

### **WHO IS THE PLAN FOR?**

This training plan is designed for runners with some experience under their belts and ideally, for those who have completed a full marathon. This means that they are familiar with the dedication needed to train consistently and have experience finding a balance between running and the stresses of daily life. The plan is 20 weeks long, so some prior fitness is required. Ideally, if you have been running for 3-4 days per week for more than six weeks you should be able to follow the plan as-is.

### **HOW MANY DAYS A WEEK WILL I NEED TO RUN?**

Since the plan is geared to beginner ultrarunners, there are five running workouts per week and two rest days. One of the rest days can be an active rest day with up to 60 minutes of low-intensity cross-training, but at least one day per week should be a full rest.

### **HOW MANY MILES PER WEEK WILL I NEED TO RUN?**

The focus of the plan is less on mileage and more about the time on your feet - but loosely, your maximum mileage per week will be 50-70 miles per week for the 50k and 50-mile plans and 70-100 miles per week for the 100k and 100-mile plans. The time it takes to run a certain distance varies according to weather conditions, time of year, elevation, and terrain and for that reason, we prescribe based on time.

### **DO I NEED FANCY TECH TO FOLLOW THE PLAN?**

Not unless you want to wear fancy tech. All workouts are prescribed according to Rate of Perceived Exertion (RPE), rather than by pace or by HR. Since ultrarunners train on varied terrain in a greater variety of conditions than the typical marathon runner, it's a challenge to prescribe workouts the way you might be used to. More on the workouts and how to use RPE to follow.

### **WHAT IF A MARATHON IS THE LONGEST DISTANCE I HAVE EVER RUN?**

No problem - you will work up to the distance as you go. This plan is all about maximizing your training time so that you can train smarter, not just longer. We recommend that you plan one or two other races (or race simulations) as you work up to your goal race.

### **WHAT IF I MISS A WORKOUT DUE TO FAMILY/WORK COMMITMENT OR ILLNESS?**

Life happens and even the best plans don't always work for one reason or another. Depending on the training phase you are in and the workout you missed, you can swap it with a planned rest day that week. Just make sure that by replacing your rest day, you aren't stacking two intense sessions (like running intervals or tempo runs) back to back. You also don't want to stack an extra running day before your back-to-back weekend runs. It's okay if you have to miss a session entirely, especially if you have been sick. Take an extra rest day when you need it.

### **TAKE REST DAYS AND RECOVERY WEEKS SERIOUSLY**

Consistency is key. By taking your recovery days easy, and full advantage of your recovery phases, you will grow and adapt from phase to phase. Avoid the temptation to run harder on your Recovery Run days or longer during your Recovery Phases.

### **WHAT IS RATE OF PERCEIVED EXERTION?**

On this plan, you will use a simplified 1-10 scale to note your Rate of Perceived Exertion (RPE), with 1 being no effort at all and 10 being a maximum effort. Using this scale, an Endurance Run or "forever" pace would be a 5 or a 6, a Steady State Run would be a 7, a Tempo Run pace would be an 8 or a 9, and a Running Interval pace would be a solid 10. In contrast, a Recovery Run pace would be at a 4 or 5.

# THE WORKOUTS

There will be four main phases of training, each with a specific focus on one of the workouts outlined in the chart below. They are listed in order of intensity, from highest to lowest.

## THE RIGHT STRUCTURE FOR INTERVAL WORKOUTS

Many training programs, including this one, will define precise warm up and cool down periods to bookend specific interval work. Typically, the warm up and cool down periods are exactly 15 minutes each and the number is not magical. Therefore, when the Endurance Run duration defines the total time of the workout, it's intended for the intervals to be completed within that time. For instance, a 2-hour Endurance Run with  $3 \times 10$  minute Tempo Run and five minutes recovery between intervals means: "Run a total of 2 hours and within those two hours complete three 10-minute Tempo Run efforts, separated by 5 minutes at Recovery Run pace." This gives you a flexible amount of time for the warm up and cool down periods. The only strict parameters are that the warm up be between 10 and 30 minutes and the cool down be at least 10 minutes.

A proper warm up should also include 4-8 Running Strides of 20 seconds each after the warm up time and before any intervals. Running Strides (commonly called strides, stride outs or striders) are short high intensity intervals intended to gradually get the body used to operating at a high intensity. They are typically between 10k and 5k race pace for the 20 seconds. Rest between each Running Stride is one minute.

