WALKER TRAINING PLAN (12 weeks)

Congratulations on accepting the challenge to walk a half marathon! You are in for an amazing experience!

This program is for you if you've been walking regularly (three times a week or more) for at least three months *and* can comfortably walk for at least an hour. The focus is on gradually building your mileage so you are ready for race day. Here is an overview of the training plan to prepare you to walk 13.1 miles.

Feel free to adjust the days of the week that you do a particular walk to fit your schedule.

Let's Get Started

Consistency is key when training for a half marathon. The closer you adhere to the training schedule the better you'll feel and the more fun you'll have on race day! You'll also be likely to cross the finish line more quickly!

Here are the types of walks you'll be doing:
(Begin all of your walks with 3 to 5 minutes of easy walking to warm up and do the same at the end to cool down.)

- ***Brisk Walk (blue) to improve your fitness:*** Walk as if you're in a bit of a hurry. The effort should be somewhat hard so that it's a little difficult to speak in complete sentences, but you can still talk. Never push yourself to the point that you cannot speak.

- ***Interval Walk (light blue) to increase your speed:*** After you warm up by walking at an easy to moderate pace for 3 to 5 minutes, you'll alternate short bouts of fast walking (you can only speak a few words at a time) with slightly longer intervals of brisk walking for the duration of your workout. Then, cool down by walking at an easy pace for about 3 minutes. The interval lengths are noted on the training schedule and change each month.

- ***Long Walk (red) to build your endurance:*** For these walks, go a little slower at a moderate, purposeful pace. While you should feel some effort, you should be able to easily carry on a conversation, speaking in full sentences. The goal is endurance, not speed. *Times noted for **Long Walks** are just estimates to help with scheduling your walks. They are based on a 15- to 20-minute mile pace.* You can do **Long Walks** any day of the week to accommodate your schedule—just make sure you do a **Recovery Walk** (see below) the next day. There are also **Long Walk Breaks** (shorter mileage days) that provide an opportunity for flexibility. You can switch the week that you do these if needed. For example, if you're on vacation September 22nd when you're supposed to do a 9-miler, you can wait to do it the following week (September 29th) instead of the recommended 4-miler that day. Ideally, you'll do the 4-miler on September 22nd in place of the 9 miles instead of just skipping a **Long Walk** while you're on vacation.

- ***Recovery Walk (green) to ease stiffness and soreness from Long Walks:*** Walk at an easy, window-shopping pace. The effort should be light enough that you could sing while you walk. These walks should *always* follow a **Long Walk** day.

- ***Hill Walks (purple) to prepare you for the climb in the first two miles of the course:*** (a gradual downhill after that, though!) Choose a hilly route or train on a treadmill for these walks. You could also use stairs. These are basically **Brisk Walks** for 30 to 45 minutes, but a portion of each walk should be uphill. You'll start with 10 minutes of incline and work up to 30 (times are noted on the training schedule). Don't forget to warm up at the beginning and cool down and stretch at the end.

You'll round out your plan with some **Cross Training**. By doing an alternate activity (swimming, cycling, yoga, strength training, etc.) you'll avoid burn out and boredom, and you'll work different muscles to reduce your risk of injury or overtraining.

A **Rest** day is also built into the schedule. Feel free to use your **Rest** day any day of the week to make it easier to fit your training into your schedule.

"Nothing can stop the person with the right mental attitude from achieving his goal. Nothing on earth can help the person with the wrong attitude."
–Thomas Jefferson

LET'S GO!

You are taking your first steps toward greatness (see below) and a fun, empowering experience! You can do it!

For **Interval Walks**, go as quickly as possible for 30 seconds, then slow down to a moderate pace for 2 minutes. Speed up again for 30 seconds, and then slow down for 2 minutes. Repeat for 20 to 25 minutes. Remember to warm up first and cool down at the end.

