

A woman with tattoos on her left arm is standing in a park, holding a black kettlebell. She is wearing a grey tank top and black leggings. The background is a lush green park with trees and a path. The text is overlaid on the image.

HALF MARATHON TRAINING GUIDE

12 WEEKS • ADVANCED

medibank
For Better Health

Live Better

Personal best

12 week advanced half marathon training guide

If you've completed a few half marathons and want to push yourself towards a new personal best (PB), this is the training guide for you.

To achieve your personal best, you'll want to improve both your endurance and your speed. The best way to do this is by increasing the length of your runs, the pace you're running at and by combining distance and speed training sessions.

Remember this is a **12 week** guide, so make it work for you – you can be flexible and mix up days and runs when you need to. If you miss a run, you can make it up. The real aim is to be consistent with your training.

Here is an explanation of the terms used in this training guide:

→ **Easy run:** The runs on Mondays, Wednesdays and sometimes Fridays or Saturdays are designed to be done at a comfortable pace.

→ **Stretch + strengthen:** Stretching is key to a strong, supple body and should be done daily. Strength training, particularly for your core muscles, is an important focus of this training guide. Try bodyweight exercises like push-ups, chin-ups or dips, or light weights with high reps at your local gym.

→ **Rest:** Your muscles need time to recover and rebuild, so ensuring adequate rest is just as important as the runs in this guide. In particular, taking the time to rest before and after your long run will help reduce your risk of injury. Be realistic about your fatigue level, especially in the closing weeks of the program, and don't be afraid to take an extra day off now and then.

→ **Time-based runs:** In this guide, some runs are based on distance (eg 5 km), while some are based on time (2 hours). The time-based run, scheduled for Sundays, may see you running further than your half marathon distance. The aim is to forget about the distance and to find rhythm in your running.

→ **Hill runs:** Hill training helps strengthen your quads and build speed. This guide has three hill sessions, all in the first half of the program. If you find these sessions work for you, you can substitute hill sessions with any of the interval runs.



→ **Speed sessions:** To increase your speed to achieve your PB you need to train at an increased pace a couple of sessions per week. This guide alternates interval running with tempo runs. An interval workout usually consists of fast runs separated by walking or jogging. This guide begins with 5 x 400 m and reaches 10 x 400 m the week before your half marathon. Walk or jog between each. Medium pace is around your 10 km best time pace and fast pace is around your 5 km best time pace.

→ **Tempo runs:** This is a continuous run with a buildup of pace in the middle. A tempo run of 30 to 45 minutes would begin with 10-15 minutes easy running, build to 15-20 minutes at medium pace near the middle, then 5-10 minutes easy toward the end. The pace buildup should be gradual. A tempo run can be as hard or easy as you want to make it.

→ **Warm-up:** A good guide for a warm-up is to jog 1-2 km, sit down and stretch for 5-10 minutes, then run some easy strides (100 m at near race pace). Cool down afterwards by doing half the warm-up distance.

→ **Pace runs:** In this guide some workouts are designed as pace runs to get you used to the pace you will run to achieve your PB. For example in week 10 you run a session of 8 km at PB race pace. Remember to do a short warm-up before starting each of these pace runs.

→ **Long runs:** Run at a comfortable, conversational pace, except on those days where a negative split run is prescribed. For a negative split run, run the first half at a comfortable pace and the second half at an increased pace, i.e. you cover more distance in the second half of the run than you do in the first.


→ **Cross-training:** On cross-training days, try a different kind of workout – like biking, swimming, rowing or a group fitness class at the gym. Even though you are focused on achieving a PB, cross-training is still an effective session as it helps with active recovery and injury prevention.

→ **Test:** The idea with the test runs is to measure your time, progress and fitness, if it suits you. Another option is to find local fun-runs at these distances so you can time your race and get used to running with other competitors.



Don't forget to stretch! It's important to start each training session with some stretches and gentle movement to prepare your body for your workout. After your session, cool down with more stretches to help with recovery.

