



General Training Information and Tips

So, you *are* thinking about participating in one of the races offered during the La Crosse Fitness Festival! Great! Depending on your fitness level, any of these races can be an excellent challenge. The nice part is, regardless of the distance, the benefits of training have the potential to bring you both fitness and health related benefits. Even with the luxury of a base of social support including a very active community, your success will ultimately depend on you alone. Still interested? There are plenty of things to consider before getting started.

- **Make sure you are in good physical health.**

This may require a visit with your physician.

- **Check your shoes.**

A good pair of running shoes will help in preventing injuries or soreness while training. (Do not use tennis shoes, aerobics shoes, basketball shoes, etc.) Running on paved surfaces wear out shoes fairly quickly; watch for excessive or uneven wear on the soles of your shoes, especially at the heel or the toe.

- **Listen to your body.**

While you should expect to be tired at the end of some training runs, be on the lookout for signs of fatigue: proper rest is just as important as the workout itself.

- **Listen to your body some more.**

You want to distinguish between the normal soreness, achy muscles, and the like that come with training and persistent pain in a muscle, joint or tendon. Such pain may be an indication of common afflictions like hamstring soreness/tightness, shin splints, plantar fasciitis, Achilles tendonitis, or patellar tendonitis. Such conditions are often referred to as “overuse injuries,” and those with the “-itis” suffix indicate a painful inflammation of the relevant tendon. An overuse injury requires some alteration in your training or even time off from training, and, if the pain is persistently severe, perhaps a visit with your physician.

- **Eat right, stay hydrated, and get adequate sleep.**

All of these considerations are even more critical if the event you chose is the half or full marathon.

La Crosse Fitness Festival Running in La Crosse

Why are there so many runners in La Crosse? Do runners really like it? Why?

Good questions those. Let's try to answer them.

First, without question La Crosse is a great city in which to be a runner! Runners here are truly blessed to have well-maintained sidewalks, bike trails, more trails in the La Crosse River marsh, Hixon Forest, and Goose Island. La Crosse drivers are courteous to pedestrians and runners. The City snow plows do a commendable job of clearing streets of snow in winter, and the large majority of home owners and businesses are generally conscientious about keeping their walks shoveled. In the summer's heat, the city's residential streets and bike trails offer a goodly amount of shade, and water is readily available at the many public drinking fountains. And sweaty runners can walk into any Kwik Trip store to have a drink of cold water from a courtesy cup – try doing that in Manhattan or LA!

Second, after someone has begun running year round in Wisconsin he or she will discover pleasures that were unforeseen at the beginning. Runners experience the neighborhoods, houses, yards, and flower gardens throughout La Crosse more fully than people driving by. Fall and spring weather is usually almost ideal for running. And winter running, especially on a bright sunny day with little wind, really is much more pleasant than it probably seems to someone looking out the window. Summer is the most challenging season for runners everywhere, especially when the temperatures and the humidity are high, but fortunately La Crosse is far enough north that such days are not too frequent.

Third, La Crosse has an active and long-established running club, the [River City Running Club](#). For most of us, doing the longer training runs required to prepare for a marathon or a half marathon welcome the opportunity to run with others of similar abilities and goals. As indicated on its website, the RCRC has regularly scheduled group runs on the weekends; runners at any level of ability are welcome to participate without becoming a member, and on those group runs advice on training and racing is readily dispensed (and may even prove useful).

Fourth, the short answer to the question, "Do runners really like running?" is definitely "Yes!" While it's probably true that most people who start running do so to improve cardio-vascular fitness, to lose weight, or similar healthy goals, those who stay with a sensible regimen of running for even a couple of months often find that the mental benefits match or exceed the physical ones. Research has shown that running often bestows improved self confidence, a sense of accomplishment, and even helps control depression.

OK. You're now convinced that you want to enter one of the running events of the La Crosse Fitness Festival. Great! Now go back and check out the training advice for the event of your choice.

One final point before you go: The famed Dr. George Sheehan, runner, philosopher, and writer, once said, "The difference between a jogger and a runner is a completed entry blank." You're on your way to becoming a runner!

La Crosse Fitness Festival

Example Training Guide

5K Run/Walk

■ **Week 1**

Walk briskly for 15 to 20 minutes, at least 5 times this week.

