



# **EVERY WOMAN'S MARATHON™**

**POWERED BY TEAM MILK**

**RUNNER'S WORLD**

## **POSTPARTUM MARATHON TRAINING GUIDE**

Use this 16-week guide to get back into running shape and across the finish line of your first postpartum marathon.

**Already completed the 12-week Base Plan?**

This training guide will lead you through the next 16 weeks to race day.

**Haven't completed the 12-week Base Plan?**

Don't sweat, you can start here and still be ready for race day.





# WELCOME TO YOUR 16-WEEK POSTPARTUM TRAINING GUIDE!



Mothers are a unique breed of women—we're strong, we're resilient...and we're tired!

This training guide honors your distinct challenges, whether they be sleepless nights, a “new” body shape, or scheduling snafus. Whatever you're up against, we've been there, and we can help you get through it and finish your first marathon after birthing.

As a new mom, you need to be adept at juggling baby's needs with the responsibilities of family, work, and yourself. Now throw marathon training into the mix, and you're in danger of dropping at least one ball. This is where our plan can help.

In partnership with Milk, Runner's World created this 16-week program that caters specifically to the needs of moms attempting a marathon after giving birth. You'll progress gradually, building your mileage slowly as you get used to your new normal. Each week, you'll have the option to choose when to do certain workouts, and you'll get three full days of rest to ensure you have plenty of time for recovery. You'll learn how to fuel yourself, your baby, and your training—all at once—and get plenty of motivational coaching along the way.

**WHETHER THIS IS YOUR FIRST BABY OR YOUR FIFTH, YOU'LL BE ABLE TO USE THIS PLAN AND GET THAT MEDAL AT THE END!**

## BEFORE YOU BEGIN

- **No matter whether you had a vaginal birth or a C-section, get the A-OK from your physician, gynecologist, or pelvic-floor specialist before starting this plan.** If you have diastasis recti—like coach Vanessa Peralta-Mitchell had (see her story on the next page)—or other complications, consult your doctor; they may recommend that you postpone running until you rehab your core.
- **Try on your running shoes.** That might sound weird, but your feet may be swollen or may have even gotten a little bigger during pregnancy. If your shoes feel snug, get fitted for new kicks at a reputable running store. You'll save your feet from blisters and dead toenails, and your knees, hips, and lower back from wear and tear.
- **Invest in a sports bra with plenty of support, especially if you're nursing.** Shop around and find one that works for both you and your baby. To help prevent clogged ducts, breast-feed or pump prior to your run, and change out of your sports bra as soon as you can afterward.
- **Make a pact to be patient with yourself.** Juggling a newborn, work, life, family, and marathon training is a lot, so you have to be flexible, open-minded, and willing to pivot at a moment's notice. Don't beat yourself up if you miss a workout or a run, and always, always celebrate your achievements, no matter how small. Let's get started!

## EACH WEEK, YOUR EXPERT-DESIGNED PLAN WILL HELP YOU:

- |                                                                 |                                                                            |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| > GRADUALLY INCREASE YOUR WEEKLY MILEAGE WITH EASY RUNS         | > FACILITATE MENTAL AND PHYSICAL RECOVERY WITH PLENTY OF PLANNED REST DAYS |
| > NAVIGATE SCHEDULE CHALLENGES WITH A FLEXIBLE WORKOUT PROGRAM  | > STRETCH AND STRENGTHEN WITH FOUR UNIQUE FLOW WORKOUTS                    |
| > INCORPORATE SPEED WORK TO BUILD ENDURANCE AND STRENGTH        | > GAIN THE POWER AND CONFIDENCE YOU NEED TO CARRY THROUGH TO THE END       |
| > IMPROVE ENDURANCE AND MENTAL FORTITUDE WITH A WEEKLY LONG RUN | > REALIZE THAT YOU'RE NOT ALONE!                                           |



# MEET YOUR COACHES

## MEET YOUR COACHES:

This plan is a collaboration of three experts in the fields of running, nutrition, and motherhood. Let's meet these incredible women.



**Vanessa Peralta-Mitchell** is a marathon runner and founder of Game Changers, Inc., a program that provides mentorship and funding to support diversity among running coaches. Three kids call her mom—sons Braheen (18) and Dez (11), and daughter Catalina (6).



**Jess Movold**, aka Coach Jess, is a certified running coach and seasoned marathoner known for her motivational prowess, and a new mom to son Battle (18 months).



**Starla Garcia, R.D.**, is a dietitian and Olympic-trials marathoner who helps women athletes reach their goals and succeed through strategic performance nutrition.

## THE ROCKY ROAD TO SUCCESS

You decided to run this marathon, but now you might be feeling overwhelmed. Know that you're not alone. Thousands of women just like you have set this very same goal and succeeded, including two of your coaches. Here, they share their stories of their very first postpartum marathons.

### » VANESSA'S STORY

In 2011, I finally gained entry via lottery to one of my ultimate bucket-list races. But shortly thereafter, we discovered we were expecting baby number two, so I deferred my race entry to the following year.

Once I got the doctor's clearance (this was my second C-section), I began training. However, my body was different in ways I hadn't been expecting. I had those extra pounds that made my thighs and hips curvier, and the fatigue that comes with a newborn, but also my midsection was not the same. I vividly remember being in a plank position, and as I looked down my shirt at my feet, I could see my stomach hanging down, and I could not suck it back in.

I went to the gynecologist, who explained that I had

diastasi recti—my abs had split down the middle. Even though this is a common issue, there were (and still are) very few options to fix it, aside from surgery. Instead, I found a program that helped me rehab my core. It took three months, during which time I could not run at all, because the impact of every stride would undo the progress I made.

Once my core was stronger, I began my marathon training. But now I had different obstacles: two kids, a demanding full-time job, a husband, and my innate desire to cook dinner instead of ordering out. I had to reorg my life and lifestyle to fit in my workouts. At night I would cook dinner, then run while my husband ate with our boys. In the morning I would pump, run before the baby woke up, then breast-feed when I got home.

