



Marathon: The Ultimate Training Guide

Hal Higdon

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With over 50% new material, this category killer is sure to go the distance

When the previous edition of Hal Higdon's superb training guide appeared, Grete Waitz, 9-time winner of the New York City Marathon, cheered: "Higdon's years of marathoning experience come through in this practical book. Aspiring or veteran marathoners will benefit enormously from its proven guidance."

This new edition focuses on first marathoners, women runners, and those new to the sport; and as always, Higdon shows how to build up mileage and gives advice on running long, speedwork for distance runners, defensive running strategies, and planning for peak performance.

Marathon: The Ultimate Training Guide Details

Date : Published September 3rd 2005 by Rodale Books (first published October 15th 1999)

ISBN : 9781594861994

Author : Hal Higdon

Format : Paperback 356 pages

Genre : Nonfiction, Sports and Games, Sports, Fitness, Health

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From Reader Review Marathon: The Ultimate Training Guide for online ebook

Bill says

So I used Hal Higdon's training guide on the interwebs to train for my first marathon on October 9th this year, the Chicago Marathon. At the expo the day before the race, my younger sister (who ran the race with me - well, as much as anyone who finished an hour ahead of me "ran with" me) excitedly spotted Hal and got him to sign her a brand new copy of his book. I sat by with a camera ready, but she was too timid to ask him for a picture, and I was too timid to demand that she pose with him. We were all quite nervous.

The next day, we ran the marathon. (I ran it in 5:13, if you're asking - not amazing, but I did beat my goal of 5:30) Afterwards I was (naturally) demolished, and ended up picking up her signed copy of this book to read. I found it engaging and informative, so I bought my own copy later on the next day.

I just finished it, and I really should have read it before running the race. The book is a brisk read, full of motivational perspectives from coaches, runners, and Higdon himself, and contains lots of training advice that probably would have done me good had I read it beforehand.

Before I ran this race, I treated it like no big deal - just like a 20 mile run, just six miles longer. That may sound ridiculous, but if you can run six miles, you can slowly increase your mileage each week over 18 weeks and get to that 20 mile mark. Having now actually run that 26.2 miles, I found that it was qualitatively different from all the training I did before it, and it feels like a real achievement. This book does a great job of conveying that in a welcoming and non-intimidating fashion. Hal is as old as hell and has seen the marathon from every angle there is - he's run 2:15 races and he's run 5:30 races. That surveyor's perspective makes you feel welcomed into a community, even if you (maybe like me) aren't exactly in fighting condition yet.

Jo Javernick ronk says

I loved this book. Signed up for my first marathon and this book got me so excited to start training. He makes it sound so doable. Can't wait!!!

Jamie says

I'm going to run a marathon

Luisa says

Everything that I need to know and more. The only downside was they were ABSOLUTELY adamant that first time marathoners should NEVER have a goal beyond finishing the race. But my opinion is that I want to beat the race, I don't want the race to beat me. I don't want to feel like I barely finished by the skin of my

teeth. I want to achieve the status of marathoner without nearly killing myself to cross the finish line.

Rachel says

One of the best marathon manuals that I have read. Unfortunately for me I ran out of time and had to finish it after my 1st marathon thus not requiring the training schedule at the end. However, this had some great advice which I will defo use on my next marathon. Yes, I'm going to do another one. I loved it, every minute. Wish I'd done one earlier than my 40th year!

Read again a year later before doing my second marathon. Still the best book in my opinion to read on marathons.

Dani says

I have read 8 books on running. Everything from running for weight loss to the ultimate beginners guide and from inspirational fiction on running to marathon training. I have to say that Hal Higdon's Marathon: The Ultimate Training Guide, Advice, Plans and Programs for Your 1st Marathon or 50th was a favorite.

You have to wonder how many books on running can you read? Don't they all start to sound the same? Yes and no. The basic information like how to stay hydrated, warnings on things not to do, proper nutrition etc are things you will come across in all these books. But to me that is a great thing. It makes that information really sink in so you don't forget it. And you do not have to read the same book over and over to remember it. You can be sure to really absorb this basic but really important information while reading a variety of books by different authors. The best part is reading the inspirational things you come across. When it comes to having plenty of inspiration for an aspiring marathoner to read Hal Higdon has plenty in this book. I really like the fact that he has plenty of quotes and tips from runners he knows personally or from the forum on his website. You hear the struggles that other people face and their stories let you see that it really is people just like you who are running these marathons.

There were plenty of times while reading this book that I wanted to throw on my running shoes and head right out the door. A realistic check of the weather and a real feel of over 100 degrees outside killed that idea, but kept me motivated to head out as soon as the weather permitted.

In the last chapter of the book there are quotes from runners on what they learned from their first marathon. The one that hit me the most was "I realized how much time I wasted doing nothing. An hour spend watching TV became a 7-mile run. Time wasted daydreaming became time spend in the morning sun. It's about setting priorities."

