

VODAFONE FOUNDATION STEP FOR SCHOOLS 2025

16 WK TRAINING PLAN MARATHON RUN



**Vodafone
Foundation**



Your plan

This plan has been developed for you to fit around your busy schedules. It is designed to ensure you are in the right physical state to take on this challenge. The fitter you are and the closer you stick to the plan, the more you will enjoy it!

The plan shows sessions against set days, but feel free to move around to suit your schedule. Taking a few moments to plan ahead will make the whole process much easier and give you the best chances of success in both your training and the event.

Top tips

DO:

- Stop immediately if you feel uncomfortable or suspect an injury
- Insert key personal appointments that may prevent you from training on a particular day (weddings, birthdays etc.)
- Save and keep this plan somewhere you will be able to easily access it
- Record the distance you run against each session, and your average pace, this will enable you to monitor your progress, offering a fantastic motivational boost as you tick off each week
- Record any key notes from your runs, like if a run felt really good, or really bad. Then consider why this might have happened and learn from it

DON'T

- If for some reason you miss a session, don't try and make it up later in the week, simply move onto the next session
- Be tempted to do more than the plan says, especially if you are new to these types of challenges

Key notes

- **Easy pace:** This is exactly what it says, it should be nice & steady, if your heart is pumping hard and your breathing is heavy, you are running too fast. Many people struggle to run because they are trying to run too fast, take it steady and you will see quicker progress with your training.
- **Hills:** The hill you use for the 'hills' session will depend on what you have near to where you live, the steeper the better, but any hill will work. if you have the option, increase the steepness of the hill as the plan progresses
- **Intervals:** This is where you CAN run fast. Make sure the warm up and cool down are very slow, when running the fast part of the interval, run at 8/10 effort (slightly quicker than 5km pace). On the slow part of the interval, it is okay to walk if you need to, this is a rest period. It is better to pick a flat place to do this session.
- **Cross training:** This is beneficial, and what you choose to do will depend on your competence in other sports, maybe you already go to the gym, or run, cycle or swim? If that is the case, stick to those activities. You can also mix it up from week to week
- **Other sports count too:** If you are struggling for something to do, simply add in an extra short run or walk if you have the time
- **Kit:** Make sure you have the appropriate trainers to run with. Wearing the wrong trainers can cause serious injury and may prevent you completing the plan. If you need to get some trainers, go to a reputable running shop and have your running gait analysed, they should then be able to recommend the best shoes for you
- **Nutrition:** Make sure you eat well before, during and after any exercise. Experiment with food that works for you during your longer runs, you don't need to buy 'sports nutrition' unless you want to, simply take you like to eat, and aim to eat little and often when walking (every 30-45 minutes is ideal)

Strength sessions

These sessions don't require any equipment and can be done at home, they don't take long. Click the link for instruction on how to do the exercise.

Mobility and control

Warm-up:

- [High knees slow](#) – 2 x 30 seconds
- [Shoulder taps](#) – 2 x 20 (10 per side)

Main set:

- [Bird dog](#) – 3 x 12 per side
- [Side lunge](#) – 4 x 12 per side
- [Fire hydrants](#) – 4 x 12 per side
- [Cobra hold](#) – 4 x 20 second hold

Cool-down:

- [Pigeon stretch](#) – 30 second hold per side
- [Scorpion stretch](#) – 10 slow reps (5 per side)

Core stability

Warm-up:

- [Shoulder taps](#) – 2 x 20 (10 per side)
- [Reverse lunge with knee drive](#) – 2 x 10 per side

Main set:

- [Bird dog](#) – 3 x 10 per side
- [Side plank with hip drops](#) – 3 x 10 per side
- [Dead bug](#) – 3 x 12
- [Cobra hold](#) – 3 x 15 second hold

Cool-down:

- [Pigeon stretch](#) – 30 second hold per side
- [Scorpion stretch](#) – 10 slow reps (5 per side)

Phase 1

| | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday | Sunday |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------------------|---|--|--|--------|-----------------------------|--------|
| w/c 19 th May | | Easy pace run – 3 miles | Strength - core stability | Easy pace run – 3 miles | | Easy pace run – 6 miles | |
| w/c 26 th May | | Easy pace run – 3 miles | Strength- core stability | Easy pace run – 3 miles | | Easy pace run – 7 miles | |
| w/c 2 nd June | Strength – mobility & control | Intervals – 3 miles 1 MILE: EASY PACE WARM UP 1 MILE: 1 MIN FAST, 1 MIN SLOW 1 MILE: EASY PACE COOL DOWN | Easy pace run – 3 miles Strength – core stability | Hills – 3 miles 1 MILE: EASY PACE WARM UP 1 MILE: 30 SEC SPRINT UP HILL, SLOW JOG OR WALK BACK DOWN, REPEAT FOR DISTANCE 1 MILE: EASY PACE COOL DOWN | | Easy pace run – 8 miles | |
| w/c 9 th June | Strength – mobility & control | Intervals – 3 miles 1 MILE: EASY PACE WARM UP 1 MILE: 1 MIN FAST, 1 MIN SLOW 1 MILE: EASY PACE COOL DOWN | Easy pace run – 4 miles Strength – core stability | Hills – 3 miles 1 MILE: EASY PACE WARM UP 1 MILE: 30 SEC SPRINT UP HILL, SLOW JOG OR WALK BACK DOWN, REPEAT FOR DISTANCE 1 MILE: EASY PACE COOL DOWN | | Easy pace run – 10 miles | |