After four months, I was ready to tackle the race—but Superstorm Sandy had other ideas. The race was canceled, and I was devastated. I remember standing in the shower, crying and crying, thinking of all the time I had put in, every meal I had missed with my kids, every schedule that had been changed, every shoe that was tied in the darkness. I felt like it had all been for nothing.

*But in 2013, I finally ran that race and conquered that dream. Looking back, I realize that all that time was not a waste—it was an investment in myself. It allowed me to routinely take care of myself, to move my body, to free my mind, and to build my strength from the inside out.*

### » JESS'S STORY

My son, Battle, was born prematurely, at 26 weeks. He was in the NICU for six months, and during that time I put running on the back burner in order to spend as much time as possible with him. Toward the end of his hospital stay I began running again, but it was purely for mental health, not fitness or performance. It needed to move my body, connect to my mind, and just feel.

After 167 days in the NICU, Battle came home, but I didn't start running consistently until two months later, in preparation for a marathon I had qualified for. And when I first got back into it, it was really hard. I hadn't prioritized fitness during the NICU journey, so I was really out of shape and disconnected from my sport. In my mind, running felt easy, effortless, and rewarding, but in reality, each

run felt clunky and hard. I knew I shouldn't compare my training now to my previous self, but I couldn't help it. I was huffing and puffing, and I felt frustrated and defeated.

But as hard as it was, those first few weeks of training were also rejuvenating, and after each run I felt amazing. Yes, I allowed myself to feel disappointment, but I didn't let myself quit. That consistency gradually led to an increase in self-confidence and an improvement in my overall fitness. Each run, no matter how it went in terms of performance, was a win for me, because I was continuing to show up for myself. And showing up became my only goal for myself, for both the training and the race itself. Finally, in January of 2023, four months after Battle came home, I felt like I was getting my groove back.

I coordinated with my husband so I could get my runs done early in the morning, before Battle got up. And every time I got home, I felt better about myself and I was able to be the person that I ultimately wanted to be. I discovered that I liked myself more after accomplishing my run for the day, and I felt focused and energized when I was back with my son.

*Looking back, I see that I discovered a whole new level of strength and discipline that I'd had no idea was possible. And when I crossed the finish line in April of 2023, I felt incredibly empowered and capable. I had worked smartly and trusted my training, and when things got hard, I pushed on. Because there is no quitting when it comes to being a mom.*



# TRAINING CALENDAR

## Your Comprehensive 16-Week Plan

This plan outlines everything you’ll need to do in order to cross the finish line of your first postpartum marathon. Your program has plenty of built-in rest days to ensure you progress safely, and to accommodate any unforeseen baby snafus. And because babies are unpredictable, your plan offers some flexibility, giving you the option to do one of your workouts on either Day 2 or Day 3 and take the other off for rest and recovery.

|        | DAY 1          | DAY 2 OR 3                                                                                                         | DAY 4 | DAY 5          | DAY 6            | DAY 7 | Estimated Weekly Mileage |      |
|--------|----------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|----------------|------------------|-------|--------------------------|------|
|        | EASY RUN       | SPEED WORK OR REST                                                                                                 | REST  | EASY RUN       | LONG RUN         | REST  | LOW                      | HIGH |
| WEEK 1 | ☐ 4 to 5 miles | ☐ 3 to 4 easy miles                                                                                                | REST  | ☐ 2 to 3 miles | ☐ 5 to 6 miles   | REST  | 14                       | 18   |
| WEEK 2 | ☐ 4 to 5 miles | ☐ 4 to 5 easy miles                                                                                                | REST  | ☐ 3 to 4 miles | ☐ 7 to 8 miles   | REST  | 18                       | 22   |
| WEEK 3 | ☐ 4 to 5 miles | ☐ 4 to 5 easy miles                                                                                                | REST  | ☐ 3 to 4 miles | ☐ 8 to 9 miles   | REST  | 19                       | 23   |
| WEEK 4 | ☐ 5 to 6 miles | ☐ 5 to 6 easy miles                                                                                                | REST  | ☐ 4 to 5 miles | ☐ 9 to 10 miles  | REST  | 23                       | 27   |
| WEEK 5 | ☐ 5 to 6 miles | ☐ 2-to-3-mile warmup<br><i>Intervals:</i><br>4 x 100-meter* strides + 1-to-2-minute recovery<br>1-mile cooldown    | REST  | ☐ 4 to 5 miles | ☐ 10 to 12 miles | REST  | 23                       | 30   |
| WEEK 6 | ☐ 4 to 5 miles | ☐ 3-to-4-mile run + 30 minutes @ half-marathon pace (MP)                                                           | REST  | ☐ 3 to 4 miles | ☐ 10 to 12 miles | REST  | 21                       | 29   |
| WEEK 7 | ☐ 5 to 6 miles | ☐ 1-to-3 mile warmup<br><i>Intervals:</i><br>4 x 400 meters @ 5K pace + 2-minute recovery<br>1-to-2-mile cooldown  | REST  | ☐ 3 to 4 miles | ☐ 12 to 14 miles | REST  | 24                       | 30   |
| WEEK 8 | ☐ 6 to 7 miles | ☐ 1-to-3-mile warmup<br><i>Intervals:</i><br>6 x 400 meters @ 5K pace + 90-second recovery<br>1-to-2-mile cooldown | REST  | ☐ 5 to 6 miles | ☐ 14 to 16 miles | REST  | 29.5                     | 35.5 |
| WEEK 9 | ☐ 6 to 7 miles | ☐ 1-to-2-mile warmup<br><i>Intervals:</i><br>4 x 800 meters @ 10K pace + 3-minute recovery<br>1-to-2-mile cooldown | REST  | ☐ 5 to 6 miles | ☐ 12 to 14 miles | REST  | 28                       | 34   |



