

By Steve Mazzucchi

# the right stuff

Our crack team of more than 20 wear-testers put dozens of running shoes, socks, shorts and shirts through their paces. Train and race your best with our top 27 half-marathon picks.

<1>

gear

>>> 1. Under Armour Heatgear Long Sleeve All the features of the tank (item #2), plus long sleeves. Our tester said: "No chafing under the arms. Completely breathable." \$35

Shorts by Dolphin; shoes by New Balance; glasses by Nike. See Buyer's Guide on page 130.

Our Under Armour tester said:

"This fabric rocks! Totally breathable and light."

## where to buy

- adidas: (800) 448-1796, [www.adidas.com](http://www.adidas.com)
- Asics: (800) 333-8404, [www.asicstiger.com](http://www.asicstiger.com)
- Brooks: (800) 2BROOKS, [www.brooksrunning.com](http://www.brooksrunning.com)
- Carushka: (800) 304-3729, [www.carushka.com](http://www.carushka.com)
- DeFeet: (800) 688-3067, [www.defeet.com](http://www.defeet.com)
- GoldToe: (800) 523-8265, [www.goldtoe.com](http://www.goldtoe.com)
- Mizuno: (800) 966-1211, [www.mizunousa.com](http://www.mizunousa.com)
- New Balance: (800) 253-SHOE, [www.newbalance.com](http://www.newbalance.com)
- Nike: [www.nike.com](http://www.nike.com)
- OxySox: (866) 4OXYSOX
- Puma: (800) 662-PUMA, [www.puma.com](http://www.puma.com)
- Reebok: (800) 648-5550, [www.reebok.com](http://www.reebok.com)
- Saucony: (800) 365-7282, [www.saucony.com](http://www.saucony.com)
- Thorlos: (888) THORLOS, [www.thorlo.com](http://www.thorlo.com)
- Under Armour: (888) 4ARMOUR, [www.underarmour.com](http://www.underarmour.com)

Editorial assistance provided by Dan Rolnick.



By Tom Weede

# going the distance

>>> Finish your first half-marathon with this 12-week, step-by-step program

Imagine a sunny morning in the not-too-distant future. You're running down a street blocked off to cars but wide open to you and a thousand other runners. Your legs are churning like powerful pistons, propelling you ever forward.

Suddenly, the finish line is in sight and the goal you've spent the last 12 weeks striving for is in front of you. You're so pumped up you don't even feel the pain in your quads that was unbearable just a couple of miles back. You cross the line with an exhilarating burst of speed as the crowd cheers, and then family and friends surround you with enough congratulations to last a lifetime. You've done it. You've just run your first half-marathon.

Sound like a far-fetched scenario? It isn't if you follow our 12-week plan to get you there. The program — designed by top running coaches — will progressively take you from a run of just a few miles to the bragging-rights distance of 13.1 miles. "It's a Milo and the bull program," says Hal Higdon, author of numerous running books, including *Marathon: The Ultimate Training Guide* (Rodale Press, 1999), and a training consultant for The LaSalle Bank Chicago Marathon. "He's the Greek Olympic champion who started out lifting a calf and kept lifting it every day until it grew to be a bull."



### sticking with it

Here are a few words of wisdom from Hal Higdon on how to stay motivated:

- Find shorter races to complete during your training (see "The Schedule" for when to race, although it's not obligatory).
- Run with other people.
- Find a local running club with structured workouts for runners at your level.
- Vary your running routes. Treat yourself to a run in a state park or at the beach.



Shorts and shoes by New Balance; top by Carushko. See Buyer's Guide on page 130.

# weeks 5-8

Exercise	Sets	Reps
Front Squat	1-2	10-12
Stiff-Legged Deadlift	1-2	10-12
Incline Press (machine/barbell)	1-2	10-12
Seated Row	1-2	10-12
Superman	1-2	12
Crunch	1-2	20