Phase 2

| | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday | Sunday |
|------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--|--|---|--------|-----------------------------|--------|
| w/c 16 th June | | Easy pace run – 3 miles | | Easy pace run – 3 miles | | Easy pace run – 6 miles | |
| w/c 23 rd June | Strength – mobility & control | Intervals – 3 miles 1 MILE: EASY PACE WARM UP 1 MILE: 1 MIN FAST, 1 MIN SLOW 1 MILE: EASY PACE COOL DOWN | Easy pace run – 5 miles Strength – core stability | Hills – 3 miles 1 MILE: EASY PACE WARM UP 1 MILE: 30 SEC SPRINT UP HILL, SLOW JOG OR WALK BACK DOWN, REPEAT FOR DISTANCE 1 MILE: EASY PACE COOL DOWN | | Easy pace run – 12 miles | |
| w/c 30 th June | Strength – mobility & control | Intervals – 4 miles 1 MILE: EASY PACE WARM UP 2 MILES: 1 MIN FAST, 1 MIN SLOW 1 MILE: EASY PACE COOL DOWN | Easy pace run – 5 miles Strength – core stability | Hills – 4 miles 1 MILE: EASY PACE WARM UP 2 MILES: 30 SEC SPRINT UP HILL, SLOW JOG OR WALK BACK DOWN, REPEAT FOR DISTANCE 1 MILE: EASY PACE COOL DOWN | | Easy pace run – 14 miles | |
| w/c 7 th July | Strength – mobility & control | Intervals – 4 miles 1 MILE: EASY PACE WARM UP 2 MILES: 2 MIN FAST, 1 MIN SLOW 1 MILE: EASY PACE COOL DOWN | Easy pace run – 6 miles Strength – core stability | Hills – 4 miles 1 MILE: EASY PACE WARM UP 2 MILES: 30 SEC SPRINT UP HILL, SLOW JOG OR WALK BACK DOWN, REPEAT FOR DISTANCE 1 MILE: EASY PACE COOL DOWN | | Easy pace run – 16 miles | |

Phase 3

| | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday | Sunday |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--|--|---|--------|-----------------------------|--------------|
| w/c 14 th July | Strength – mobility & control | Intervals – 4 miles 1 MILE: EASY PACE WARM UP 2 MILES: 2 MIN FAST, 1 MIN SLOW 1 MILE: EASY PACE COOL DOWN | Easy pace run – 6 miles Strength – core stability | Hills – 5 miles 1 MILE: EASY PACE WARM UP 3 MILES: 30 SEC SPRINT UP HILL, SLOW JOG OR WALK BACK DOWN, REPEAT FOR DISTANCE 1 MILE: EASY PACE COOL DOWN | | Easy pace run – 18 miles | |
| w/c 21 st July | | Easy pace run – 4 miles | | Easy pace run – 4 miles | | Easy pace urn – 6 miles | |
| w/c 28 th July | Strength – mobility & control | Intervals – 5 miles 1 MILE: EASY PACE WARM UP 3 MILES: 1 MIN FAST, 1 MIN SLOW 1 MILE: EASY PACE COOL DOWN | Easy pace run – 6 miles Strength – core stability | Hills - 5 miles 1 MILE: EASY PACE WARM UP 3 MILES: 30 SEC SPRINT UP HILL, SLOW JOG OR WALK BACK DOWN, REPEAT FOR DISTANCE 1 MILE: EASY PACE COOL DOWN | | Easy pace run – 18 miles | Walk 2 miles |
| w/c 4 th August | Strength – mobility & control | Intervals – 5 miles 1 MILE: EASY PACE WARM UP 3 MILES: 2 MIN FAST, 1 MIN SLOW 1 MILE: EASY PACE COOL DOWN | Easy pace run – 6 miles Strength – core stability | Hills – 5 miles 1 MILE: EASY PACE WARM UP 3 MILES: 30 SEC SPRINT UP HILL, SLOW JOG OR WALK BACK DOWN, REPEAT FOR DISTANCE 1 MILE: EASY PACE COOL DOWN | | Easy pace run – 20 miles | Walk 2 miles |

Phase 4

| | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday | Sunday |
|----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--|--|---|-------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------|
| w/c 11 th August | Strength – mobility & control | Intervals – 5 miles 1 MILE: EASY PACE WARM UP 3 MILES: 2 MIN FAST, 1 MIN SLOW 1 MILE: EASY PACE COOL DOWN | Easy pace run – 6 miles Strength – core stability | Hills – 5 miles 1 MILE: EASY PACE WARM UP 3 MILES: 30 SEC SPRINT UP HILL, SLOW JOG OR WALK BACK DOWN, REPEAT FOR DISTANCE 1 MILE: EASY PACE COOL DOWN | | Easy pace run – 22 miles | Walk 3 miles |
| w/c 18 th August | Strength – mobility & control | Intervals – 5 miles 1 MILE: EASY PACE WARM UP 3 MILES: 2 MIN FAST, 1 MIN SLOW 1 MILE: EASY PACE COOL DOWN | Easy pace run – 6 miles Strength – core stability | Hills – 5 miles 1 MILE: EASY PACE WARM UP 3 MILES: 30 SEC SPRINT UP HILL, SLOW JOG OR WALK BACK DOWN, REPEAT FOR DISTANCE 1 MILE: EASY PACE COOL DOWN | | Easy pace run – 24 miles | Walk 3 miles |
| w/c 25 th August | | Easy pace run – 4 miles | | Easy pace run – 3 miles | | Easy pace run – 6 miles | |
| w/c 1 st September | | Easy pace run – 3 miles | | | Race day! 26.2 miles | | |