



Frederick Steeplechasers Marathon Training Program Information

Training Program Purpose: To prepare runners for their upcoming marathon.



Description:

This program is ideal for the first-time or intermediate marathoner and is a great way to improve your running and meet other runners in our community. Each participant is given a training plan, including recommendations for mileage, cross-training, and days off. While some runs will need to be done independently, volunteer coaches lead group runs twice a week. Group runs are encouraged but not mandatory. A private Facebook page provides a place to coordinate additional runs with other participants and get support and advice from more experienced participants and your volunteer coaches. We try our best to answer your questions or connect you with someone who can.

Cost:

\$0 for current Steeplechasers members.

Prerequisites:

To help protect against injury, we *strongly* recommend you are:

- Consistently running 4 days a week or more for at least 6 months
- Comfortable running 8-10 mile long runs
- Comfortable running hills and tempo runs
- Have your physician's blessing if you have some sort of medical issue that may affect your participation (heart issues, orthopedic concerns, etc.)

Training Plan:

Each participant will be provided with a training plan, including recommended mileage, group runs, and additional workouts, including runs, cross-training, and strength training. There are two different training plans – Plan A and Plan B.

- *Plan A:* intended for first-time half marathoners, veterans recovering from injury or an extended layoff, runners with limited time to train, and runners that do better with more recovery time.
- *Plan B:* intended for runners that have been regularly running 4+ days a week for several months, with a total weekly mileage consistently in the 26+ mile range. Plan B is better suited for runners who are comfortable racing the marathon distance and just need to fine-tune or get back into race shape.

Be honest with yourself about where your running has been in the past few months before choosing a training plan. Choosing Plan B if you don't have the required base and aren't ready for that level of intensity can lead to injury. If in doubt about which plan you should choose, pick Plan A.

Weekly Group Runs:

Group runs begin promptly. Arrive early to have time to park, pee, whatever. Each run starts with a warm-up and dynamic stretching. Each run ends with static stretches and occasional form drills.

- Tuesdays, 7:00 PM, Rotating between TJ Middle School, Riverside Park Trail, and Ballenger Creek Trail, Frederick
 - Tempo or other moderate paced workout
- Saturdays, 7:00 AM, Various locations in or near Frederick.
 - Conversational pace long run

Pace Groups:

Runners will be placed with runners of similar pace into pace groups, which volunteer pace leaders lead. If you wish to run slower, or faster, please join the pace group that meets your needs. As each pace group finishes, they will do their static stretches and form drills, then depart when ready.

Gear:

- Comfortable running shoes that fit well and are in good shape
- Water bottle and, for the Saturday long run, fuel. Please be prepared to be self-sufficient.
- Bright clothing or bright running vest for road runs. The brighter your clothes, the easier you can be seen by traffic.
- Weather-appropriate clothing. Breathable, wicking synthetic fabrics are best. The general rule is to dress for 20 degrees warmer than the thermometer says.
 - Summer: Hat/visor/sunglasses, sunscreen, extra water
 - Winter: Hats, gloves, warm socks, windproof jacket
 - Below 30: We still run. Adding a buff around the neck that can be pulled up over the mouth and nose for the first few miles, Vaseline to exposed parts of the face, and hand warmers, can significantly increase comfort.
- (Optional) Running watch/GPS or smartphone app (e.g. Strava, Garmin, mapmyrun)

Safety:

- Prior to a run, tell someone else where you are running and when you expect to return.
- Be aware of your surroundings – traffic, potholes, strangers.
- Wear bright clothing to make you more visible to drivers
- For runs in the dark or near dusk/dawn, use a combination of reflective gear, a headlamp, and/or pod lights to see and be seen.
- Carry identification – ROAD ID or license, preferably with emergency contact information.

- Carry a cell phone in case you get lost or need help.
- If you must run on the road: RUN ON THE LEFT, AGAINST TRAFFIC. If a car approaches, drop to single file and warn runners with you loudly (“car up” if the car is approaching from in front of you, “car back” if the car is approaching from behind.) If a car does not seem to be moving over, STEP OFF THE ROAD. Remember, if the sun is to your back, the approaching driver has the sun in their eyes, which significantly reduces their ability to see you.
- At intersections, ASSUME THE DRIVER DOES NOT SEE YOU. Even if they seem to make eye contact with you, be particularly cautious with drivers making right-hand turns as they are generally looking left for traffic and may not see you.
- Do not assume that just because a runner in front of you crosses a street, it is safe for you to cross.
- Headphones: We strongly recommend not wearing headphones during group runs. Hearing is a critical sense when running near cars and other people. If you must run with music, try using only one earbud or bone conduction headphones that do not go into the ear.

