

# Training for a Marathon

The Individual Marathon distance is 42,195 meters. The Half Marathon distance is 21,097 meters.

Dates in parentheses are suggested timetable if you are planning to participate in the [Global Marathon Challenge](#) in late April every year.

## TRAINING

**Basic Groundwork:** The 10,000 meter row. You should complete at least ten 10,000 meter rows over the course of a month or two, before you move on to longer training pieces. (January-February)

**Building Up:** Next, complete four one-hour rows and then two 20,000 meter efforts spread out over a 4 week period. Any of these rows can be completed in an interval or repetition format to make them more interesting and varied. For example, a 60 minute row can be divided up by rowing at a moderate pace for 2:30, then rowing easy for :30, and repeating this pattern. Or 20,000 meters can be done by rowing 500 meters @22 spm, 300 meters @24 spm, 200@ 26spm and repeating this sequence 20 times. In these longer rows, try drinking and eating a little, to see how it goes, and what tastes good and settles well. (March)

**In Between the Long Rows:** When you are not doing one of the longer rows in training you should be working for about 30-45 minutes, with a variety of workouts to keep the rowing lively and fresh.

**Testing for Comfort:** Do one 30,000 meter row 10-12 days before your marathon to alert you to any issues that must be addressed before you try the 42,195. This will give you a chance to see how well your hands and seat will do for the long haul. You should also use this longer row to test the foods and drinks that you plan to use during your marathon effort. (early April)

## TAKING CARE OF YOURSELF

You should always do this, but it is especially important before a marathon:

- Stay well hydrated.
- Listen to your body as to when to rest.
- Consider rowing at different times of the day to increase the amount of time between certain workouts, ie: 7 am Tuesday and 5 pm Wednesday.
- Keep track of your training and resting heart rate. If either increase away from the norm over a three-day period, the body is saying it needs rest or sickness may be around the corner.

## PACING

Pay attention to your pace as you train for the marathon. Be careful NOT to start out too hard! It always feels great when you start - especially if you are excited. However, it is important that you start at a pace that you know you will be able to maintain.

If you can row 2000 meters around 7:00 pace, you should be able to row the marathon in under 3 hours - if your body and mind can tolerate the effort for that long.

If your training pace is more like 2:15-2:20, expect your marathon to take 3:15 or longer.

Rowing a marathon is about staying focused, knowing the training is there to complete it and staying positive when the little aches and pains arise.

## COMFORT

Throughout your Marathon preparation, pay attention to all of the following things. Be sure you know how to make yourself comfortable on the rower.

- **Damper setting/drag factor:** It is important to know not just the damper setting, but the drag factor at which you are most comfortable rowing. For more information about Drag Factor, see this page: [Drag Factor](#).
- **Seat:** We find that variety is the key for seat comfort on long rows. Have a seat pad handy (call us for a free pad - sorry, US and Canada only) and several sheets of "bubble wrap". Bubble wrap works great for us!
- **Foot height:** Be sure you know the most comfortable foot height setting for you.
- **Hands:** We don't use gloves, but some people swear by them. If you plan to use them, be sure to test them by using them throughout your training as well. If your hands are pretty tough, but you're worried about getting some "hot spots", we again recommend some pieces of bubble wrap handy. If you feel any hot spots, grab a piece and wrap it around the handle. It will offer a break from the friction.
- **Sweat and other bodily fluids:** Have a towel handy for drying hands and face. Have tissues handy in case you need to blow your nose. Know how to find the closest bathroom in case you end up being too well-hydrated!
- **Stretch breaks:** Sometimes a brief stretch break can really help. Try this and see if it works for you. The PM2 will shut down automatically after four minutes of inactivity, so be sure to keep your breaks under four minutes or keep pressing the "Change Display" button to keep the monitor alive.

## AND A FEW FINAL WORDS OF ADVICE

Enjoy this challenging event. If it gets so it's not fun - perhaps you should bail out and settle for a half-marathon.

You don't have to race the marathon - it's enough of an achievement just to finish it!

If your first attempt is not successful - try it again another time.

## GOOD LUCK!

## PRE-MARATHON ERG MAINTENANCE

**Home or individually-owned machines** don't need very much regular maintenance, but if you haven't been doing any, this would be a good time to do it.

**Club or institutionally-owned machines** should be getting more regular maintenance. But again, if this hasn't been done, now is a great time to do it!

- Wipe off the monorail.
- Oil the chain.
- Make sure the PM2 has fresh batteries.

## FOOD & DRINK FOR THE MARATHON

In your training, experiment with different liquids. We suggest having both water and dilute sports drink. Or maybe you prefer full-strength sports drink. See what works best for you. For energy food, we've seen everything from chocolate bars to power bars; and nuts to fresh fruit. It's really important that you try some of these things in training, so you'll know what to bring for the real event. Even if you don't think you're going to want or need to eat, it's a good idea to have something handy in case you go out too hard and "hit the wall".

## ENVIRONMENT & ENTERTAINMENT

Some people like to watch videos. Others like loud music. Other books on tape. Still others want nothing to distract them from the numbers on the PM2.

We have found that it really helps to have a group of people rowing together; but others may prefer a solo attempt.

Consider moving your rower to a new location for the event. Bring it up from the basement and put it in the living room - so you can feel part of the family while you row.

Again, use your training rows to determine what works best for you.