

BY TISH HAMILTON

on the calendar is one of the effective ways to become fit. If you're motivated to run, a triathlon is a great way to get started. It's used by both the 2017 New York City Marathon women's winner, Jennifer Flanagan, and the hundreds of thousands of weekend warriors who head out for their annual triathlon races each year. Depending on your fitness level and your current training schedule, you can pick an event — from a 5K to a full marathon — and follow a training plan for four to 20 weeks. It's all about the purpose of your running and the goal you're trying to achieve. (As you start any exercise program, be sure to consult with your doctor about your health and limitations.)

For Anyone who can walk a mile.

Walking is one of the most popular ways to attract more participants in fitness programs across the United States than any other activity. In 2015, 82 percent of runners entered the 2017 National Runner Survey reported that they walked at least a mile today, you can complete a triathlon. On July 4, the nation's annual Independence Day running event, more than 10 million runners participated in the annual event. And if you can run a mile, you can run a triathlon.

And if you can run a triathlon, you can run a triathlon.



How to Make Running a Habit

BY RACHEL SWABY

MORNING, when Judy Mick heads out her door each day, she will continue an 11,884-day streak of running a mile (but usually more) every single day. That's 32½ consecutive years of running. Judy turned 60 in 2011, which means she has maintained this daily routine for more than half her life. Today she does it while also working a run-coaching business and an online retail business, specializing in cutlery and operating a Dairy Queen franchise with her husband, not to mention weekly trips to the gym to help out her aging mother. Through it all, she has made running a habit.

One of her success can be attributed to planning. "I'm not a Channel junkie," Mick says. "I always know what the weather is going to be doing during the time that I run." With the morning conditions in mind, she goes out her running clothes and shoes the night before. She makes sure that she's not thrown off by a missed run or a surprise storm. The morning's timing is

important. "Things happen in your day," says Mick, who is a firm believer in carving out time first thing — before other obligations interfere.

Mick also maps out her route and the number of miles she'd like to run in advance, so she doesn't have to make any decisions in the morning. She takes pleasure in scheduling her entire year, modifying her training around the races she'd like to run — which, of course, she nails down well ahead of time. "I've already got my room booked for my Key West half-marathon next January!" She chooses her routes and mileage about three months out.

When monotony strikes, Mick changes locations or reviews her running log, which she finds can reignite a feeling of accomplishment and inspiration.

Mick appreciates the energy and positive outlook that her dedication to running has given her: "I'm 60 years old," she says, "and I can work circles around the 20-year-olds that work for me." ◆

seconds, say) of easy-run segments along the way.

10K

Best for: Runners, joggers and runners who complete three to four miles at least three times a week. The 10K distance is the overlooked middle child of road racing. There are fewer 10Ks than 5Ks, which is too bad, because aiming to complete a 6.2-mile run is a worthy challenge that you can accomplish on less than four hours of dedicated work a week.

Training principles: If you can commit to three 30-to-45-minute sessions of running (or run-walking) a week and working up to a long weekend run of 60 minutes, you can train for a 10K. More advanced runners should go a bit farther than the distance once per week and add a session or two of intervals. If you're currently doing three miles, you'll want to add a mile to a long run on alternate weekends, building to a distance of six or seven miles. If you're already running at least six miles every weekend, you're set.

HALF-MARATHON

Best for: Those running at least 30 minutes three times a week and an hour or more at least once per week. The popularity of the half-marathon has surged in the last decade, with participation more than doubling. 1.9 million people finished 131-milers in 2016. It's a distance that women dominate, making up more than 60 percent of finishers. Running 13.1 miles

MARATHON

Best for: People who have completed 25 to 30 miles per week for at least a year.

Finishing 26.2 miles is a feat for any runner of any level, representing hours of training, well-considered nutritional choices and injury-prevention strategies, not to mention the understanding of friends and family. Yes, many people with full-time jobs or small children complete a marathon. But there's a reason that 68 percent of dedicated runners have no children or just one child under 19 at home. Training is time-consuming, so is recovery. If you're not ready, maybe you will be next year.

Training principles: Marathon-training plans typically involve 16 to 20 weeks of training, a minimum of four days a week, often more. Your long weekend runs will start at eight or so miles in Week 1 and gradually build up to 20-milers. So these plans expect you to start with a base of 25 to 30 miles per week. Seasoned marathoners may do some interval work and tempo runs targeting their goal pace; newcomers will focus more exclusively on building endurance. If you have a bib for the New York City Marathon on Nov. 4, your 16-week training plan will begin on Monday, July 16. All runners, but first-timers especially, need to prepare their bodies (and minds!) for the rigors of long periods of relentless forward motion. You'll also need more food and more sleep. ◆

Rest or easy stretching.	Easy 3-5 miles. Include 5-8 HIT pickups of 30-60 seconds, with 90-second recovery in the middle miles.	Easy 3-4 or cross-train.	Pyramid pace session: 400, 800, 1200, 1600, 400 at close to 10K goal pace. Warm up and cool down with 1-2-mile jog.	Rest or cross-train.	Easy 3-5 miles, ending with 4-5 pickups (not all out).	Easy 3-5 miles, ending with 4-5 pickups (not all out).	Easy 3-5 miles, ending with 4-5 pickups (not all out).
--------------------------	--	--------------------------	---	----------------------	--	--	--

10K TRAINING: For intermediate runners who have completed a few 5Ks.