12 week advanced half marathon training guide

Week	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
1	5 km run + strength Notes: <input type="checkbox"/>	6 x 200 m hill runs Notes: <input type="checkbox"/>	5 km run + strength Notes: <input type="checkbox"/>	40 min tempo run Notes: <input type="checkbox"/>	Rest	5 km run Notes: <input type="checkbox"/>	90 min run (negative split) Notes: <input type="checkbox"/>
2	5 km run + strength Notes: <input type="checkbox"/>	7 x 400 m fast speed Notes: <input type="checkbox"/>	5 km run + strength Notes: <input type="checkbox"/>	45 min tempo run Notes: <input type="checkbox"/>	Rest	5 km pace Notes: <input type="checkbox"/>	90 min run Notes: <input type="checkbox"/>
3	5 km run + strength Notes: <input type="checkbox"/>	7 x 250 m hill runs Notes: <input type="checkbox"/>	5 km run + strength Notes: <input type="checkbox"/>	30 min tempo run Notes: <input type="checkbox"/>	Rest	Rest	5 km test Notes: <input type="checkbox"/>
4	5 km run + strength Notes: <input type="checkbox"/>	8 x 400 m fast speed Notes: <input type="checkbox"/>	5 km run + strength Notes: <input type="checkbox"/>	40 min tempo run Notes: <input type="checkbox"/>	Rest	6 km run Notes: <input type="checkbox"/>	90 min run (negative split) Notes: <input type="checkbox"/>
5	5 km run + strength Notes: <input type="checkbox"/>	8 x 300 m hill runs Notes: <input type="checkbox"/>	5 km run + strength Notes: <input type="checkbox"/>	45 min tempo run Notes: <input type="checkbox"/>	Rest	6 km pace Notes: <input type="checkbox"/>	90 min run Notes: <input type="checkbox"/>
6	5 km run + strength Notes: <input type="checkbox"/>	8 x 400 m fast speed Notes: <input type="checkbox"/>	5 km run + strength Notes: <input type="checkbox"/>	30 min tempo run Notes: <input type="checkbox"/>	Rest	Rest	10 km test Notes: <input type="checkbox"/>
7	5 km run + strength Notes: <input type="checkbox"/>	4 x 800 m medium speed <input type="checkbox"/>	5 km run + strength Notes: <input type="checkbox"/>	45 min tempo run Notes: <input type="checkbox"/>	Rest	7 km pace Notes: <input type="checkbox"/>	1 hr 45 min run (negative split) Notes: <input type="checkbox"/>
8	5 km run + strength Notes: <input type="checkbox"/>	3 x 1600 m race speed <input type="checkbox"/>	5 km run + strength Notes: <input type="checkbox"/>	50 min tempo run Notes: <input type="checkbox"/>	Rest	8 km pace Notes: <input type="checkbox"/>	1 hr 45 min run Notes: <input type="checkbox"/>
9	5 km run + strength Notes: <input type="checkbox"/>	5 x 800 m medium speed <input type="checkbox"/>	5 km run + strength Notes: <input type="checkbox"/>	30 min tempo run Notes: <input type="checkbox"/>	Rest	Rest	15 km test Notes: <input type="checkbox"/>
10	5 km run + strength Notes: <input type="checkbox"/>	4 x 1600 m race speed <input type="checkbox"/>	5 km run + strength Notes: <input type="checkbox"/>	50 min tempo run Notes: <input type="checkbox"/>	Rest	8 km pace Notes: <input type="checkbox"/>	2 hr run (negative split) Notes: <input type="checkbox"/>
11	5 km run + strength Notes: <input type="checkbox"/>	6 x 800 m medium speed <input type="checkbox"/>	5 km run + strength Notes: <input type="checkbox"/>	60 min tempo run Notes: <input type="checkbox"/>	Rest	5 km pace Notes: <input type="checkbox"/>	2 hr run Notes: <input type="checkbox"/>
12	5 km run + strength Notes: <input type="checkbox"/>	6 x 400 m fast speed <input type="checkbox"/>	5 km run + strength Notes: <input type="checkbox"/>	30 min tempo run Notes: <input type="checkbox"/>	Rest	Rest	 Race day

Fact: If you do follow this guide to the letter you will have completed nearly **460 km** of running – pat on the back! **Exercise safely:** Talk to your GP before starting a new exercise program, especially if you have any existing health conditions.

The training guide is just that, a guide – it is important to make it work for you. If you want to do long runs on Saturday rather than Sunday, simply change the days. Or if you miss a run you can make it up on one of your rest days.

Check off your training each day to keep track of your achievements. Each step gets you closer to your goal!