# TRAINING CALENDAR

## Your Comprehensive 16-Week Plan (cont.)

|         | DAY 1          | DAY 2 OR 3                                                                                                         | DAY 4 | DAY 5          | DAY 6            | DAY 7 | Estimated Weekly Mileage |      |
|---------|----------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|----------------|------------------|-------|--------------------------|------|
|         | EASY RUN       | SPEED WORK OR REST                                                                                                 | REST  | EASY RUN       | LONG RUN         | REST  | LOW                      | HIGH |
| WEEK 10 | ☐ 6 to 7 miles | ☐ 1-to-2-mile warmup<br><i>Intervals:</i><br>6 x 800 meters @ 10K pace + 2-minute recovery<br>1-to-2-mile cooldown | REST  | ☐ 5 to 6 miles | ☐ 16 to 18 miles | REST  | 33                       | 39   |
| WEEK 11 | ☐ 5 to 6 miles | ☐ 1-to-2-mile warmup<br>2 to 3 easy miles<br><i>Intervals:</i><br>4 x 100-meter strides                            | REST  | ☐ 4 to 5 miles | ☐ 18 to 20 miles | REST  | 31                       | 38   |
| WEEK 12 | ☐ 7 to 8 miles | ☐ 1-to-2-mile warmup<br>3 to 4 miles + 30 minutes @ MP<br>1-to-2-mile cooldown                                     | REST  | ☐ 4 to 5 miles | ☐ 14 to 15 miles | REST  | 30                       | 36   |
| WEEK 13 | ☐ 6 to 7 miles | ☐ 1-to-2-mile warmup<br><i>Intervals:</i><br>5 x 600 meters @ 10K pace + 1-minute recovery<br>1-to-2-mile cooldown | REST  | ☐ 3 to 4 miles | ☐ 18 to 20 miles | REST  | 32                       | 38   |
| WEEK 14 | ☐ 5 to 6 miles | ☐ 1-to-2-mile warmup<br><i>Intervals:</i><br>5 x 400 meters @ 5K pace + 2-minute recovery<br>1-to-2-mile cooldown  | REST  | ☐ 3 to 4 miles | ☐ 12 to 13 miles | REST  | 24                       | 29   |
| WEEK 15 | ☐ 5 to 6 miles | ☐ 1-to-2-mile warmup<br>3 to 4 miles + 30 minutes @ half-MP<br>1-to-2-mile cooldown                                | REST  | ☐ 3 to 4 miles | ☐ 7 to 8 miles   | REST  | 20                       | 26   |
| WEEK 16 | ☐ 3 to 4 miles | ☐ 1 to 2 miles + 4 x 100-meter strides                                                                             | REST  | ☐ 0 to 1 miles | RACE DAY!        | REST  | 32.2                     | 37.2 |



# WORKOUT GLOSSARY

» **WARMUP**  
Warming up is essential, especially when you're getting back into exercise postpartum. Walk briskly for several minutes before you begin your run, or take the first couple of minutes of it slowly increasing your pace and easing into movement. Your warmup should always be done at a very easy effort level, and you should be able to hold a conversation without breathing heavily for the duration.

» **EASY RUN**  
These workouts should be done at a relaxed and comfortable pace to build endurance and running efficiency. Settle into a groove that lands around 6 on a scale of 1 to 10 in terms of effort.

» **SPEED WORK**  
These interval workouts—short periods of more intense effort followed by periods of easy effort—will improve your speed, reaction time, endurance, and leg turnover.

» **FLOW WORKOUTS**  
In the interest of time, we've combined strength training with mobility work, so you can get it all done in one shot! Resistance training is an essential workout component for runners, helping promote efficiency and strong running form, and stretching helps loosen sore joints and promotes recovery. Do one of these workouts weekly.

» **LONG RUN**  
These are the bread and butter of any marathon training plan, challenging both your brain and your body as you endure longer distances and more time on your feet.

» **COOLDOWN**  
This should be done at a slow, easy pace to allow your heart rate and body temp to return to normal. It is up to you whether you want to jog or walk.

» **STRIDES**  
These small bursts of faster running are not sprints, but rather controlled pick-ups to a faster effort.



| PACE          | DEFINITION                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|---------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| MARATHON      | The pace you have held during a marathon in the past, or the pace you're aiming to hold on race day.                                                                                                                                |
| HALF MARATHON | The pace you have held during a half-marathon in the past, or a pace that is roughly 80 percent of your max effort.                                                                                                                 |
| 5K/10K PACE   | A pace that is comfortably uncomfortable, where you're pushing yourself enough that you can't hold a conversation, but not so hard that you're redlining. You should be able to maintain this pace for the duration of the workout. |



# STRENGTHENING AND STRETCHING FLOW WORKOUTS



These workouts combine resistance training and mobility into one single flow. Choose one flow each week, and do it on one or two days when you have time. Afterward, spend up to five minutes practicing your kegel exercises to improve the strength and health of your pelvic floor. For any move that is not familiar to you, an internet search will produce a number of demonstration videos.

FOR EACH FLOW, ALLOW YOURSELF 20 TO 30 SECONDS FOR TRANSITIONING FROM ONE MOVE TO THE NEXT. TO PROGRESS, ADD WEIGHTS OR ANOTHER ROUND.

FLOW1

COMPLETE THREE ROUNDS

| Exercise              | Seconds        |
|-----------------------|----------------|
| > Dead Bug            | 40             |
| > Cat/Cow             | 40             |
| > Deep Squat and Sway | 40             |
| > Clamshell           | 20 (each side) |
| > Rest                | 60             |

FLOW2

COMPLETE FOUR ROUNDS

| Exercise                               | Seconds |
|----------------------------------------|---------|
| > Mountain Climber*                    | 40      |
| > Good Morning                         | 40      |
| > Alternating World's Greatest Stretch | 40      |
| > Alternating Reverse Lunge            | 40      |
| > Rest                                 | 60      |

\*Modification: Straight-Arm Plank

FLOW3

COMPLETE FOUR ROUNDS

| Exercise            | Seconds |
|---------------------|---------|
| > Glute Bridge Hold | 40      |
| > Wall Sit          | 40      |
| > Forearm Plank     | 40      |
| > Squat             | 40      |
| > Rest              | 60      |

FLOW4

COMPLETE FOUR ROUNDS

| Exercise                          | Seconds        |
|-----------------------------------|----------------|
| > Inchworm Walkout + Shoulder Tap | 40             |
| > Split Squat                     | 20 (each side) |
| > Alternating Bird Dog            | 40             |
| > Alternating Lateral Lunge       | 40             |
| > Rest                            | 60             |



# FEED YOUR TRAINING

Use the Performance Plate Technique to Make Marathon Nutrition a Snap.