"You don't have to be great to start,
but you have to start to be great." –Zig Ziglar

AUGUST

	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Week 1: Aug 12-18	Brisk Walk 45 min	Brisk Walk 30 min	Cross train 20-30 min	Rest	Interval walk (30 sec: 2 min) 30 min	Brisk Walk 30 min	Long Walk 5 miles (75-100 min)
Week 2: Aug 19-25	Recovery walk 15 min	Brisk Walk 45 min	Cross train 20-30 min	Rest	Interval walk (30 sec: 2 min) 30 min	Brisk Walk 30 min	Long Walk 6 miles (90-120 min)
Week 3: Aug 26-Sep 1	Recovery walk 15 min	Brisk Walk 45 min	Cross train 20-30 min	Rest	Interval walk (30 sec: 2 min) 30 min	Brisk Walk 30 min	Long Walk 7 miles (105-140 min)

KEEP IT UP!

For **Interval Walks**, go as quickly as possible for 30 seconds, then slow down to a moderate pace for 1 minute. Speed up again for 30 seconds, and then slow down for 1 minute. Repeat for 20 to 25 minutes. Remember to warm up first and cool down at the end.

For **Hill Walks**, total walk time is in ( ). The first time noted is how long you should be climbing, ideally all at once. On the hill, slow down and focus on posture—stand tall! Don't lean into the hill.

"One important key to success is self-confidence. An important key to self-confidence is preparation."
–Arthur Robert Ashe

SEPTEMBER

	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Week 4: Sept 2-8	Recovery walk 20 min	Brisk Walk 60 min	**Cross train 20-30 min**	Rest	Interval walk (30 sec: 1 min) 30 min	Brisk Walk 45 min	Long Walk Break 3 miles (45-60 min)
Week 5: Sept 9-15	Recovery walk 20 min	Hill Walk 10 min (30 total)	**Cross train 20-30 min**	Rest	Interval walk (30 sec: 1 min) 30 min	Brisk Walk 45 min	Long Walk 8 miles (120-160 min)
Week 6: Sept 16-22	Recovery walk 20 min	Hill Walk 15 min (30 total)	**Cross train 20-30 min**	Rest	Interval walk (30 sec: 1 min) 30 min	Brisk Walk 45 min	Long Walk 9 miles (135-180 min)
Week 7: Sept 23-29	Recovery walk 20 min	Hill Walk 20 min (45 total)	**Cross train 20-30 min**	Rest	Interval walk (30 sec: 1 min) 30 min	Brisk Walk 45 min	Long Walk Break 4 miles (60-80 min)

THE FINISH LINE IS IN SIGHT!

Time to increase the fast portion of your **Interval Walks** to 1 minute. Bend your arms to speed up!

After the longest **Long Walk**, you'll taper by reducing your training to ensure your body is well rested for the big day.

You should be very proud of yourself for all that you have accomplished! Now get ready for the experience of a lifetime! Have FUN!!!

"The miracle isn't that I finished. The miracle is that I had the courage to start." –John Bingham

OCTOBER

	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Week 8: Sep 30-Oct 6	Recovery walk 20 min	Hill Walk 25 min (45 total)	Cross train 20-30 min	Rest	Interval walk (1 min: 1 min) 30 min	Brisk Walk 30 min	Long Walk 10 miles (150-200 min)
Week 9: Oct 7-13	Recovery walk 20 min	Hill Walk 25 min (45 total)	Cross train 20-30 min	Rest	Interval walk (1 min: 1 min) 30 min	Brisk Walk 45 min	Long Walk Break 5 miles (75-100 min)
Week 10: Oct 14-20	Recovery walk 20 min	Hill Walk 30 min (45 total)	Cross train 20-30 min	Rest	Interval walk (1 min: 1 min) 30 min	Brisk Walk 30 min	Long Walk 11 miles (165-220 min)
Week 11: Oct 21-27	Recovery walk 20 min	Brisk Walk 30 min	Cross train 20-30 min	Rest	Brisk Walk 60 min	Brisk Walk 45 min	Long Walk Break 6 miles (90-120 min)
Week 12: Oct 28-Nov 3	Recovery walk 20 min	Brisk Walk 30 min	Cross train 20-30 min	Rest	Recovery walk 20 min	Rest	Recovery walk 20 min