and fiber intake.

Day	Strategy	Example Foods
3 days before	Begin increasing carbs to 60-65% of total calories	Pasta, rice, bread, potatoes, pancakes, fruit juice
2 days before	Carbs at 65-70% of calories, reduce fiber	White rice, plain pasta, bagels, bananas, sports drinks
Day before	Carbs at 70%+, low fiber, familiar foods only	Pasta with simple sauce, white bread, pretzels, rice cakes
Race morning (2-3 hrs before)	200-300 calories of easily digested carbs	Bagel with honey, banana, or oatmeal with minimal toppings

Race day fueling: For a half marathon, most runners benefit from 30-60g of carbs per hour after the first 45-60 minutes. This could be 1-2 energy gels, a few swigs of sports drink, or energy chews. Practice your fueling strategy during training long runs.