**>>** New moms have lots to think about and do on a daily basis, and nutrition often falls by the wayside in favor of convenience (or just sleep). What’s more, if you’re breast-feeding and/or pumping, you may feel hungrier than normal. Once you add exercise into the equation, you may be downright ravenous. This is okay—lean into it and eat. You’re feeding yourself, your baby, and your workouts, all in one shot!

These Performance Plates combine lean protein and quality carbohydrates to provide you with the energy and strength to achieve all your goals, as well as veggies for essential fiber, vitamins, and minerals.

## YOUR PERFORMANCE PLATES

| WEEKS 1-6               |                                | WEEKS 7-9, 11-12 & 14-16   |                    | WEEKS 10 AND 13             |                    |
|-------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------|
| Basic Performance Plate |                                | Moderate Performance Plate |                    | Peak Week Performance Plate |                    |
| ½ plate                 | Fruits and Veggies             | ½ plate                    | Fruits and Veggies | ½ plate                     | Starches/Grains    |
| ¼ plate                 | Lean Protein                   | ¼ plate                    | Lean Protein       | ¼ plate                     | Lean Protein       |
| ¼ plate                 | Starches/Grains + dairy option | ¼ plate                    | Starches/Grains    | ¼ plate                     | Fruits and Veggies |

### SET YOURSELF UP FOR SUCCESS

- **Consult a healthcare professional or registered dietitian before making any significant dietary changes** to ensure your nutritional needs are met, especially if you’re breast-feeding.
- **Drink dairy milk to make milk!** Breast-feeding moms need about 300 to 500 additional calories per day to support production, and **dairy milk** contains healthy calories in the form of protein and carbs, as well as 13 essential nutrients to support you and your baby.
- **Hydration is imperative for postpartum women**, especially if you’re breast-feeding because it helps protect your milk supply. Drink plenty of fluids during the day and around your training, aiming for at least 8 to 10 glasses per day. **Dairy milk** checks both boxes really well since it hydrates better than water and has 13 nutrients, such as calcium, choline, iodine, potassium, and vitamin D—all are especially important for breastfeeding moms.
- **It might be tempting to resort to weight-loss strategies after you give birth, but now is not the time to diet.** It is better for you and your baby to consume a well-balanced diet for optimal energy, recovery, and health.
- **Cooking food in large batches saves time and energy, and makes family meals a breeze.** Casseroles, chicken breasts, soups, and meatballs are easy options to batch-cook and freeze for later.
- **Breast-feeding moms may be deficient in calcium and iron**—which are also two elements that runners need for energy and to prevent bone injuries. Consume foods rich in both of these nutrients, such as **dairy milk**, red meat, poultry, beans, and leafy greens.
- **Sometimes sitting down for a meal is impossible for moms.** Instead, consider eating smaller, more frequent grab-and-go meals to stabilize your blood sugar and give you all-day energy. Drinking **dairy milk** can help prevent blood sugar spikes because it has protein and fat along with carbs. That makes it pass out of the stomach more slowly and prevents blood sugar spikes



# WEEK-BY-WEEK GUIDE

Consider this your must-read. Here your coaches help keep you consistent and on track with your marathon training, no matter what.

| WEEK 1 | DAY 1          | DAY 2 OR 3          | DAY 4 | DAY 5          | DAY 6          | DAY 7 | Estimated Weekly Mileage |      |
|--------|----------------|---------------------|-------|----------------|----------------|-------|--------------------------|------|
|        | EASY RUN       | SPEED WORK OR REST  | REST  | EASY RUN       | LONG RUN       | REST  | LOW                      | HIGH |
|        | ☐ 4 to 5 miles | ☐ 3 to 4 easy miles | REST  | ☐ 2 to 3 miles | ☐ 5 to 6 miles | REST  | 14                       | 18   |

» **TRAINING TIPS**  
Your focus this week is to be as consistent as possible. All of your runs should be easy and conversational, and remember—listen to your body and walk whenever you need to.

» **NUTRITION NOTES**

- Make a loose plan on how you’re going to feed yourself and the baby around your training.
- If you’re running in the morning, make breakfast ahead of time to eat upon your return. Enjoy baked oatmeal, overnight oats, or a frozen breakfast sandwich while you feed your baby.

**MOMMY MESSAGING**  
Building your base back up might seem impossible, but getting into a groove where running feels comfortable and familiar again takes time. Give yourself some grace and patience, and embrace the idea of walking if a run is too challenging.

| WEEK 2 | DAY 1          | DAY 2 OR 3          | DAY 4 | DAY 5          | DAY 6          | DAY 7 | Estimated Weekly Mileage |      |
|--------|----------------|---------------------|-------|----------------|----------------|-------|--------------------------|------|
|        | EASY RUN       | SPEED WORK OR REST  | REST  | EASY RUN       | LONG RUN       | REST  | LOW                      | HIGH |
|        | ☐ 4 to 5 miles | ☐ 4 to 5 easy miles | REST  | ☐ 3 to 4 miles | ☐ 7 to 8 miles | REST  | 18                       | 22   |

» **TRAINING TIPS**  
During these first few weeks, don’t worry about your pace. Practice consistency and positive mindset rather than focusing on time splits. Enjoy each mile, noticing the scenery and landscape, listening to your breathing, and reconnecting with your body.

» **NUTRITION NOTES**  
Make sure you eat a simple, easy-to-digest carb and a full glass of water before your run to shake off that sluggish feeling that late night’s may bring.