Emergencies:

Please put your coaches’ cell numbers in your phone if you get lost or need to let us know you have a longer than usual run. Call loudly for help from runners and/or your pace group leader. (At least one pace leader per group should have a cell phone.) As soon as possible after calling 911, contact your coach by phone.

Weather:

We run in foul weather, but not dangerous weather. We will cancel for severe thunderstorms and severe winter weather. Cancellations will be posted on Facebook. Otherwise, as long as roads/sidewalks are safe, we run in the rain, snow, heat, and cold. Summer thunderstorms present the additional challenge of being very unpredictable. We will take the quickest route back to our cars if we are out on the run and hear thunder. If we can’t get back to our cars safely, we will seek shelter. Frederick has several runner-friendly businesses designated by a sticker in their window.

Hydration and Nutrition:

Proper hydration and nutrition are essential, not only to your performance but to your safety. As we build mileage, you will need to learn to read your body’s cues. There are as many hydration and nutrition strategies as there are runners. Use your fellow runners and coaches as a resource for ideas for methods to try on your runs. As a general rule, though:

- If you are running for more than an hour, you need fuel. This can be Gu’s, real food such as dried fruit or pretzels, or even liquid nutrition such as Tailwind.
- Fuel early and often. Your body will have an easier time digesting small bites. Eat earlier in your runs, so you don’t get into a fuel deficit. The body has a more challenging time digesting when physically spent.

- The hotter it is, the more you sweat and need more hydration. This hydration should include some sort of electrolyte intake – electrolyte drink, salt tabs, even pretzels, or other salty foods.
- The colder it is, the less you will feel like you need to drink. Drink anyway.
- Keep it simple. The best fuel is easily-digestible, simpler carbs. Heavy proteins and high fiber foods are difficult to digest while running.
- Eat and hydrate well in the days leading up to your long runs. For runs in the heat, consume a little extra salt the day before the run to help you retain fluid.

Pace:

Learning to pace your runs properly is a key element of marathon success.

- 80 to 100% of your mileage will be done at a *conversational pace*, the pace at which you can easily talk. This includes the Saturday long run. Running greater than 20% of your mileage faster than conversational pace is discouraged. It leads to an increased injury rate and fails to develop the cellular changes needed to run longer and faster. Trust us, run slow to run fast.
- 20% or less of your mileage will be done at tempo pace (or harder), a comfortably hard pace but at which you can still speak a few words at a time. Tempo pace develops mental toughness and metabolic fitness.

Leaving a Run Early:

If you need to leave a run early, please notify a pace group leader or your coach. This saves us from trying to find you or waiting unnecessarily for you to finish a run.

Communications:

Before each group run, you will receive an email with a link to our running route. The route will also be posted on the **FSRC Marathon Training** Facebook page. We ask that pace groups also communicate with each other regularly to keep each other motivated and sometimes run together on days that aren't official group runs. You are encouraged to post questions and comments on the Facebook page. Chances are high another runner has the same question, and someone else knows the answer.

Tips for Success:

Training for a marathon is not always easy. You will have great days and not-so-great days. You may even have days where you feel like quitting. Don't. We promise you that the feeling you get when you cross that finish line is well worth the effort. For the best chance of success:

- **Bring a positive attitude.** The more you tell yourself, "I can do this," the more likely you will succeed. You may not fully believe you can, but tell yourself you can anyway.
- **Bring a goal.** Have a goal for the program and every workout. Goals help keep you on track.
- **Be consistent.** Consistently getting out there and running is the number one factor leading to success, even if it is just a short, casual run around the block.
- **Don't fear stepping out of your comfort zone.** Successful runners get comfortable with being uncomfortable. The more you do it, the less frightening it becomes.

- **Ask for help.** Just ask whether you feel overwhelmed or need advice on fueling, hydration, or gear. The Steeplechasers are an eclectic bunch, from brand new runners to runners with lots of experience to professionals with doctoral degrees in relevant fields. Somewhere in there, someone can answer your question. We will help you find that someone.
- **Support the runners around you.** Even just a “good job” or doubling back to run in with another runner can go a long way. That person you support today may well be the person tomorrow that tells you “good job” when you need to hear it most.
- **Remember, we are each in a different place in our fitness journey.** Be inspired by other runners, but don’t compare yourself to them. Regardless of when or why you start, how fast you are, or how far you can go, **WE ARE ALL RUNNERS.**

FREDERICK STEEPLCHASERS RUNNING CLUB MISSION:

To promote running for fitness, friendship, and athletic development, in support of our members and the Frederick community.