

FITNESS PROTECTION



MARATHON RAMP: TENACIOUS AF

Most people start with an outcome and back their way into a training plan. That's like driving a car in reverse on the interstate. If we start by focusing on how fast you NEED to run in order to meet a goal on race day, we are missing one important variable: where you are on Day One of the training plan.

I prefer to start with our easy effort pace, with a heart rate cap at 140 bpm. Our jog. There is a certainty there—you know you can cover the distance by jogging it. How much faster you can go depends on a TON of things, many of which (weather) are out of your control. If you are reading this, you probably aren't afraid to work hard. I'm going to encourage you to work efficiently, meaning "not work harder than you HAVE to". Picking the hardest plan doesn't guarantee the best outcome or fastest finish time on race day, let's pick the one that works best for you TODAY.

If your 140 pace is 14:00, you could jog 26.2 miles in 6 hours and 7 minutes.

If your 140 pace is 9:10, you could jog 26.2 miles in 4 hours.

This is where we begin.



TENACIOUS AF:

For first-time marathoners or anyone whose pace at 140 is > 14 minutes/mile (meaning, you do not reasonably expect to finish your race in less than six hours).



DEDICATED AF:

For those who reasonably expect to break six hours in the marathon but not four (pace at 140 is faster than 14 minutes/mile but slower than 10 minutes/mile).



STEADY AF:

For people who really want a brutal marathon training experience AND can pass the chair test on both legs at the PT AND whose 140 pace is faster than 10 minutes per mile

Here are some other reasons Tenacious AF may be a good match for you:

- Anyone running their first marathon
- Anyone who does Orangetheory Fitness/Crossfit 2-3 times per week and would like to keep that on the schedule
- Anyone facing a stressful race cycle and wants more flexibility in moving workouts around

There's only so much we can do in 16 weeks, and only so much we can do in ten weeks. It's easy to go hard, it's hard to go smart. Let's make these 10 weeks smart AF.



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WEEK

1	60	46	60		60	14/2:50	
2	60	50	60		70	16/3:15	
3	60	55	60		70	14/2:50	
4	EE 60	60	EE 60		70	16/3:15	
5	30	60	EE 30		40	18/3:40	
6	60	60	60		80	20/4:00	
7	60	60	60		80	18/3:40	
8	60	60	60		80	20/4:00	
9	EE 60	46	EE 60		46	75	
10	x (40)	30	x (30)		20	off	



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WORKOUTS OVERVIEW

MONDAYS AND WEDNESDAYS:



Cardio maximization workouts.

TUESDAYS AND FRIDAYS:



Avocado Toast (Easy Effort run with six minutes of 20/40 accelerators at the end).

THURSDAYS AND SUNDAYS:



Rest.

SATURDAY:



Long run, always EE (easy effort). You may throw in 20-second pickups to 10k effort at the top of each mile if you like, this always makes long runs fun for me.

Long runs are notated on the chart in miles/time (i.e., 14/2:50 indicates you can choose to either run 14 miles or 2 hours 50 minutes). If you see 14/2:50 for the long run, that means your long run is finished whenever you hit 14 miles, OR 2 hours and 50 minutes total workout time, whichever comes first. Longer isn't necessarily better.

NOTES:

FPP strongly encourages total rest on either Thursday or Sunday, and one rest day may become a recovery run no longer than 60 minutes with a heart rate cap of 130.

FPP also encourages strength on hard days, which by definition are every run harder than EE and/or longer than one hour. Keep your easy days easy so your hard days can be hard.

We need to ramp strength down **BIG TIME** during the taper, weeks nine and ten.
CONSERVE ENERGY AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE.

DEFINITIONS:

10K PACE/10K EFFORT: Current Easy Effort pace minus two minutes or use recent 10K race

EE: Easy Effort. Heart rate cap 140 bpm.

HME: Half Marathon Effort. Current Easy Effort pace minus 90 seconds or use recent half-marathon race or EAT.

ME: Marathon Effort. Current Easy Effort pace minus one minute.

RR: Recovery Run. Heart rate cap 120 bpm.

SPECIALIZED WORKOUTS FOR THIS CYCLE:

Most coaches agree that mile repeats are the best marathon-specific workouts we can perform. We also agree that these workouts are responsible for more injuries than just about any other in non-elite athletes; they are really hard on the body.

For the intents and purposes of this program, we aren't looking for *as* much specialization as other programs. For example, Molly Huddle's event is the half-marathon, but occasionally she will switch gears to race a full marathon. Since she is a professional runner, she is highly specialized. When it comes to us mere mortals, we just don't need to specialize as much as pro runners because we are nowhere near as fit. YAY US! I am operating on the assumption that I have nothing but mere mortals in here.

