

Marathon Checklist

The Week Before:

- ***Stay in a good hotel near the start*** – avoid staying with relatives or committing to other social obligations before the marathon, which can lead to added stress and lack of focus. Plan to visit your friends and relatives after the race, not before.
- ***Learn the race course*** – general terrain, aid stations, and mile marks. Drive it or ride it on a bicycle to get a feel for it.
- ***Study the weather reports*** – understand how possible changes in the weather can affect your race, and plan accordingly. Consider bringing an old blanket or sleeping bag in case your wait at the starting area is likely to be long. Bring your own water and toilet paper. Try to bring only clothing and supplies that you don't mind losing.
- ***Pack clothes and equipment you've used before*** – things that you've used at least a couple of times to “break” them in. Don't wear a brand new pair of shoes, socks or shorts. These may add to your pain. Be sure to include hat and gloves for cold weather, if necessary.
- ***Bring your favorite “tried and true” foods with you*** – you might not be able to find them when you're traveling.
- ***Take prescribed medications*** – do not skip anything you normally take.
- ***Eat foods that are normal for you*** – balanced diet, nothing unusual or exotic. Don't experiment with foods, drinks, energy gels, bars, carbo-loading formulas, vitamins, minerals, etc. that you haven't tried before.
- ***Drink plenty of water*** - 4 to 6 ounces every hour.
- ***Continue eating a high carbohydrate diet at least 3 days before the race*** - don't change your diet drastically unless you've done it before successfully.
- ***Go to bed early 2 to 3 nights before the race*** – these nights are more important to good racing than the night before, which may be a restless night.
- ***Mentally rehearse the marathon*** – feeling good, feeling good.

The Day Before:

- ***Drink plenty of water*** – 4 to 6 ounces every hour.
- ***Eat a high carbohydrate diet*** – eat high carbohydrate mini-meals every 3 to 4 hours.
- ***Consider avoiding the race “carbo-loading dinner”*** – the stress level will likely be high and a mass-produced dinner may not be such a good idea for your tummy.
- ***Relax and enjoy the moment*** – all you have is now.
- ***Know where you're going*** - review the procedure, plan and/or route for getting to the starting area.
- ***Pack your bag*** – clothing (shoes, socks, shirt, shorts, warm-up suit), race number and pins, race instructions/map, water (32-64 oz.), Vaseline, bandages, toilet paper, cold weather clothing if necessary (hat, gloves, tights, long-sleeve shirt, etc.), food (carbohydrate source), emergency money (\$20-30), fanny pack or plastic bags, and garbage bags as an inexpensive over-shirt or ground cover.
- ***Stay off your feet*** – relax!

Race Day:

- ***Wake up early and slowly*** – allow yourself plenty of time to get ready. Relax.
- ***Drink plenty of water*** – 4 to 6 ounces every hour until you hear “sloshing.”
- ***Eat*** – only what has worked for you in the past for long runs. Don’t try anything new on race day!
- ***Prepare your mind*** – positive thinking, feeling good.
- ***Prepare your body*** – apply Vaseline to areas that will chafe.
- ***Leave early*** – at least 30 minutes before you think you need to leave in case of unforeseen circumstances such as heavy traffic, etc.
- ***At the race site*** – stay warm and hydrated, get off your feet, relax. Walk around every 30 minutes to get your legs moving. Jog for a 3 to 5 minutes and then stretch shortly before lining up. Your muscles should be warm, flexible and prepared to run easily at your planned pace.

After the Race:

- ***Immediately*** – drink water and high carbohydrate foods and/or sports drinks. Walk, eat and drink for at least 15 to 20 minutes.
- ***Ice*** – any sore spots and immerse your legs in a cold water bath as soon as possible.
- ***Eat*** – high carbohydrate snacks continuously for the rest of the day.
- ***Drink*** – at least 4 to 6 ounces of water or sports drinks every hour.
- ***Walk*** – for 30 to 60 minutes later in the day.