

Welcome to the Half Marathon Tips

NOTE: THE SERVICE OFFERED ON THIS WEB SITE IS FOR EDUCATIONAL AND INFORMATION PURPOSES ONLY.

Firstly and Importantly a Recommendation

It is recommended that any potential participant not currently involved in physical sporting activity, should undertake a medical examination before taking part in the Half Marathon.

Tick.. Tock. Countdown time

So here we are... Not long to go! By now you have completed your longest 'long run'. It's time to start winding it down so you are full of energy for the Half Marathon. Continue your running programme - it will bring you gradually to your Taper week. There is no point in bursting yourself to get long runs in now – you really won't get much fitter and you will stress your body. If you are not on a training programme work it that you reduce your training by 25% each week. If you are really getting itchy feet with the slowdown in training consider swimming or cycling – low impact sports.

The last week before the Half Marathon also known as the Taper week you should be getting your mind and body ready for the race. Generally speaking a 5km run on Monday, a 4km walk on Wednesday should be sufficient specific time to be spending on your feet in preparation for the Half Marathon. I repeat you won't get any fitter going for a long run 7 days before the Half.

Now how do you get your mind right. 1) If you live near the course – why not drive it so you are familiar with it. 2) Read the website and become familiar with the timings of things. Print off the info you need 3) Make out a list of what you need for the day. Include the items you got in registration (if you registered on the Saturday or Sunday).

Start Carbohydrate loading on the last week. Increase your intake by 60 – 70% from Thursday. If you have been consistent with increasing your Carb's as you trained, your body will store the excess in preparation for Sunday. Fear not if you haven't – the body will still store a level of Carbohydrate naturally that will give you the energy.

Continue keeping the body well hydrated. We are talking water here and not Tea, Coffee or a pint of Stout! And do some stretching – maybe get a massage?! Note: get the massage by Wednesday latest. They can be dehydrating. Cut your toe nails (remember that one?).

Day before – Chill out. It's natural to have some level of the jitters. Its nervous energy – your body is fuelled and ready to go. Remember you can't do any more training now. You have checked your gear 3 times and it's still correct so things are out of your hands. You know your plan for the morning etc. Check the weather forecast to see if it changes any of your plans. Then it's easy to say this but....Chill out! Get a DVD or something to relax. Go to bed early – even if you don't sleep straight away you are still resting your body. Don't wait until you are tired. It might not happen under the circumstances. 8 hours in the bed min. Make sure the alarm is set....

Race Day – Keep the head and go through the motions. Slow down your movements. Start in control first thing in the morning and continue as you mean to go on. Eat your normal healthy breakfast. Don't try anything new – this is a common mistake ppl make. If you haven't tried it before no matter what someone says – don't stick it in your gob. I'm talking about Sports Gels and bars etc. Stick on your running clothes at home if applicable – it can be easier here than the side of a car. Get the Vaseline on in those sensitive spots. Depending on the weather you should have extra clothes with you for A)

Coastal Breeze B) Changing back into when finished – putting them in your Dry Clothes bag. Arrive early – that takes a lot of the stress out of it. If it's blowing a gale and lashing rain bring a bin bag and make a Poncho out of it (a hole for your head and two arms). This will keep you dry and shield you from the wind. Just before the start take it off. Make sure you put it in a Bin. Stuffing it in a crack in a wall or jamming it under a tyre won't do. Nothing looks worse than seeing them blowing in the wind later. Hint,hint.

Do some light jogging followed by stretching. Have a bottle of water with you to stay hydrated. Keep an eye on the clock and don't wander too far. Keep the body moving. Get to the toilet. When the runners are called - if you are not planning on winning the race pls don't go to the front of the race. Exercise courtesy for your fellow runners.

Take the pace out AT YOUR PACE – not the person in front of you. Relax into it and enjoy.

Eoin Ryan (Ultra Marathon Runner)