

# MUSHROOM CAP HALF MARATHON TRAINING PLAN – Level 2

Hi, my name is John Goldthorp of [Fix Your Run](#) and I'm going to guide you through training for this year's Mushroom Cap Half Marathon on November 3rd! Here's just a bit more about me and **I encourage you to reach out to me personally if you have any questions or experience any issues along the way.**

**You can connect with me in the following ways:**

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[Fix Your Run](#) is a specialized fitness coaching business that not only helps runners break through frustrating plateaus and injury cycles, but also helps people build sustainable fitness for a lifetime. Recently named "[Philly's Best Running Coach](#)" by Philadelphia Magazine and featured in [Runners World](#), [Philly.com](#) and [MensJournal.com](#), John currently works with clients at Mass F.I.T. in Center City, Philadelphia and leads weekly group speed training sessions at [Philly Surge Running](#).

As a competitive runner, John, a certified personal trainer and running coach, realized most runners will likely encounter injury at some point in their journey. While many running coaches can develop a solid training plan, John has successfully integrated traditional run coaching with cutting edge strength and movement training. In addition to his B.S. in Kinesiology from Penn State ('00), he's currently Center City Philly's first and only [Neurokinetic Therapy®](#) Level 3 practitioner which enables him to unravel movement compensations that are often the root of many movement related problems like pain or tightness. He is a certified ACE Personal Trainer, a Functional Movement Screen Expert, a Road Runner Club of America certified running coach, and Precision Nutrition Level 1 certified.

## **Intention of the program**

This program is intended for runners who have been cleared by their physician to train for a 13.1 mile half-marathon running race and who can currently, before beginning the program, run at least 8 miles without stopping. The goal is to get to the starting line fit, healthy and injury-free, then have a great experience on race day. We'll introduce speedwork and race pace training so that when you're actually racing, everything is familiar and you're confident you can maintain your pace.

As someone who's looking to run a fast half-marathon, it's critical you also have a support network in place. I strongly recommend you get assessed by a knowledgeable movement professional like a physical therapist, sports chiropractor, or high level personal trainer and then check in with them promptly if something feels 'off' to you during training. Many injuries can easily be prevented by taking action at the first sign of trouble!

## **Brisk Walk**

Going for a brisk walk the day after a hard session, especially the long run, will speed recovery. Try it – I bet you'll feel better afterwards!

## **Easy Running**

Run at a relaxed, conversational pace, slowly enough that you could run with your mouth closed. You don't have to run with your mouth closed, but you should be able to (try it!). If you rated your exertion level on a scale of 1-10, where 1 is a slow walk and 10 is a maximal effort run, an easy run would be about a 4 or 5.

## **Breathing**

When one is truly running at an easy effort level, breathing usually works out to approximately “in for 3 or 4 steps and out for 3-4 steps”. At the moment, I'm in good shape, so for me it's *IN-2-3-4, OUT-2-3-4*. Focusing on that rhythm can help keep your pace in the right place and keep you relaxed and present, rather than worrying about how much farther you may have to run.

## Hard Days Hard, Easy Days Easy

For the most part, we're going to avoid doing back-to-back hard sessions. Instead, we're going to make days with intervals, tempo runs, or long runs a little bit harder by also doing strength training on those days. This way, we can truly recover and absorb the hard training. Plus, you'll show up to your next hard day with more mojo and feel ready to crank it!

## Strides

Typically 20 seconds in duration, think of these as short bouts of relaxed faster running, around 5k pace, maybe a little faster in the last few. Certainly no straining going on here. **I recommend doing these in the last third of the run.**

## Hills

Early in the plan we'll develop leg power by doing some hill repetitions. The key here is to run them NOT TOO HARD at first. You should aim to run a stride or two farther with each rep. We want a hill that is mild to medium. Not very steep! Slow jog back down to the starting point for recovery.

## Tempo

Often I prescribe an effort level, like 75%. This means to sense into your perceived effort level and run at 75% (7.5 out of 10). The pace will be what it is. Don't worry about it! If you're running on hilly terrain, your pace will slow on the uphill and quicken on the downhill. Just maintain the correct effort level. Now, early on, like in minute one, you might not be sure if you're at 75%. Err on the side of being a little slow. Allow your body time to settle into a sustainable groove, then start monitoring that effort!

## Strength – no equipment necessary

Preparing for a half marathon race requires more than just running miles. A stronger body is a more resilient body and endurance quite literally *comes from* strength. The stronger you are, the easier running is on your body. The strength sessions described in this program are designed for folks not used to strength training and the goal is to keep these sessions short, but effective. Hey, I know, runners just gonna run. Strength train anyway.