■ **Week 2**

Run for 2 minutes, then walk for 5 minutes. Repeat this 3 times (21 minutes total). Do this 3 or 4 times this week. Walk briskly for 30 minutes on two other days.

■ **Week 3**

Run for 4 minutes, then walk for 4 minutes. Repeat this 3 times (24 minutes total). Do this 3 or 4 times this week. Walk briskly for 30 minutes on two other days.

■ **Week 4**

Run for 5 minutes, then walk for 3 minutes. Repeat this 3 times (24 minutes total). Do this 3 or 4 times this week. On two other days, either walk briskly for 30 to 40 minutes, or alternate running and walking 2 minutes for 30 minutes.

■ **Week 5**

Run for 7 minutes, then walk a minute or two. Repeat this two times. Then alternate 2 minutes of running and a minute of walking three or four times (total time of 26 to 30 minutes). Do this 3 or 4 times during the week. On two or three other days do a light mix of running and walking, depending on how you feel.

■ **Week 6**

Run for one mile. Walk until you're recovered. Repeat this 3 times. Hey, you just covered at least 3 miles! Do this 3 or 4 times on three days this week. On two or three other days do a light mix of running and walking, depending on how you feel.

■ **Week 7**

On one or two days, run 1.5 miles followed by a brief walk. Repeat. If this workout is not difficult, do a 2 mile run or longer. Again, lighter running and/or walking on other days.

■ **Week 8**

Do at two 2-mile runs early in the week, say on Sunday and Wednesday. Light running and/or walking on other days. Rest on Friday.

La Crosse Fitness Festival Example Training Guide Half-Marathon

- **Week 1**
Run 2 to 4 miles (or run and walk, if you're not ready to run that far yet), four or five times.
- **Week 2**
Run 3 to 4 miles (or run and walk, if you're not ready to run that far yet), four or five times.
- **Week 3**
Run 3 to 5 miles five times. Weekly mileage: 15 or more miles.
- **Week 4**
Run 3 to 5 miles five or six times. Weekly mileage: 16 or more miles.
- **Week 5**
Run 3 to 6 miles five or six times. Weekly mileage: 18 or more miles.
- **Week 6**
Run 4 to 6 miles five times. Weekly mileage: 20 or more miles.
- **Week 7**
An easy week. Run 3 to 5 miles four times. Weekly mileage: 12 or more miles.
- **Week 8**
Base building is over! Long run: 6 to 8 miles; moderately long run: 5 miles; easy or tempo runs: 3 miles. One or two rest days. Weekly mileage: 20 or more miles.
- **Week 9**
Long run: 7 to 8 miles; moderately long run: 5 miles; easy or tempo runs: 4 miles. One or two rest days. Weekly mileage: 24 or more miles.
- **Week 10**
Long run: 7 to 8 miles; moderately long run: 6 miles; easy or tempo runs: 4 miles. One or two rest days. Weekly mileage: 25 or more miles.
- **Week 11**
An easy week. Long run: 6 miles; moderately long run: 5 miles; easy or tempo runs: 3 miles. Two rest days. Weekly mileage: 20 miles.
- **Week 12**
Long run: 7 to 8 miles; moderately long run: 6 miles; easy or tempo runs: 4 miles. One or two rest days. Weekly mileage: 24 or more miles.
- **Week 13**
Long run: 7 to 8 miles; moderately long run: 6 miles; easy or tempo runs: 4 or 5 miles. One or two rest days. Weekly mileage: 24 or more miles.

■ **Week 14**

Long run: 8 to 9 miles; moderately long run: 6 miles; easy or tempo runs: 4 or 5 miles. One or two rest days. Weekly mileage: 26 or more miles.

■ **Week 15**

Time to taper off the hard training. Long run: 7 miles; moderately long run: 5 miles; easy or tempo runs: 3 to 4 miles. Two rest days. Weekly mileage: 21 to 23 miles.

■ **Week 16**

The Half-Marathon is Sunday! Taper off the training. Do a few easy runs of 4 to 6 miles, maybe one tempo run. Rest on Friday and Saturday. Have a nice pasta dinner at the Expo and sleep well the night before. The best of luck!