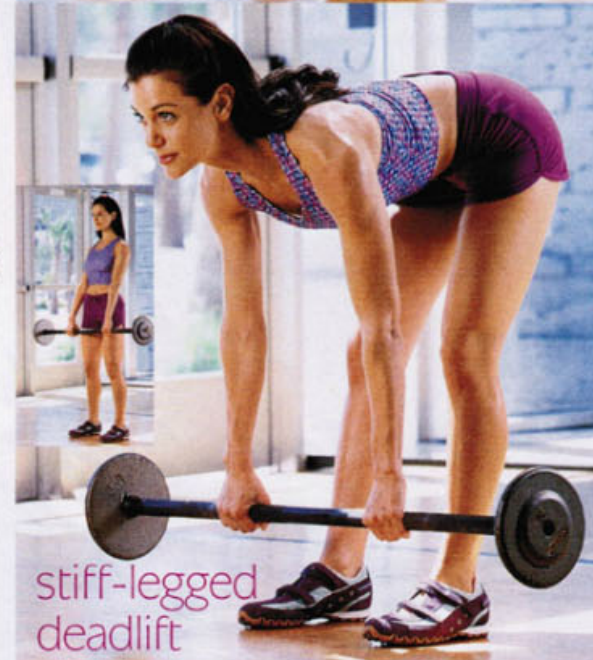
### tips for shoes, clothing and more

- Find a running specialty store. A knowledgeable salesperson can look at your stride and determine your shoe type.
- "Motion control" shoes may be necessary if your feet overpronate (roll too far inward) or underpronate (don't roll inward enough). Heavier runners need shoes with more cushioning.
- Jog around the store to test shoes.
- Make sure you have a little extra room in the toe box. "Quite frequently that means going up a half size or a full size," says Higdon. This will keep your toes from jamming, particularly when you run downhill.
- Buy running clothing made from high-tech breathable fabric, which promotes cooling and reduces chafing by wicking moisture from the skin.
- Wear layers if it's chilly, but don't overdress so that you're overheated later.
- Wear a cap and sunglasses to protect your face and eyes, and apply sunscreen frequently.
- Eat a carbohydrate-rich meal the night before your long run to store glycogen for energy.
- Experiment during your training with pre-run eating and fluid intake, as well as hydrating and fueling during your long run to find your optimal intake.

Need more expert advice on preparing for a half-marathon? Get in touch with Hal Higdon via e-mail at [halhigdon@attbi.com](mailto:halhigdon@attbi.com) or by phone at (763) 404-0060 or (904) 543-8771. Contact Zach Weatherford via e-mail at [zach.weatherford@usoc.org](mailto:zach.weatherford@usoc.org) or by phone at (619) 482-6138.



front squat



stiff-legged deadlift



**overtraining**

If you're experiencing decreased motivation, depression, irritability, anxiety or sleeplessness, you may be overtraining. Also, if your heart rate is 6–8 beats per minute higher than normal first thing in the morning, that's a "pretty good sign that you're either about to catch the flu or you're overtraining, or maybe both," says Higdon.

If you *are* overtraining, make sure your diet includes plenty of carbohydrates and that you are staying hydrated throughout the day. "Program in more rest," adds Higdon. "And that means not merely rest from running but maybe taking a break from some of the other activities that are going on in your life." Taking a complete break from your training for a couple of days is okay.

# weeks 9–12

Exercise	Sets	Reps
Leg Extension	1–2	8–10
Leg Curl	1–2	8–10
Machine Bench Press	1–2	8–10
Bent-Over Lateral Raise	1–2	8–10
Superman	1–2	12
Crunch	1–2	20

**notching it up**

If you're already an experienced runner, you can take your half-marathon training to the next level by including faster-paced runs in your training. For example, on one of your weekday runs, incorporate five 90-second segments of fast running, separated by easy jogging or walking intervals of 60–90 seconds (include warm-up and cool-down, and increase the number of intervals to 8–10 over the course of training).

The next week, do a "tempo" run: run for 15–20 minutes at a pace you could hold for an hour in a race. Warm up for 10–15 minutes and include a cool-down. You also may want to adjust the program so that your longest run before the race reaches 12–14 miles.

To increase muscle power, consider adding plyometrics and fast, explosive lifts to your routine, advises Weatherford.



machine bench press



bent-over lateral raise



superman

Lie facedown, arms outstretched. Lift upper body from the hips so that hands rise a few inches.



## going high-tech

A heart-rate monitor is a device that shows your heartbeats per minute — a measure of your effort. Prices range from \$50 to about \$250 for models that allow you to download workout information into your computer. Although not a necessity, a monitor can keep you from pushing too hard — past the 65%–75% of your maximum heart rate — thus helping prevent burnout and injury.



# flexibility training

quads



hip



calf



Repeat each of these stretches 5–10 times on each side (except for the hip stretch), and hold for 10–20 seconds. Move gently and slowly — don't bounce. Don't stretch to the point of pain, as this will contract your muscles and tendons and prevent them from lengthening. Stretch the muscle groups you trained after each workout.

> **Quadriceps** Standing straight and looking forward, balance on your left leg with that same-side hand touching a wall or bench for support. Bend your right leg back and grasp your foot with your right hand.

> **Hip** Sit with your legs crossed. Keeping your back straight, lean forward from the hips, pressing your hands out in front.

> **Calf** Stand on a step or stair and allow the heel of your right foot to hang over the edge. Use a support to keep your balance.

> **Hamstrings** Lie on your back with your knees slightly flexed. Bending your right knee, lift that leg so that it's perpendicular to the ground. Straighten your right leg as much as is comfortably possible.

> **Back** Sit with your left leg straight and your right leg bent and crossed over your left knee. Turn your upper body to the right, and place your left arm over the outside of your right knee.

**NOTE:** Also remember to stretch before you run, and warm up with a very easy jog first. Flexibility training will lengthen your muscles and tendons, thus increasing range of motion and reducing injury risk. Also, stretch after running to help remove lactic acid, prevent the blood from pooling and get oxygen and nutrients to your muscles. 7

hamstrings



back