Rest or easy stretching.	Easy 3-5 miles. Include 5-8 HIT pickups of 30-60 seconds, with 90-second recovery in the middle miles.	Easy 3-4 or cross-train.	Pyramid pace session: 400, 800, 1200, 1600, 400 at close to 10K goal pace. Warm up and cool down with 1-2-mile jog.	Rest or cross-train.	Easy 3-5 miles, ending with 4-5 pickups (not all out).	Easy 3-5 miles, ending with 4-5 pickups (not all out).	Easy 3-5 miles, ending with 4-5 pickups (not all out).
--------------------------	--	--------------------------	---	----------------------	--	--	--

HALF-MARATHON TRAINING: For intermediate runners.

Rest.	Easy 6 miles. Include 5-8 HIT pickups of 30-60 seconds with 90-second recovery.	Easy 3-5 miles.	6 miles with hills OR progression run (start slow, finish faster).	Rest or cross-train.	Easy 3-5 miles.	Easy 3-5 miles.	12-14 miles, conversational pace.
-------	---	-----------------	--	----------------------	-----------------	-----------------	-----------------------------------

MARATHON TRAINING: For first-timers.

Rest.	Easy 6 miles. Include 5-8 HIT pickups of 30-60 seconds with 90-second recovery.	Easy 3-5 miles.	6 miles with hills OR progression run (start slow, finish faster).	Rest or cross-train.	Easy 3-5 miles.	Easy 3-5 miles.	12-14 miles, conversational pace.
-------	---	-----------------	--	----------------------	-----------------	-----------------	-----------------------------------

6 Destination Races

BY CHELSEA LEU

THE BOSTON MARATHON and the London Marathon are prestigious races. But if you're just getting started, the amount of training it takes to qualify can be daunting (and qualifying may simply be out of reach). Try setting your sights on events that are as much about the experience and the destination as your race time, and you'll be more likely to stay motivated as you put in your miles.

EASIER

BY TRACY VENCE, WIRECUTTER

Established in 1912 to lift San Francisco's spirits post-earthquake, this wacky 12K now features thousands of people climbing the city's hills in outrageous costumes.

RUN INTERNACIONAL

(El Paso to Juarez, Mexico)

A celebration of the vibrant community at the United States-Mexico border, this 10K is truly international: Run to a different country in a single day.

MEDIUM

POLARNIGHT HALF MARATHON (Tromsø, Norway)

There isn't much sun here in January, which is why this frigid race, held during the day, is lit by torch. If it's not snowing, you might even catch a glimpse of the northern lights.

EMPIRE STATE BUILDING RUN-UP (New York)

This race is a mere fifth of a mile straight up into the air. Make it to the top of the iconic building's 1,576 steps (that's 85 flights) to the observation-deck finish line.

HARD

BIG FIVE MARATHON (Entabeni Safari Conservancy, South Africa)

Combine that dream safari trip with your fitness goals and run through a scenic big-game reserve alongside zebras, giraffes and wildebeest.

INCA TRAIL MARATHON

(Peru)

Erik's Adventures' marathon's steep, challenging course weaves through the Andes, passes Inca fortresses and terraces and ends at the grand citadel of Machu Picchu itself. ◆

The Best Fitness Tracker for Running

BY TRACY VENCE, WIRECUTTER

IF YOU'RE LOOKING to begin running, a wearable fitness tracker could help motivate you. In addition to tracking your steps and calculating distance traveled, some trackers are equipped with walk-run progression programs, which can help you to start slow and advance at your own pace. Once you've established a running routine, a GPS-capable tracker can help you monitor your times on any given route. This is particularly helpful for runners who want to shave minutes (or seconds) from their times.

At Wirecutter we thoroughly research and comparatively test products to help readers quickly and easily decide what to get. After testing 23 top-rated devices over the last three years, we've found that the Garmin's Vivosport (\$170) is the best wearable fitness tracker for beginning runners and regular racers. This lightweight, wrist-worn device combines programs to get you started running with automatic activity- and location-detection capabilities to help you get faster. This tracker also functions as a digital watch.

To find the best fitness trackers, we've spent more than 150 hours wearing nearly two dozen of them to the gym and the track, as well as while we commuted, worked and grocery-shopped. Nearly all of the devices, including the Vivosport, occasionally mistook some arm-only movements, like drying dishes, for steps. But the Vivosport was the only tracker we tested that reliably distinguished among standing, walking and running, even without manual input. In our testing, it automatically detected running within one minute (walking within five) and auto-paused at every stop. The Vivosport also automatically recorded GPS maps of our routes, which we could review using the associated Garmin Connect app. ◆

Read more about the best fitness trackers: wrcr.co/fitnesstrackers

