

# **12-Week Beginner Trail Half Marathon Plan for 2026 Juneteenth Half Marathon**

*Designed by Vicky Adams, RRCA Certified Running Coach and Founder of Own Your Tempo, LLC*

## **How to Use This Plan**

This plan is a GUIDE for you to confidently complete your trail half marathon where you will run by effort and not by pace. Trail terrain will naturally affect speed and time on your feet is important. Consistency always matters more than perfection.

## **Key Running Terms**

*RPE (Rate of Perceived Exertion):* A way to measure how hard a run feels.

*Pickups/ Speed-Ups:* Short 20-30 second smooth accelerations. Not sprinting.

*Hill Efforts:* Short uphill segments at a strong but controlled effort. Walk or jog down to recover.

*Long Run:* Your longest run of the week. Focus on endurance and terrain control.

*Cutback Week:* A lighter week to allow recovery and adaptation.

*Taper:* Reduced mileage before race day to feel fresh.

## **Effort Guide**

Easy (RPE 4-5): Conversational effort.

Steady (RPE 6-7): Breathing heavier but controlled.

Strong (RPE 7-8): Short hill efforts only.

## **Optional Strength & Mobility**

Trail running emphasizes higher demands on hips, glutes, core, calves, and ankles. Consider adding 1-2 short strength sessions per week (20-30 minutes) focusing on glute stability, single-leg balance, core control, calf strength, and ankle mobility. These sessions should be kept light during peak training weeks and not recommended the day before a long run.

## **Treadmill Guide (for indoor treadmill replacement runs)**

Easy runs: 1% incline.

Steady efforts: 2-3% incline.

Hill intervals: 6-8% incline.

Long runs: 2% base incline with occasional short rolling segments.

## **Week 1**

Tues - 40 min easy (4 miles)

Wed - 35 min steady (3.5 miles)

Fri - 35 min easy (3.5 miles)

Sat - 75 min trail (6.5 miles)  
**Total: 3 hr 5 min (17.5 miles)**

### Week 2

Tues - 45 min easy (4.5 miles)  
Wed - 40 min steady (4 miles)  
Fri - 35 min easy (3.5 miles)  
Sat - 80 min trail (7 miles)  
**Total: 3 hr 20 min (19 miles)**

### Week 3

Tues - 45 min easy (4.5 miles)  
Wed - 40 min steady (4 miles)  
Fri - 40 min easy (4 miles)  
Sat - 85 min trail (7.5 miles)  
**Total: 3 hr 30 min (20 miles)**

### Week 4 (Cutback)

Tues - 40 min easy (4 miles)  
Wed - 35 min steady (3.5 miles)  
Fri - 30 min easy (3 miles)  
Sat - 75 min trail (7.5 miles)  
**Total: 3 hr 0 min (18 miles)**

### Week 5

Tues - 50 min easy (5 miles)  
Wed - 45 min steady (4.5 miles)  
Fri - 40 min easy (4 miles)  
Sat - 90 min trail (8.5 miles)  
**Total: 3 hr 45 min (22 miles)**

### Week 6

Tues - 50 min easy (5 miles)  
Wed - 45 min steady (4.5 miles)  
Fri - 45 min easy (4.5 miles)  
Sat - 100 min trail (9 miles)  
**Total: 4 hr 0 min (23 miles)**

### Week 7

Tues - 50 min easy (5 miles)

Wed - 50 min steady (5 miles)  
Fri - 45 min easy (4.5 miles)  
Sat - 105 min trail (9.5 miles)  
**Total: 4 hr 10 min (24 miles)**

### **Week 8** (*Cutback*)

Tues - 40 min easy (4 miles)  
Wed - 40 min steady (4 miles)  
Fri - 35 min easy (3.5 miles)  
Sat - 85 min trail (7.5 miles)  
**Total: 3 hr 20 min (19 miles)**

### **Week 9**

Tues - 55 min easy (5.5 miles)  
Wed - 50 min steady (5 miles)  
Fri - 45 min easy (4.5 miles)  
Sat - 110 min trail (10 miles)  
**Total: 4 hr 20 min (25 miles)**

### **Week 10**

Tues - 55 min easy (5.5 miles)  
Wed - 50 min steady (5 miles)  
Fri - 45 min easy (4.5 miles)  
Sat - 120 min trail (11 miles)  
**Total: 4 hr 30 min (26 miles)**

### **Week 11**

Tues - 50 min easy (5 miles)  
Wed - 45 min steady (4.5 miles)  
Fri - 40 min easy (4 miles)  
Sat - 130 min trail (12 miles)  
Total: 4 hr 45 min (25.5 miles)

### **Week 12** (*Taper*)

Tues - 40 min easy (4 miles)  
Wed - 35 min steady (3.5 miles)  
Fri - 30 min easy (3 miles)  
**Sat - Race Day (2 hr 45 min / 13.1 miles)**  
**Total: 4 hr 30 min (23.6 miles)**