## RUNNING INTERVALS (RI)

Running Intervals are maximal efforts lasting 1 to 3 minutes. The RPE for these efforts is 10. Because of the high intensity of these workouts, it is a good idea to warm up with 15-30 minutes of Endurance Run and 6 to 8 strides of Running Strides of 20 seconds each. As you start the interval, accelerate over 15 to 20 seconds to the highest intensity you can sustain for the remainder of the interval. The recovery periods between Running Interval efforts are purposely too short to allow for full recovery because part of the training stimulus comes from starting the next high-intensity effort before you're completely recovered from the previous one. During the recovery periods, slow to a jog, or you can slow to a hike if you need to, but keep moving. These intervals can be done on any terrain or even on a treadmill, but it's recommended to run them uphill if possible to reach the correct intensity more consistently. Some athletes get confused by what "RPE of 10/10" means for Running Intervals. A maximal 3-minute interval will be slower than a maximal 2-minute effort. One mistake some athletes make is to start a Running Interval like a sprint. To avoid this, ramp up into the effort by accelerating over the first 15-20 seconds of the interval to the highest intensity you can maintain through the end of the effort. Will you slow down in the final 30-45 seconds of a Running Interval? Yes, and that's OK. When these efforts are done correctly, you are running at a pace you can barely sustain for the duration of the interval, and slowing down slightly in the final 30 seconds of the effort is a sign that you've pushed yourself appropriately.

## TEMPO RUN (TR)

Tempo Run intervals are a crucial workout for making you a faster and stronger runner. The pace and intensity for these intervals are strenuous, and you will be running slightly below or at your lactate threshold intensity. It has long been said that you can't become a faster runner without first running faster in training, and that's exactly what these intervals do. They help to drive the process of increasing the size and density of mitochondria in your muscles, improving your ability to process and utilize lactate. Tempo Runs also increase your ability to manage core temperature. Tempo Run intervals should be run at an RPE of 8 or 9.

## **STEADY STATE RUN (SSR)**

A Steady State Run workout pushes you to a challenging aerobic pace but keeps you below your lactate threshold intensity and pace. This intensity plays a very important role in developing a stronger aerobic engine because you are maintaining an effort level greater than your normal “forever” pace. You are generating more lactate and working to process it, but not creating so much that you can’t sustain the effort level for prolonged periods. The RPE for SSR is 7, and as with Endurance Run workouts, you need to be careful not to let your intensity level creep up toward lactate threshold territory (RPE 8-9) on hills. The important distinction between SSR and Endurance Run is that the duration defines the intensity of the effort. Endurance Run is at an intensity you could maintain from start to finish of a medium or long training run, whereas SSR is at an intensity you cannot sustain as long.

## **ENDURANCE RUN (ER)**

You’re going to spend much of your running time in the Endurance Run intensity range. This is the moderate-intensity running time surrounding your focused interval sets, as well as the “forever” intensity for your Endurance Runs that contain no specific intervals. Perceived exertion for this intensity is 5 or 6 and will naturally vary with uphill and downhill. Endurance Run durations range from 30 minutes to more than 6 hours. A typical workout would be a 2-hour Endurance Run. When you are running at this intensity, however, it is important to slow down when you begin going uphill. It can be easy for your intensity level to creep up into Steady State Run or Tempo Run territory, and then you are adding training stress and using energy you may need and want later.

## **RECOVERY RUN (RR)**

To be effective, a Recovery Run needs to be very easy. All you’re trying to do is loosen up your legs and increase circulation and respiration with some mild activity. Perceived exertion for a Recovery Run is about a 4 or 5, so it’s not a leisurely walk, but it should be substantially easier than an Endurance Run.

