

A top-down view of a breakfast table set on a white marble surface. The table features several dishes: a waffle topped with a fried egg and fruit, a bowl of oatmeal with blueberries, strawberries, and kiwi, a bowl of oatmeal with blueberries and strawberries, a waffle topped with a fried egg and fruit, a bowl of tomato soup, and a bowl of oatmeal with blueberries and strawberries. There are also small metal pitchers of milk and a white pitcher. The background is a solid purple color with a white diagonal line.

**MARATHON**

**TRAINING**

**MEAL**

**PLAN**

# THE PRINCIPLES OF

# MARATHON TRAINING NUTRITION

Your diet during marathon training is almost as important as your physical training.

Not only should your food provide the fuel you require in order to train properly, it should also:

- optimise your recovery time
- prevent dehydration,
- keep your energy levels high
- Strengthen the immune system.

You'll likely have to increase the amount of food you regularly consume – we recommend doing this with more frequent servings, rather than larger servings!

## PROTEIN IS KEY

Protein aids with recovery, by helping re-build muscles after workouts. This can aid in injury prevention too!

Aim to consume protein throughout the day, and especially as a post-workout snack or meal.

Runners require 50-75% more protein intake than non-runners.

## EAT WELL

It's easy to turn to processed foods and high-sugar options in order to get the required nutrients while in marathon training mode. However, your body will thank you for putting in the extra effort and seeking out high-quality, minimally processed food sources.

## CARBS

Carbohydrates are your primary fuel source, so it's important to be consuming good quality carbs throughout the day.

You'll likely need to increase your carb intake by 30% as you begin marathon training –

Carb-loading is only required for the last few days before your marathon – see later in this guide!

## HYDRATION

Fluids, even when you're not running are important for temperature regulation, flushing out toxins, and lubricating joints – always have a water bottle with you!

# PRACTICAL TIPS ON MARATHON TRAINING NUTRITION

We've included three meal plans in this guide:

- Training
- Vegetarian
- The Week Before
- The Week Before (Vegetarian)

In the week before your marathon, you should look to increase carbohydrates for 3-5 days, to bolster your fuel reserves.

Although these are presented as weekly plans, we recognise that it can be challenging to juggle so much food preparation along with your marathon training and the rest of your life!

If having overnight oats for breakfast every day works for you, all the better!

## EAT THE SAME THING REPEATEDLY

It may sound monotonous, but having the same meal several days in a row can be much more practical than attempting to prepare nutritious meals every single day from scratch.

When I make a salad, or a casserole, for example, I make enough to cover me for at least two meals – this way I don't have to spend so much time preparing food.

Pick out the meal ideas which work for you, and stick to them

## NO NEW DIETS

It may sound obvious, but during marathon training you don't want to begin experimenting with a new diet.

When you're on a healthy streak, it's easy to want to try new things – but when it comes to food, stick to what your body is used to. If your body is used to eating meat, it may not be the best timing to turn vegetarian.

This is especially true for the keto diet, which completely changes the way your body delivers energy during exercise

## SNACK TIMES

We've positioned the snack in-between lunch and dinner in our meal plans – however, you may wish to mix this up based on your schedule and preferences. During marathon training, I often have two mini-meals throughout the day – it keeps me fuelled without leaving me bloated from one big meal.

# EXAMPLE MEAL PLAN: TRAINING

|           | Monday                         | Tuesday                              | Wednesday                            | Thursday                               | Friday                    | Saturday                       | Sunday                      |
|-----------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--|---------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Breakfast | Porridge with nuts and berries | Scrambled eggs with toast            | Peanut butter, banana + oat smoothie | Overnight oats with seeds and berries  | Avocado toast with eggs   | Muesli with yoghurt + a banana | Banana pancakes with syrup  |
| Lunch     | Grilled chicken salad          | Smoked mackerel + couscous salad     | Green pasta salad with feta          | Mushroom Risotto                       | Thai-style prawn salad    | Turkey burger                  | Green pasta salad with feta |
| Snack     | Trail mix                      | ABC Smoothie (Apple Beetroot Carrot) | Nut, seed, and honey flapjacks       | Raspberry + banana smoothie            | Hummous and rice cakes    | Spiced seed mix                | Beef jerky                  |
| Dinner    | Tuna steaks with grilled veg   | Lentil casserole                     | Grilled salmon with vegetables       | Whole wheat pasta in tomato with salad | Steak with sweet potatoes | Large tuna salad               | Chilli Con Carne            |