Try one of these options 30 to 45 minutes before your run:

- > 4 graham-cracker sheets
- > 1 slice toast + sliced bananas + drizzle of honey
- > 1 cup of juice + 2 fig squares

**MOMMY MESSAGING**  
While you might be loathe to adopt this edict, do your best to normalize walking. Because every step—whether it’s done walking or running—brings you that much closer to your goal.



# WEEK-BY-WEEK GUIDE

Consider this your must-read. Here your coaches help keep you consistent and on track with your marathon training, no matter what.

| WEEK 3 | DAY 1          | DAY 2 OR 3          | DAY 4 | DAY 5          | DAY 6          | DAY 7 | Estimated Weekly Mileage |      |
|--------|----------------|---------------------|-------|----------------|----------------|-------|--------------------------|------|
|        | EASY RUN       | SPEED WORK OR REST  | REST  | EASY RUN       | LONG RUN       | REST  | LOW                      | HIGH |
|        | ☐ 4 to 5 miles | ☐ 4 to 5 easy miles | REST  | ☐ 3 to 4 miles | ☐ 8 to 9 miles | REST  | 19                       | 23   |

» **TRAINING TIPS**

Your focus during your Easy Runs this week is to perfect your form. Use these tips to make the most of each step:

- > Run tall with good posture; keep your shoulders down and back.
- > Avoid overstriding; focus on having your feet land softly underneath your hips.
- > Relax your hands and face, and release any tension in your head and neck.
- > Keep a 90-degree bend in your arms; they should drive straight forward and backward by your sides.

» **NUTRITION NOTES**

Breast-feeding moms need additional calories and nutrients to support their and their baby’s health.

Try this **Banana Cinnamon Lactation Smoothie**: Blend together 1 cup dairy milk, ½ cup Greek yogurt, ⅓ cup oats, 2 tbsp. peanut butter, 2 tbsp. flaxseeds, 1 banana, 1 tsp. ground cinnamon, and 1 tbsp. maple syrup or honey. It provides healthy carbs and protein, as well as lots of calcium, iodine, potassium, vitamin D, and other essential nutrients to support growing babies and running mommas.

**MOMMY MESSAGING**

Even if a run is prescribed as “easy,” some days it will feel like the biggest challenge of your life. Don’t feel defeated. Just take each step in stride (literally) and congratulate yourself for showing up.

| WEEK 4 | DAY 1          | DAY 2 OR 3          | DAY 4 | DAY 5          | DAY 6           | DAY 7 | Estimated Weekly Mileage |      |
|--------|----------------|---------------------|-------|----------------|-----------------|-------|--------------------------|------|
|        | EASY RUN       | SPEED WORK OR REST  | REST  | EASY RUN       | LONG RUN        | REST  | LOW                      | HIGH |
|        | ☐ 5 to 6 miles | ☐ 5 to 6 easy miles | REST  | ☐ 4 to 5 miles | ☐ 9 to 10 miles | REST  | 23                       | 27   |

» **TRAINING TIPS**

Mile by mile, you’re laying the foundation of strength and endurance that will help you succeed. Even if you’re eager to push the pace, keep all your runs easy and conversational to progress safely and avoid injury. Physically and emotionally you’ve been through a lot, so it will take time to get back to your routine.

» **NUTRITION NOTES**

- Stay on top of your goals by stocking up on food items that can be ready in a pinch on time-crunched days, such as canned tuna, frozen veggies and grains, boiled eggs, and instant oatmeal.
- If you want to use gels, chews, or gummies during your race, buy some options to experiment with now on your long runs. Optimally, you will want to ingest about 50 grams of carbs every 30 minutes of running.

**MOMMY MESSAGING**

Ask for help when you need it. Talk to your partner, babysitter, or family member to devise a plan that can give you this “me” time you need and ensure your baby is well taken care of.



# WEEK-BY-WEEK GUIDE

Consider this your must-read. Here your coaches help keep you consistent and on track with your marathon training, no matter what.

| WEEK 5 | DAY 1          | DAY 2 OR 3                                                                                                        | DAY 4 | DAY 5          | DAY 6            | DAY 7 | Estimated Weekly Mileage |      |
|--------|----------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|----------------|------------------|-------|--------------------------|------|
|        | EASY RUN       | SPEED WORK OR REST                                                                                                | REST  | EASY RUN       | LONG RUN         | REST  | LOW                      | HIGH |
|        | ☐ 5 to 6 miles | ☐ 2-to-3-mile warmup<br><i>Intervals:</i><br>4 x 100-meter strides +<br>1-to-2-minute recovery<br>1-mile cooldown | REST  | ☐ 4 to 5 miles | ☐ 10 to 12 miles | REST  | 23                       | 30   |

» TRAINING TIPS

- On Day 2 or 3, do your first speed workout of the training program. Ease into it with a slow 2-to-3-mile jog at a comfortable pace. Follow with four 100-meter strides: Pick a starting point and gradually increase your speed so that by the time you reach it, you’ll be running close to maximum effort. Rest or walk for 1 or 2 minutes to recover, then repeat.
- As your Long Runs get longer, know that you can move them to a different day of the week if needed. Just allow at least 48 hours between your Long Run and your Speed Work to prevent injury.

» NUTRITION NOTES

The night before the Long run, have a dinner that won’t cause stomach issues down the line. For example:

- > Pasta + marinara sauce + turkey meatballs + cheese
- > Baked potato + dollop of sour cream + grilled chicken + green beans
- > Homemade pizza made with marinara sauce + cubed chicken + spinach + part-skim mozzarella

MOMMY MESSAGING

When your training gets hard, remind yourself why you signed up for this in the first place. Prioritizing yourself is essential if you want to be the best mom, partner, and athlete possible.

| WEEK 6 | DAY 1          | DAY 2 OR 3                                               | DAY 4 | DAY 5          | DAY 6            | DAY 7 | Estimated Weekly Mileage |      |
|--------|----------------|----------------------------------------------------------|-------|----------------|------------------|-------|--------------------------|------|
|        | EASY RUN       | SPEED WORK OR REST                                       | REST  | EASY RUN       | LONG RUN         | REST  | LOW                      | HIGH |
|        | ☐ 4 to 5 miles | ☐ 3-to-4-mile run + 30 minutes @ half-marathon pace (MP) | REST  | ☐ 3 to 4 miles | ☐ 10 to 12 miles | REST  | 21                       | 29   |

» TRAINING TIPS

- During your Speed Work, run for 30 minutes at your half-marathon pace. It should feel like an 8 on a scale of 1 to 10 in terms of intensity.
- If you didn’t hit that 12-mile mark for your Long Run last week, make it your goal to achieve that distance this week.

