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What Training Do I Need to Walk a Half Marathon?

By [Wendy Bumgardner](#), About.com Updated: November 13, 2008

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Question: What Training Do I Need to Walk a Half Marathon?

I already walk 5-7 miles several times a week at a speed of under 15 minute miles. Am I ready to walk a half marathon, or what further training do I need?

Answer: You have a good mileage base, your body is ready now to train for higher mileage. In my experience, you could probably go out tomorrow and make it through a 13.1 mile half marathon, but finishing would probably be your only achievement. If you want to feel great at the finish, rather than hobbling in with blisters, aches and pains, you should train at higher mileage once a week.

Mileage Building

It would be good to walk a longer day once a week, gradually increasing your mileage. Walkers do well increasing their long day by 2 miles every 2 weeks. If you are walking 7 miles now, you should do a long day of 9 miles this week, and drop back to 7 miles for the longest day the next week. Then put in a long day of 11 miles the next week. If you have more time to put into it, walk 12-13 miles for your long walk of the week and concentrate on pacing. Then allow for 1-2 weeks of lower mileage before your half marathon race.

[Half-Marathon Training Schedule](#)

Training Effects

By increasing your long day in steps, you give your body time to build endurance and become accustomed to the longer mileage. This will help toughen your feet further and help with endurance during the event.

The Agony of the Feet

For many years, I only walked 10K (6.2 miles) at a time at volkssport events. Jumping up to 10 miles or 13 miles, I would experience blisters that I would never have at lower miles. I had to learn new blister prevention techniques for use at higher mileage.

Hydration and Energy Snacks at Longer Miles

When walking a half marathon, you will be out on the route for twice as long and getting the proper amount of liquids and snacks becomes much more important. I can usually enjoy a 10K walk with one bottle of water and no snacks. But going further means needing some carbs to fuel the body. Your long walks are the time to experiment with this and get it right. If your half marathon provides on-course sports drink and snacks, it is best to use those same products on your long training walks to see if you tolerate them well.

Half Marathon and Marathon Step by Step Advice

Find out how to train for and walk a half marathon or marathon, including advice on shoes, clothing, hydration, snacks, training schedules, and race day tips.

[Training to Walk a Marathon or Half Marathon](#)

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Wendy Bumgardner

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