Whether we like it or not, the keys to success in this tier comes down to being physically prepared to cover the distance, having enough glute and ankle strength to avoid injury, and knowing how to pace yourself over the course of the race. The workouts are designed to achieve those aims without burning you out.



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WORKOUT KEY



BKB (BIG KID BRITCHES):

This is an EE run. At the end of every mile, do a 60-second pickup to 10K pace (your current easy effort pace minus two minutes, or faster if you like. Just not SO fast that you need to walk afterwards).



CHARGE:

This workout is about teaching you to engage your glutes on hills. I really want you to focus on going up hills and engaging your glutes, feeling them stabilize as you climb the hill and how your quads take over as you come back down the hill. These aren't hill repeats designed to make you strong (without a LOT of glute strength, hill repeats are more likely to hurt you than strengthen you).

When I say, "CHARGE!", I want you going hard but steady effort. This is not ATTACK!!!! Or a dead sprint, it's just "hard, but no so hard you have to walk before you get to the top". You should be breathing heavily throughout. Focus on your form, 'sitting into the hill' which means squatting a touch more than you normally would, and leaning forward just a touch (don't get too aggressive with either of these, play around and when you lock in on it you'll know).

Please find a really hilly road or path, don't go crazy you don't need to get on a mountain; out and back over 20-30ft rollers is totally fine for our purposes. If you don't live near any hills, you can do this workout on a treadmill, or up and down a single incline (i.e. parking garage or bridge).

- 20 minutes warm up
- 20 minutes of charging up hills
- 20 minutes cooling down



SPIKE:

This is an aerobic maximizing workout that aims to make you more efficient at burning oxygen at harder efforts.

- 20 minutes warming up
- 6 sets of accelerators (20 seconds accelerator, 40 seconds super slow shuffle recovery)
- 10 minutes EE
- 4 sets of accelerators (20 seconds accelerator, 40 seconds super slow shuffle recovery)
- 20 minutes jogging to cool down

Adjust the workout to your needs, four or six sets isn't categorically better; listen to your body. You aren't wimping out if you are tired and don't need that fourth set. Your race will not be determined by the difference of one interval on this one workout on this one day.

1X1:

Think of this as a 'sharpener'. It's a terrific workout favored by elites right now.

THE 40-MINUTE WORKOUT

- 10-15 minutes warming up
- 10 minutes of 1x1 (one minute at race effort, one minute easy)
- 15-20 minutes cooling down

THE 30-MINUTE WORKOUT

- 10 minutes warming up
- 10 minutes of 1x1 (one minute at race effort, one minute easy)
- 10 minutes cooling down



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SMOOTH:

This workout is about teaching you to moderate pace on hills. I really want you to focus on backing off and letting your glutes take over as you climb hills. Please find a really hilly road or path, don't go crazy you don't need to get on a mountain; out and back over 20-30ft rollers is totally fine for our purposes.

Even effort almost always means "slow down a touch climbing the hill, then you will go down the hill a little faster". This workout is about tuning into your body and learning to moderate effort over time.

- 20 minutes warm up
- 20 minutes of smoothly running over hills, maintaining even effort
- 20 minutes cooling down

WARM-UPS AND COOL DOWNS:

You want to keep warm-ups and cool-downs under 140 as much as possible, but after some of the harder workouts it may be harder to calm down on the cool-down. That's okay. Just focus on slowing your roll as much as you possibly can, relaxing your breathing, and shuffling if you have to. Lightest effort possible, and if that only gets your HR down to 150 so be it. The point is to ease off and reduce effort not to stress you out. This is not permission to throw 140 out the window forever, just understand that the heart rate/effort cap exists to ensure your easy runs truly remain easy, and this is one time when the cap may not work for you. That's okay.

Again, your race day performance does not hang on one mile repeat in one workout. Listen to your body, that is always the most advanced thing you can do.

The Fitness Protection Program **STRONGLY** advocates waiting until you've completed 2-3 successful months of Maintain before signing up for a marathon and utilizing this document. We also **STRONGLY** advocate clearing the idea of training for a marathon with your GP as well as your physical therapist before jumping in. The worst they can say is, "not yet" and explain why. We will work with you to overcome those hurdles.

Coach MK founded Fitness Protection with the mission of making running a truly positive experience for all runners. We provide year-round training plans, as well as a tether to your coaches and your run club when you need it most; in between race cycles, when you're unable to run due to injury or life circumstances, or when you are just trying to rebuild a fitness habit.