» NUTRITION NOTES

- After your runs this week, consider a quick post-workout drink like white or chocolate dairy milk for hydration. These are great options to replenish fluids because they add a quick dose of carbs and protein for accelerated recovery.
- Lunch doesn’t have to be a big deal. Choose an option from each of these categories for a meal ready in minutes:
  - > Protein: sliced deli turkey, tuna pouch, boiled eggs, edamame
  - > Dairy: glass of dairy milk, Greek yogurt, cheese stick, cottage cheese
  - > Starch/Grains: tortilla wrap, pita pocket, sliced bread, crackers, pretzels
  - > Fruit: apples, mandarin oranges, grapes, fruit cup

MOMMY MESSAGING

If yesterday was a disaster—diaper explosions, all-night crying, and the overwhelming responsibilities of work and life—and you had to miss your run, let it go. Focus on the things you can control, and don’t stress about missed runs. Today is a fresh start, so shake off the burdens of yesterday and move forward.



# WEEK-BY-WEEK GUIDE

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| WEEK 7 | DAY 1          | DAY 2 OR 3                                                                                                                 | DAY 4 | DAY 5          | DAY 6            | DAY 7 | Estimated Weekly Mileage |      |
|--------|----------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|----------------|------------------|-------|--------------------------|------|
|        | EASY RUN       | SPEED WORK OR REST                                                                                                         | REST  | EASY RUN       | LONG RUN         | REST  | LOW                      | HIGH |
|        | ☐ 5 to 6 miles | ☐ 1-to-3 mile warmup<br><i>Intervals:</i><br>4 x 400 meters<br>@ 5K pace +<br>2-minute recovery<br>1-to-2-mile<br>cooldown | REST  | ☐ 3 to 4 miles | ☐ 12 to 14 miles | REST  | 24                       | 30   |

» TRAINING TIPS

- This week, the pace for your Speed Work intervals should be pretty intense, landing around a 9 on a scale of 1 to 10. Make sure you warm up and cool down thoroughly around your workout to prevent injury.
- Rest well the night before your Long Run this week, and complete 14 miles if you can!

» NUTRITION NOTES

Give your dinner a solid protein boost for optimal recovery. Here are some easy ideas:

- > Frozen ready-to-eat chicken breast + broccoli + brown rice
- > Cottage cheese + pasta + marinara sauce
- > Quinoa + mixed veggies + beans or lentils
- > Frozen meatballs + pita bread + small salad
- > Add a glass of dairy milk to any meal. It is an easy way to consume high-quality protein plus 12 other nutrients.

MOMMY MESSAGING

If you’re exhausted physically as well as mentally, shorten the distance of your run, if needed. Alternately, you can swap a rest day with a run day if you simply can’t make it happen.

Remember that your ability to work at intensity will change day by day, especially when you have a new baby. So skip the stopwatch and instead run by feel.

| WEEK 8 | DAY 1          | DAY 2 OR 3                                                                                                                     | DAY 4 | DAY 5          | DAY 6            | DAY 7 | Estimated Weekly Mileage |      |
|--------|----------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|----------------|------------------|-------|--------------------------|------|
|        | EASY RUN       | SPEED WORK OR REST                                                                                                             | REST  | EASY RUN       | LONG RUN         | REST  | LOW                      | HIGH |
|        | ☐ 6 to 7 miles | ☐ 1-to-3-mile warmup<br><i>Intervals:</i><br>6 x 400 meters<br>@ 5K pace +<br>90-second<br>recovery<br>1-to-2-mile<br>cooldown | REST  | ☐ 5 to 6 miles | ☐ 14 to 16 miles | REST  | 29.5                     | 35.5 |

» TRAINING TIPS

- This is the halfway point in your training—how do you feel? Reconnect to your “why” and remind yourself of your commitment to this goal. Then celebrate your victories so far!
- This week your Speed Work intervals increase by two and your rest time decreases to 90 seconds. Use the time to regain your breath before hitting it again.
- Have you been doing your Flow Workouts? Make sure you’re doing one per week.

» NUTRITION NOTES

Bored with breakfast? Use chocolate dairy milk to boost the excitement factor! Add it to pancake mix, smoothies, and overnight oats to add B vitamins, calcium, zinc, selenium, protein, vitamin D—and flavor!

MOMMY MESSAGING

Remember to be flexible. For a new mom, things will come up—baby, work, family, life—so expect the unexpected and adapt as needed.



# WEEK-BY-WEEK GUIDE

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| WEEK 9 | DAY 1          | DAY 2 OR 3                                                                                                         | DAY 4 | DAY 5          | DAY 6            | DAY 7 | Estimated Weekly Mileage |      |
|--------|----------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|----------------|------------------|-------|--------------------------|------|
|        | EASY RUN       | SPEED WORK OR REST                                                                                                 | REST  | EASY RUN       | LONG RUN         | REST  | LOW                      | HIGH |
|        | ☐ 6 to 7 miles | ☐ 1-to-2-mile warmup<br><i>Intervals:</i><br>4 x 800 meters @ 10K pace + 3-minute recovery<br>1-to-2-mile cooldown | REST  | ☐ 5 to 6 miles | ☐ 12 to 14 miles | REST  | 28                       | 34   |

» **TRAINING TIPS**  
During this week’s Speed Workout, you’re doubling the distance of your intervals from 400 to 800 meters (about ½ mile), and running them at your 10K pace. This should be reasonably challenging, so give yourself a good 3 minutes in between each interval to recover and sip some water.