For anyone wanting to run a marathon as well as for those that have already accomplished that feat I would recommend this book. If you already know how to stay hydrated during a run skip that chapter and instead read the personal struggles and accomplishments from other runners.

Sarah Simmons says

This book was a great asset in training for my first marathon. I finished with a respectable time-for me. It answered a lot of questions I didn't even know I had, being a newbie and a solitary runner. I'm using it again to train for my second marathon.

Alison says

I read this book as I was training for my first (and so far only) marathon. It was heartfelt, funny, and sincere. One quote that I will forever remember is that you should never sign up for your next marathon until you have forgotten the pain of the last one.

Daniel Solera says

This book will either inspire you to run a marathon or scare you to death. Though it breaks down the act of running 26.2 miles into manageable chapters, the feat may seem more daunting as you turn the last page. Fortunately, Higdon has populated his informative book with many testimonials from runners, from the confident elite to the skeptical newcomers.

As a veteran marathon runner with 111 marathons under his belt, he knows what he's talking about. His experience, his mistakes, his discoveries by trial and error, are all very well documented, well enough that his passion for running is in itself an inspiration for anyone to go out and tackle the distance.

On top of laying out a framework for running a successful marathon, Higdon provides a wealth of supplemental information for improving performance, preparing both physically and mentally for the event, and coping with the pitfalls and inevitable obstacles that confront runners during their training. For anyone looking to face the challenge of running a marathon, this book is a no-brainer.

Iliyana Parashkevova says

That's a real great piece for anyone who's preparing for a marathon or just began running :-)) I recommend it highly

Ross says

It still holds up as one of the top marathon books/training guides after all these years. I was completely out of shape, and I hadn't ran a step in five or six years. I read this book, followed the training guide, and ran a 4 hour marathon less than three months later. I also lost 25 pounds during the training process.

Hal's book is still the best marathon running book around, a must read for anyone wanting to run a marathon, but not wanting to urinate blood & spinal fluid afterward.

Linda says

I've made it my business to check out every marathon ebook available at my local library. I have universally disliked them all up until now. This one is fantastic.

Just about every new runner training for any event has, at least, perused one of Hal Higdon's plans. They are free, readily available, easy to understand, and geared to beginners. I'm familiar with them, but I've never used them. I have always used Pfitzinger's *Road Racing* and Fitzgerald's *Brain Training for Running*. Since I'm taking on a marathon in late Spring, I wanted to learn more about training, so I started reading other books, starting with the free ones, of course.

This book would be great for a beginner, but it has a lot to offer to a seasoned runner, too. There is practical information. I really liked the chapter on specific tapering. There are tips like "arrive one day early for every time zone crossed," as well as anecdotal inspirational stories.

I have not chosen to use a traditional plan like Higdon's to train for my marathon, but I believe his advice is solid, and moreover, *Marathon* was an enjoyable read. My only problem with this book is that Higdon told me that if my parents weren't Kenyan that I shouldn't even think about qualifying for Boston on my first marathon. My parents aren't Kenyan, and I plan to BQ. Maybe I'll write him a letter when it happens.

Nora Miller says

I'm keeping this book close at hand! Will read and re-read. Currently following the intermediate training plan for my 5th half marathon, will then roll into the novice training plan for my 1st full marathon.

Wysteria says

Anytime I get a new hobby, I like to learn as much about it as I can. I'm a knowledge collector of sorts. A really bad jack-of-all-trades. I like to learn and if something catches my attention and interests me, I want to learn as much as I can about it until I'm over it. Running is my newest obsession.

So I got this book from the library actually just read this straight through, not picking and choosing parts that sounded interesting.

I found it helpful and insightful and slightly overwhelming and disheartening.

I feel like I will never be a great runner, but with discipline I can be a successful marathon finisher. That's really what the book is about and just reinforces the idea that if you want something bad enough to spend 4 months of your life training for it, it better be worth it.

And don't think it's not going to suck, because it is.

Marissa says

Ok so this book wasn't BAD I just was annoyed by a few things....this book felt very repetative. The author revisted the importance of carb-loading and the spagehetti dinner like 10 times, once or twice would be fine but after awhile I wanted to scream, "We get the point!" Also, maybe I'm not a serious enough runner but I found the chapter on women training during menstruation just un-necessary. I also got a little tired of the ten million examples the author used of olympic athletes training secrets and racing times. I understand the author wanted to build credibility and give examples but I personally feel most people who pick this book up just want advice to get them to the finish line more so than leading the pack but then maybe that's just me...

What I do like: the training plan. At the end of the book there are several options for training plans listed based on running experience (novice, intermediate, advanced). Most of the plans offer shorter running days during the week and the long run on the weekend. The longest run in the novice plan is 20 miles, with 2 weeks after that to taper back off so the muscles can recover.

The best chapter in the book in my opinion is little secrets about post-marathon recovery. That was more advice than stories which I appreciated.

I would recommend this for anyone who wants to train for their first marathon or just wants to get an idea of what the hype is about. If you have already ran a marathon there may not be a ton of value in it for you especially since I think you can find his training plans online for free.