PHASE	WEEK	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
Running Intervals	1	Rest Day	15 min warm up 5 x 3 min RI 3 min RBI 15 min cool down	45 min Recovery Run	15 min warm up 5 x 3 min RI 3 min RBI 15 min cool down	Rest Day	1:00 Endurance Run	45 min Recovery Run
	2	Rest Day	15 min warm up 5 x 3 min RI 3 min RBI 15 min cool down	30 min Recovery Run	15 min warm up 4 x 3 min RI 3 min RBI 15 min cool down	Rest Day	1:30 Endurance Run	45 min Recovery Run
	3	Rest Day	15 min warm up 4 x 3 min RI 3 min RBI 15 min cool down	30 min Recovery Run	15 min warm up 4 x 3 min RI 3 min RBI 15 min cool down	Rest Day	1:30 Endurance Run	45 min Recovery Run
Recovery	4	Rest Day	45 min Recovery Run	45 min Recovery Run	45 min Recovery Run	Rest Day	15 min warm up 4 x 3 min RI 3 min RBI 15 min cool down	1:30 Endurance Run
Tempo Runs	5	Rest Day	15 min warm up 3 x 10 min TR 5 min RBI 15 min cool down	45 min Recovery Run	15 min warm up 3 x 10 min TR 5 min RBI 15 min cool down	Rest Day	1:30 Endurance Run with 3 x 8 min TR; 4 min RBI	45 min Recovery Run
	6	Rest Day	15 min warm up 3 x 10 min TR 5 min RBI 15 min cool down	30 min Recovery Run	15 min warm up 3 x 8 min TR 4 min RBI 15 min cool down	Rest Day	1:30 Endurance Run with 3 x 8 min TR; 4 min RBI	45 min Recovery Run
	7	Rest Day	15 min warm up 3 x 8 min TR 4 min RBI 15 min cool down	30 min Recovery Run	15 min warm up 3 x 8 min TR 4 min RBI 15 min cool down	Rest Day	1:30 Endurance Run with 3 x 8 min TR; 4 min RBI	1:00 Endurance Run
	8	Rest Day	15 min warm up 3 x 8 min TR 4 min RBI 15 min cool down	30 min Recovery Run	45 min Recovery Run	Rest Day	2:00 Endurance Run	1:00 Endurance Run
Recovery	9	Rest Day	45 min Recovery Run	45 min Recovery Run	45 min Recovery Run	Rest Day	1:30 Endurance Run with 3 x 8 min TR; 4 min RBI	2:00 Endurance Run
Steady State Runs	10	Rest Day	1:30 Endurance Run with 2 x 30 min SSR; 5 min RBI	45 min Recovery Run	1:00 Endurance Run	Rest Day	Ideal 13k race or race simulation with 2 x 30 min SSR; 5 min RBI	30 min Recovery Run
	11	Rest Day	1:30 Endurance Run with 2 x 30 min SSR; 5 min RBI	45 min Recovery Run	1:30 Endurance Run with 2 x 20 min SSR; 5 min RBI	Rest Day	1:30 Endurance Run with 2 x 20 min SSR; 5 min RBI	1:00 Endurance Run
	12	Rest Day	1:30 Endurance Run with 2 x 20 min SSR; 5 min RBI	45 min Recovery Run	1:30 Endurance Run with 1 x 30 min SSR	Rest Day	1:30 Endurance Run with 2 x 20 min SSR; 5 min RBI	1:00 Endurance Run
	13	Rest Day	1:45 Endurance Run with 2 x 20 min SSR; 5 min RBI	45 min Recovery Run	1:30 Endurance Run with 1 x 30 min SSR	Rest Day	2:00 Endurance Run	3:00 Endurance Run

RI: Running Interval TR: Tempo Run SSR: Steady State Run RBI: Rest Between Intervals

PHASE	WEEK	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
Recovery	14	Rest Day	45 min Recovery Run	45 min Recovery Run	45 min Recovery Run	Rest Day	1:00 Endurance Run with 2 x 20 min SSR; 5 min RBI	1:30 Endurance Run
Endurance Runs On Race Terrain	15	Rest Day	1:30 Endurance Run with 2 x 30 min SSR; 5 min RBI	45 min Recovery Run	1:30 Endurance Run with 2 x 30 min SSR; 5 min RBI	Rest Day	Ideal 26K race or race simulation with 2 x 30 min SSR; 5 min RBI	45 min Recovery Run
	16	Rest Day	45 min Recovery Run	1:30 Endurance Run with 2 x 30 min SSR; 5 min RBI	45 min Recovery Run	Rest Day	2:00 Endurance Run with 2 x 30 min SSR; 5 min RBI	2:00 Endurance Run
	17	Rest Day	1:30 Endurance Run with 2 x 30 min SSR; 5 min RBI	45 min Recovery Run	1:30 Endurance Run with 2 x 20 min SSR; 5 min RBI	Rest Day	2:00 Endurance Run with 2 x 30 min SSR; 5 min RBI	1:00 Endurance Run
Taper	18	Rest Day	45 min Endurance Run with 1 x 20 min SSR	45 min Recovery Run	45 min Endurance Run with 1 x 20 min SSR	Rest Day	1:00 Endurance Run	30 min Recovery Run
	19	Rest Day	45 min Endurance Run with 1 x 20 min SSR	30 min Recovery Run	45 min Endurance Run with 1 x 20 min SSR	Rest Day	1:00 Endurance Run	Rest Day
	20	Rest Day	45 min Endurance Run with 1 x 20 min SSR	30 min Recovery Run	30 min Recovery Run	Rest Day	<b>RACE DAY!</b>	Rest Day

RI: Running Interval TR: Tempo Run SSR: Steady State Run RBI: Rest Between Intervals