» **NUTRITION NOTES**  
Next week is Peak Week, so take inventory of your fridge, freezer, and pantry and make sure you have plenty of staple items to carry you through. Prep and batch-cook at least two proteins, like turkey patties and a salmon filet, to make mealtime easier.

**MOMMY MESSAGING**  
You finally get out the door—only to feel bad about leaving your baby. Mom guilt is real! Remember the reason you started this journey and honor the time you’re giving yourself.

| WEEK 10 | DAY 1          | DAY 2 OR 3                                                                                                         | DAY 4 | DAY 5          | DAY 6            | DAY 7 | Estimated Weekly Mileage |      |
|---------|----------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|----------------|------------------|-------|--------------------------|------|
|         | EASY RUN       | SPEED WORK OR REST                                                                                                 | REST  | EASY RUN       | LONG RUN         | REST  | LOW                      | HIGH |
|         | ☐ 6 to 7 miles | ☐ 1-to-2-mile warmup<br><i>Intervals:</i><br>6 x 800 meters @ 10K pace + 2-minute recovery<br>1-to-2-mile cooldown | REST  | ☐ 5 to 6 miles | ☐ 16 to 18 miles | REST  | 33                       | 39   |

» **TRAINING TIPS**  
Use your Day 1 Easy Run to strategize mentally how you’re going to tackle your Long Run on Day 6. For example, break the distance up into smaller chunks, like 4 or 6 miles at a time, to make it more manageable and less overwhelming. This is the longest run you’ve done so far, so don’t be surprised if the additional miles tire you.

» **NUTRITION NOTES**  
This is your Peak Week of training and you’ll likely be hungrier than normal. Before your Long Run, or on any day you’re in need of some additional calories, have a before-bed snack such as a glass of chocolate or white dairy milk and a handful of fresh cherries. Dairy milk contains immune-supporting compounds such as vitamins A and D, zinc, and selenium.

**MOMMY MESSAGING**  
On your days off from training, take a nap with your baby. This tends to both your needs at once!



# WEEK-BY-WEEK GUIDE

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| WEEK 11 | DAY 1          | DAY 2 OR 3                                                                              | DAY 4 | DAY 5          | DAY 6            | DAY 7 | Estimated Weekly Mileage |      |
|---------|----------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|----------------|------------------|-------|--------------------------|------|
|         | EASY RUN       | SPEED WORK OR REST                                                                      | REST  | EASY RUN       | LONG RUN         | REST  | LOW                      | HIGH |
|         | ☐ 5 to 6 miles | ☐ 1-to-2-mile warmup<br>2 to 3 easy miles<br><i>Intervals:</i><br>4 x 100-meter strides | REST  | ☐ 4 to 5 miles | ☐ 18 to 20 miles | REST  | 31                       | 38   |

» TRAINING TIPS

- This week’s Easy Runs are shorter, so take out the jogging stroller and get in some miles with baby! Make sure they are at least 6 months old and the doctor has approved it.
- You’ll recognize the Speed Workout from Week 5. For this series of strides, accelerate from the start, aiming to reach your max speed in the middle, then decelerate to the finish. Walk or jog back to the start and repeat.
- This week’s Long Run is a big one, and you’ll be gone awhile. Finish the run with some miles of gratitude. Dedicate them to a moment or memory you’ve had with your baby, or to someone who has been supporting you along the way.

» NUTRITION NOTES

- Practice your nutrition strategy around your Long Run on Day 6 as a trial-run-through for race day. Plan out your pre-run dinner on Day 5 and your pre-run meal on Day 6, according to the Performance Plate Technique, your fuel strategy during the run, and your post-run meal.
- Have you settled on a goo, gel, or chew you want to use for your event? Make sure to use it consistently throughout your workouts to ensure it does not cause any gastric distress.

MOMMY MESSAGING

You may or may not be feeling great about your training. Try to fully embrace the journey. Know that each twist and turn is custom-made for you. Do your best, no matter what it looks like!

| WEEK 12 | DAY 1          | DAY 2 OR 3                                                                     | DAY 4 | DAY 5          | DAY 6            | DAY 7 | Estimated Weekly Mileage |      |
|---------|----------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|----------------|------------------|-------|--------------------------|------|
|         | EASY RUN       | SPEED WORK OR REST                                                             | REST  | EASY RUN       | LONG RUN         | REST  | LOW                      | HIGH |
|         | ☐ 7 to 8 miles | ☐ 1-to-2-mile warmup<br>3 to 4 miles + 30 minutes @ MP<br>1-to-2-mile cooldown | REST  | ☐ 4 to 5 miles | ☐ 14 to 15 miles | REST  | 30                       | 36   |

» TRAINING TIPS

- Dedicate 30 minutes of your 3-to-4-mile run on Day 2 or 3 to running at Marathon Pace—the pace you’d like to maintain during your upcoming race.
- Your Long Run this week is a good time to try out what you’re going to wear on race day—shorts, shoes, socks, etc.—as well as what you’re going to eat and drink. Plan out and execute your pumping routine before and after, and if possible, have someone set up a hydration station for you along the way.

» NUTRITION NOTES

- This week is important for recovery, so drink a glass of dairy milk before bed for a quick shot of protein, calcium, and carbs to assist with recovery.
- Making dinner can be a chore—so have breakfast for dinner instead! Waffles with a handful of mini chocolate chips, sliced bananas, and a side of turkey bacon; a bagel with cream cheese and smoked salmon; or oatmeal with dairy milk, diced apples, walnuts, and cinnamon are all great options.

MOMMY MESSAGING

Feel the feels. One day you might be feeling great and empowered, the next guilty and downtrodden. Remember that no road to a marathon is easy, whether you’re a mom or not, so give yourself a moment to feel those feelings in a judgment-free zone.