# EXAMPLE VEGETARIAN MEAL PLAN

|           | Monday                             | Tuesday  | Wednesday                            | Thursday                               | Friday                          | Saturday                         | Sunday                      |
|-----------|------------------------------------|--|--------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Breakfast | Porridge with nuts and berries     | Fresh fruit smoothie with vegan protein powder | Peanut butter, banana + oat smoothie | Overnight oats with seeds and berries  | Avocado toast with orange juice | Muesli with yoghurt + a banana   | Banana pancakes with syrup  |
| Lunch     | Falafel pita burger                | Sweet potato and spinach dhal                  | Green pasta salad with feta          | Mushroom Risotto                       | Squash and barley salad         | lentil burger                    | Green pasta salad with feta |
| Snack     | Trail mix                          | ABC Smoothie (Apple Beetroot Carrot)           | Nut, seed, and honey flapjacks       | Raspberry + banana smoothie            | Hummous and rice cakes          | Spiced seed mix                  | Sweet potato crisps         |
| Dinner    | Chickpea, tomato and spinach curry | Lentil casserole                               | Pok Choi with tofu                   | Whole wheat pasta in tomato with salad | Butternut Squash Curry          | Black bean, tofu, + avocado bowl | Veggie thai green curry     |

# EXAMPLE MEAL PLAN: THE WEEK BEFORE

|           | Monday                           | Tuesday                               | Wednesday                        | Thursday                          | Friday                              | Saturday                               | Sunday                |
|-----------|----------------------------------|---------------------------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--|-----------------------|
| Breakfast | Large bowl of muesli             | Eggs with avocado toast               | Porridge with nuts and berries   | Scrambled eggs and bacon          | Granola with nuts, seeds, and fruit | Mexican beans, eggs, and avocado toast | <b>Your Marathon!</b> |
| Lunch     | Smoked mackerel + couscous salad | Brown rice, roasted veg, steak strips | Bagel with salmon and avocado    | Mushroom Risotto                  | Rice and bean enchiladas            | Baked sweet potato with tuna           |                       |
| Snack     | Granola with apple slices        | Savoury pretzels, fruit pieces        | Banana bread                     | Raspberry + banana smoothie       | Nut, seed, and honey flapjacks      | Peanut butter, banana + oat smoothie   |                       |
| Dinner    | Salmon steaks with brown rice    | Mexican chicken stew                  | Chilli Con Carne with brown rice | Whole wheat pasta in tomato sauce | Grilled chicken with quinoa salad   | Pasta with chicken and mushroom        |                       |

# EXAMPLE VEGETARIAN MEAL PLAN: THE WEEK BEFORE

|           | Monday                             | Tuesday  | Wednesday                                  | Thursday                             | Friday                              | Saturday                            | Sunday                |
|-----------|------------------------------------|--|--|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Breakfast | Granola with raspberries and nuts  | Fresh fruit smoothie with vegan protein powder | Porridge with nuts and berries             | Peanut butter, banana + oat smoothie | Pancakes with maple syrup           | Black beans + avocado on toast      | <b>Your Marathon!</b> |
| Lunch     | Sweet potato and carrot soup       | Dhal with brown rice                           | Leafy pasta salad with feta                | Chickpea and coriander burgers       | Thai-style quinoa salad             | Thin-base rocket and pesto pizza    |                       |
| Snack     | Trail mix and fruit                | Large fruit salad                              | Large fruit salad with yoghurt (non-dairy) | Raspberry + banana smoothie          | Banana Bread                        | Nut, seed, and honey flapjacks      |                       |
| Dinner    | Chickpea, tomato and spinach curry | Rice, bean and avocado enchiladas              | Five bean veggie chilli                    | Whole wheat pasta with tomato sauce  | Lentil + sweet potato curry w/ rice | Butternut squash and carrot risotto |                       |