
Training Tips from the 2010 NYC Marathon Winner Gebremariam Gebregzabher

With race day fast approaching, who is better to give advice than the 2010 **New York City Marathon Winner – Gebremariam Gebregzabher**, or as his friends call him Gebre. Gebre is one of the top marathon runners across the globe, and here at the Mississauga Marathon we are fortunate enough to have him share his Top 12 Training Tips for the first time Marathoner. Completing your first 42.2K run will be a moment you'll never forget, so as you train bring Gebre along for the run...



2010 New York City Marathon
Winner 2:08:14

This training pack includes basic advice on principles of training, diet, avoiding injury and preparing for race day itself – in the form of 12 top tips for the novice runner.

12 Top Tips for Novice Runners

1. Wear the right gear: buy a good pair of running shoes at your nearest sports shop. The most important thing is that you feel comfortable in them. You should be able to find a good pair for \$50-60. You should exercise in a loose T-shirt and long tights. If it's cold and wet, you might also need a waterproof top, running hat and gloves. Women may want to invest in a good sports bra available in a department store or sports shop.
2. Start out gently and build up steadily: If you're new to running, progress from walking to jogging, gradually increasing the amount of jogging compared to walking in any one effort. It might also help to keep a training log. Keeping a record of your training time or distance and see how you progress from one week to the next can be a real boost to your motivation.

3. Vary your training: You'll get more out of your training if you don't always stick to the same routes. Do some of your running off-road, either in parks or on woodland tracks: it's easier on your joints, and simply more enjoyable. Also, it's good to do some running on hilly terrain which builds up leg strength. If running at night or early morning, run in well-lit areas.
4. Find a regular time of day to exercise: this will make it easier for you to stick to your routine. You might need to plan ahead to ensure that you avoid the worst of the weather and that your training can be worked around your other commitments.
5. Find a training partner: this will make your training more enjoyable and should help you keep to your routine. Seek out the support of a local running club where there will be other more experienced runners on hand to advise you.
6. Refuel during and after exercise: Get into the habit of drinking a glass of water soon after finishing exercise. On your longer efforts (especially in the March and April) you might want to run with a water bottle and get into the habit of drinking small amounts of water while exercising. When exercising more you need to increase your food intake, so make sure you're eating enough: a good bowl of cereal at breakfast, another slice of toast or portion of fruit might help. Eating a good diet is not so much about being strict about what you can or cannot eat but rather sensible about eating the right kind of food at the right time. For instance, it's better not to eat two hours prior to exercising, while it is good to eat soon after finishing exercise. Try also to eat a varied diet.
7. Beware of injury: It is important that you give your body a chance to warm up, by progressing either from a walk to a jog or from an easy jog to a run – especially if your session involves some faster running. Stretching post-exercise will also help guard against acute feelings of stiffness. If your legs are feeling sore, don't be afraid to replace one of your sessions with a swim or bike ride. Consistency in training is more important than sticking rigidly to a set program.
8. Stay healthy: Reduce the risk of picking up a bug or bad cold by taking a regular dose of Vitamin C (e.g. one 500mg tablet per day). Also make sure you quickly get warm and dry after your run – the hour after exercising is when your immune system is at its weakest. The same applies regarding reducing the risk of stiffness and injury. Keep warm when you're out running by wearing a cap/hat and gloves and a good waterproof top.

9. Train specifically: The most important component of your marathon preparation is your longer effort once a week. Try to increase gradually the duration of this effort as you get closer to your marathon date (May 6th). How much you walk or run in this effort will depend on your fitness and past running experience. Also, you should practice running at your marathon pace during your training.

10. Take part in a race: This will break up the monotony of training; it will give you some mid-term goals and help you assess your progress. It will also give you some experience of coping with pre-race nerves and running among crowds of other runners before the marathon itself.

11. Rest up for race day: This means reducing the amount of running/ training and (where possible) your busy personal/work schedule prior to race weekend. If you're fresh and full of energy when you go to the start of a race, you're more likely to get the best out of yourself and feel satisfied with your result. In the course of training, you should also adopt the same principle of interspersing tough sessions with days of rest or easy running.

12. Finally, be sensible!: Whether it's to take control of an illness or injury, there will be times when you will need to modify your schedule to best suit your individual needs.

All the best on race day and be sure to tie your shoes at the start line!!

Gebremariam Gebregziabher is from Ethiopia with his Marathon career highlights coming with his personal best in Boston, 2011 2:04:53 and winning the ING New York City Marathon in 2010, with a time of 2:08:14 in his New York City debut.

Gebre had dominated the American road-running circuit, winning four major races before his victory in New York with his specialty being in the final sprint to outlast his competition. He is married to a world-class distance runner Werknesh Kidane; they have two young sons, Nathaniel and Muse.

Mississauga Marathon cannot accept any responsibility for any injury sustained as a result of following the above training advice.