La Crosse Fitness Festival Example Training Guide Marathon

- **Week 1**
Run 4 to 5 miles four or five times. Weekly mileage: 18 to 24 miles. (If this is more than you can handle now, start with the half marathon training schedule and stay on it until you reach Week 6.)
- **Week 2**
Run 4 to 5 miles or five or six times. Weekly mileage: 20 to 26 miles.
- **Week 3**
Run 4 to 6 miles five or 6 times. Weekly mileage: 22 to 28 miles.
- **Week 4**
Restorative week! Run 3 to 5 miles four or six times. Weekly mileage: 15 to 18 miles.
- **Week 5**
Run 4 to 6 miles five or 6 times. Weekly mileage: 23 to 30 miles.
- **Week 6**
Run 4 to 6 miles five or six times. Weekly mileage: 25 to 32 miles.
- **Week 7**
Run 4 to 7 miles five or six times. Weekly mileage: 27 to 35 miles.
- **Week 8**
Restorative week! Base building is over! Run 3 to 5 miles five times. Weekly mileage: 16 to 20 miles.
- **Week 9**
Long run: 8 to 9 miles; moderately long run: 6 miles; easy or tempo runs: 4 miles. One or two rest days. Weekly mileage: 26 to 32 miles.
- **Week 10**
Long run: 9 to 10 miles; moderately long run: 7 miles; easy or tempo runs: 4 to 5 miles. One or two rest days. Weekly mileage: 28 to 35 miles.
- **Week 11**
Long run: 10 to 12 miles; moderately long run: 7 to 8 miles; easy or tempo runs: 4 to 5 miles. One or two rest days. Weekly mileage: 30 to 36 miles.
- **Week 12**
Restorative week! Long run: 7 to 8 miles; moderately long run: 6 miles; easy or tempo runs: 3 to 4 miles. Two rest days. Weekly mileage: 22 to 25 miles.
- **Week 13**
Long run: 10 to 12 miles; moderately long run: 7 to 8 miles; easy or tempo runs: 5 miles. One or two rest days. Weekly mileage: 32 to 38 miles.

- **Week 14**
Long run: 11 to 13 miles; moderately long run: 8 miles; easy or tempo runs: 4 or 5 miles.
One or two rest days. Weekly mileage: 34 to 40 miles.
- **Week 15**
Long run: 12 to 14 miles; moderately long run: 8 to 9 miles; easy or tempo runs: 5 miles. One or two rest days. Weekly mileage: 35 to 43 miles.
- **Week 16**
Restorative week! Long run: 8 miles; moderately long run: 7 miles; easy runs: 3 to 5 miles.
Two rest days. Weekly mileage: 24 to 30 miles.
- **Week 17**
Long run: 13 to 15 miles; moderately long run: 8 to 9 miles; easy or tempo runs: 5 miles. One or two rest days. Weekly mileage: 35 to 45 miles.
- **Week 18**
Long run: 14 to 16 miles; moderately long run: 8 to 10 miles; easy or tempo runs: 5 or 6 miles. One or two rest days. Weekly mileage: 37 to 47 miles.
- **Week 19**
Long run: 16 to 18 miles; moderately long run: 8 to 10 miles; easy or tempo runs: 5 or 6 miles. One or two rest days. Weekly mileage: 40 to 50 miles.
- **Week 20**
Restorative week! Long run: 10 to 12 miles; moderately long run: 7 miles; easy or tempo runs: 4 or 5 miles. One or two rest days. Weekly mileage: 31 to 36 miles.
- **Week 21**
Long run: 18 to 20 miles; moderately long run: 10 to 12 miles; easy or tempo runs: 5 to 6 miles. One or two rest days. Weekly mileage: 43 to 52 miles.
- **Week 22**
Long run: 15 to 16 miles; moderately long run: 8 miles; easy or tempo runs: 4 or 5 miles.
One or two rest days. Weekly mileage: 35 to 40 miles.
- **Week 23**
Long run: 10 to 12 miles; moderately long run: 7 miles; easy or tempo runs: 4 miles. Two rest days. Weekly mileage: 29 to 31 miles.
- **Week 24**
The Marathon is Sunday! Taper off the training. Do a few easy runs of 5 to 7 miles, maybe one tempo run. Rest on Friday and Saturday. Have a nice pasta dinner at the Expo and sleep well the night before. The best of luck to you!

