

# 33<sup>RD</sup> MARINE CORPS MARATHON



## Training Tips from Jaron Hawkins

1. Emphasize the LONG RUN – Sorry, but a ten mile long run will not cut it – you are running a marathon – 26.2 miles. A gradual build-up in distance of your long run the closer you get to the marathon is best. Your final long run should be two or three weeks before the marathon and you should be running for as long as it will take you to race the marathon. Remember, most long runs are done at an easy pace.
2. Learn how to run tired – Around 15-20 miles into your marathon, your body will begin to shut down. You will be tired. But if you learn how to run tired, you can battle through it. One way to learn how to run tired is to finish off your long runs by running at race pace the final 5 miles. Another way is to think about running twice a day at least two times a week. At least one of those runs should be your normal mileage for the day and the second run can be half that distance.
3. Find a marathon simulator course – Find a running route to either do your long runs on that simulates the marathon course. Run this more frequently as the marathon approaches. This is a very good mental boost in the marathon when you have some idea of what is coming ahead.
4. Join a training group – It is 10 million percent easier to run with other people than to run on your own. You don't need to run every day with a group, but try to do your long run and some harder training with other people. If you are faster than the other people in the group – run with them early in the long run to keep yourself under control and then leave them at the end. If they are faster than you, they'll do the same to you.
5. Take the pressure off – My first two marathons were disasters thanks to travel and some pressure I placed on myself. If you are within driving distance of the marathon – great, but have somebody else drive. Only stay one night in the hotel before the race instead of two. Bring family to spend time with and laugh about funny stories with – get your mind off of being so serious about race day. Keep your stressors down. Eliminate the stressors as much as possible, so you are fully ready to go on race day.

6. Listen to your body – Your aches and pains will tell you if you are feeling good, or if it is time to take it easy. Don't listen to your mind too much – you'll soon find out that your brain is always tired and looks for excuses for you not to run, but the way your physical body feels is the true indicator of how you feel.
7. Find some soft surfaces – Marathon training can destroy your body, but if you make a decision to run on some soft surfaces, (canal towpaths, rail trails) you will be able to save your legs some pain and discomfort.
8. Shorten your taper – If done the three week taper and it leaves me feeling stale every time. I suggest a 10 day taper. Your last hard run should be 10 days out from the marathon and then your daily mileage should decrease just a little bit every day. I like to run the same pace I've been running during this time until I get about 3 days away from race day – then it is time to take it easy.
9. Don't be fooled by race times – Running a fall marathon means racing in the summer. The heat can really mess up your performance and leave you feeling less in shape than you actually are. Believe me, when the temperature drops 20 or 30 degrees your performance will be significantly better.
10. Don't get hurt – This one is easier said than done. I have run through a lot of injuries, but my body was capable of doing it. However, I have had to make the tough decision of taking time off because I felt a little twinge here or there. It is better to take that time off to prevent an injury than to take of 4 or 5 times that long to get over one. Err on the side of caution always.

*Jaron Hawkins is a member of the Cumberland Valley Athletic Club – an Olympic Development running group. He has completed three marathons with a PR of 2:25:32, which he ran at the 2007 Marine Corps Marathon to finish third. Hawkins has also run 24:42 for 5 miles and 45:48 for 15k.*