# WEEK-BY-WEEK GUIDE

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| WEEK 13 | DAY 1          | DAY 2 OR 3                                                                                                         | DAY 4 | DAY 5          | DAY 6            | DAY 7 | Estimated Weekly Mileage |      |
|---------|----------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|----------------|------------------|-------|--------------------------|------|
|         | EASY RUN       | SPEED WORK OR REST                                                                                                 | REST  | EASY RUN       | LONG RUN         | REST  | LOW                      | HIGH |
|         | ☐ 6 to 7 miles | ☐ 1-to-2-mile warmup<br><i>Intervals:</i><br>5 x 600 meters @ 10K pace + 1-minute recovery<br>1-to-2-mile cooldown | REST  | ☐ 3 to 4 miles | ☐ 18 to 20 miles | REST  | 32                       | 38   |

» **TRAINING TIPS**  
Go back over the strategy you used for your 18-to-20-mile run from Week 11. Analyze what worked and what didn't and make a couple of tweaks so it's a keeper for your marathon in a few weeks.

- » **NUTRITION NOTES**
- How did your Long Run nutrition strategy work out? If it didn't go as planned, see where things went awry and try to correct it this week.
  - Are you remembering to hydrate? Make sure you're getting at least 8 to 10 glasses of water per day, with a couple of glasses of dairy milk as part of your total for even better hydration potential.

**MOMMY MESSAGING**  
Remember to appreciate your body exactly as it is, right here and now. It is working hard for you, so give it some love.

| WEEK 14 | DAY 1          | DAY 2 OR 3                                                                                                        | DAY 4 | DAY 5          | DAY 6            | DAY 7 | Estimated Weekly Mileage |      |
|---------|----------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|----------------|------------------|-------|--------------------------|------|
|         | EASY RUN       | SPEED WORK OR REST                                                                                                | REST  | EASY RUN       | LONG RUN         | REST  | LOW                      | HIGH |
|         | ☐ 5 to 6 miles | ☐ 1-to-2-mile warmup<br><i>Intervals:</i><br>5 x 400 meters @ 5K pace + 2-minute recovery<br>1-to-2-mile cooldown | REST  | ☐ 3 to 4 miles | ☐ 12 to 13 miles | REST  | 24                       | 29   |

- » **TRAINING TIPS**
- This week you're beginning to taper off your workouts in preparation for your race, meaning that your mileage and speed intervals are shorter, allowing your body time to rest and recover.
  - Feeling sore? If you have access to a stationary bike or an elliptical trainer, consider using it for one of your workouts instead of running. Cross-training with different activities is a great way to prevent overuse injuries.

- » **NUTRITION NOTES**
- Even though you're tapering off your mileage, you should still be eating the same as you have until now. Add in snacks like these when you can to keep your fueling on par.
- > Yogurt + pistachios + drizzle of honey
  - > Chocolate dairy milk + granola bar
  - > Graham crackers + nut butter
  - > Fruit + cheese stick

**MOMMY MESSAGING**  
While it may be great to post pix of your new bundle of joy, not everyone's feed is as positive and upbeat as yours. If social media is bringing you down rather than lifting you up, swear off it for now. It is not serving your purpose or honoring your time.



# WEEK-BY-WEEK GUIDE

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| WEEK 15 | DAY 1          | DAY 2 OR 3                                                                          | DAY 4 | DAY 5          | DAY 6          | DAY 7 | Estimated Weekly Mileage |      |
|---------|----------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|----------------|----------------|-------|--------------------------|------|
|         | EASY RUN       | SPEED WORK OR REST                                                                  | REST  | EASY RUN       | LONG RUN       | REST  | LOW                      | HIGH |
|         | ☐ 5 to 6 miles | ☐ 1-to-2-mile warmup<br>3 to 4 miles + 30 minutes @ half-MP<br>1-to-2-mile cooldown | REST  | ☐ 3 to 4 miles | ☐ 7 to 8 miles | REST  | 20                       | 26   |

» **TRAINING TIPS**  
You'll continue to taper off this week, allowing you to prep even more mentally and physically for your upcoming race. Your Speed Work is a repeat of Week 6, and after your warmup, you'll run an easy 3 to 4 miles with a 30-minute segment at your half-marathon pace.

» **NUTRITION NOTES**  
This week, your nutrition focus is on recovery, so you can prevent injury and be at your best on race day. Reach for replenishing foods such as chocolate dairy milk, Greek yogurt, salmon, cherries, and green leafy vegetables.

**MOMMY MESSAGING**  
Set aside time in the mornings to be calm, present, and relaxed. Visualize your race mile by mile, and see yourself crossing the finish line with a smile.

| WEEK 16 | DAY 1          | DAY 2 OR 3                             | DAY 4 | DAY 5          | DAY 6     | DAY 7 | Estimated Weekly Mileage |      |
|---------|----------------|----------------------------------------|-------|----------------|-----------|-------|--------------------------|------|
|         | EASY RUN       | SPEED WORK OR REST                     | REST  | EASY RUN       | LONG RUN  | REST  | LOW                      | HIGH |
|         | ☐ 3 to 4 miles | ☐ 1 to 2 miles + 4 x 100-meter strides | REST  | ☐ 0 to 1 miles | RACE DAY! | REST  | 32.2                     | 37.2 |

» **TRAINING TIPS**  
Welcome to Race Week! You've dedicated 16 weeks to running, eating healthy, mothering, and so much more. You are READY! This is your last week of training before your marathon, so enjoy every mile and reflect on how far you've come. Day 5 is an optional Easy Run just to shake out your legs and get the blood flowing.

» **NUTRITION NOTES**

- At the beginning of the week, go to the store and stock up on everything you'll need this week and through race day.
- For the three days before your event, your Performance Plate should be made up with ½ simple carbs (too much fiber can cause stomach issues during a race), ¼ lean protein, and ¼ fruits and veggies.
- Grab a chocolate dairy milk at the finish line to help stimulate muscle repair and replenish lost electrolytes.

**MOMMY MESSAGING**  
Don't worry about your baby during your race. This is your time, so go out there and crush it! As you run, tap into those gratitude miles, and add a mile just for you. You've done so much and faced so many challenges along the way. You are strong, you are capable, and you can run like a mother!





**RUNNER'S WORLD**