1. Only use your pain-free, controllable range of motion. This means never move into a painful space, no exceptions.
2. No breath holding. Breath holding is a strategy the body utilizes when a threat (like instability) is perceived. Try to either slow down, or reduce range of motion and see if that naturally cures your inclination to hold your breath. Otherwise, simply be aware of this as you train. If you catch yourself holding your breath, try repeating the move a little slower, noticing where you feel obligated to hold your breath. Then try again, this time breathing through that 'sticking point'.
3. Be consistent. This workout is obviously not very long and you may be inclined to skip it. That would be a mistake.

# MONTH 1 – Base Phase 1

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
<b>6/18</b>	5 miles Easy w/ 6x20sec strides then Strength Session	REST	2 miles Easy. 10 min tempo run @ 75% effort 2 miles Easy. Strength Session	5 miles Easy run	REST	8 miles Easy Then Strength Session	3 miles Easy run *or* 45min brisk walk
<b>6/25</b>	5 miles Easy w/ 8x20sec strides then Strength Session	REST	2 miles Easy. 15 min tempo run @ 75% effort 2 miles Easy. Strength Session	5 miles Easy run	REST	6 miles Easy 1 mile a little faster 1 mile even faster, but controlled. Then Strength Session	3 miles Easy run *or* 45min brisk walk
<b>7/2</b>	5 miles Easy w/ 10x20sec strides then Strength Session	REST	3 miles Easy. 15 min tempo run @ 75% effort 2 miles Easy. Strength Session	5 miles Easy run	REST	3 miles Easy 8x 30sec hill sprints starting at 50% & building to 80%. 3 miles Easy Then Strength Session	3 miles Easy run *or* 45min brisk walk
<b>7/9</b>	6 miles Easy w/ 10x20sec strides then Strength Session	REST	3 miles Easy. 15 min tempo run @ 75% effort 2 miles Easy. Strength Session	5 miles Easy run	REST	10 miles Easy Then Strength Session	3 miles Easy run *or* 45min brisk walk

**Strength – Month 1:** Perform the following circuit 3 times, resting as needed. \*Click the exercise name for a video demonstration.

**Elevated Rocking** – building up to 15 reps. Nose breathing, maintain curve of spine. Knees hover 1/2 inch off floor.

**Single Leg Glute Bridge** – 8-20 per side.

**Reverse Lunge** – Start with 5-7 reps and build to 10 per side. Add weights if you're stable and feel ready

**Side Plank** – 30 seconds per side.

## MONTH 2 – Base Phase 2

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
<b>7/16</b>	2 miles Easy 4x 30sec, 4x45sec hill sprints at 60% to 85%. 2 mi Easy. Strength Session	REST	3 miles Easy. 15 min tempo run @ 75% effort 2 miles Easy. Strength Session	5 miles Easy run	REST	8 miles Easy 1 mile a little faster 1 mile even faster, but controlled. Strength Session	3 miles Easy run *or* 45min brisk walk
<b>7/23</b> <i>cut-back week</i>	4 miles Easy w/ 6x20sec strides then Strength Session	REST	4 miles Easy. 15 min tempo run @ 75% effort 1 mile Easy. Strength Session	3 miles Easy run	REST	3 miles Easy 8x45sec hill sprints 50% effort building to 80%. 3 mi Easy. Strength Session	3 miles Easy run *or* 45min brisk walk
<b>7/30</b>	6 miles Easy w/ 10x20sec strides then Strength Session	REST	3 miles Easy. 20 min tempo run @ 70% effort 2 miles Easy. Strength Session	5 miles Easy run	REST	12 miles Easy Then Strength Session	3 miles Easy run *or* 45min brisk walk
<b>8/6</b>	2 miles Easy 6x60sec hill sprints 60% effort building to 90%. 2 mi Easy. Strength Session	REST	3 miles Easy. 20 min tempo run @ 75% effort 2 miles Easy. Strength Session	5 miles Easy run	REST	10 miles Easy 1 mile a little faster 1 mile even faster, but controlled. Strength Session	3 miles Easy run *or* 45min brisk walk

**Strength – Month 2:** Perform the following circuit 5 times, resting as needed.

**Elevated Rocking** – building up to 15 reps. Nose breathing, maintain curve of spine. Knees hover 1/2 inch off floor.

**Single Leg Glute Bridge** – 8-20 per side. Slightly tuck tail to start and squeeze butt at the top.

**Reverse Lunge** – Start with 5-7 reps and build to 10 per side. Add weights if you're stable and feel ready

**Side Plank** – 30 seconds per side. No breath holding.

## MONTH 3 – Build Phase 1

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
<b>8/13</b>	2 miles Easy 3X 3min @ 5K pace w/ 2min recovery jog. 2 mile cool. Strength Session	REST	3 miles Easy. 4 times: 4min @ 75%, 3min @ 60% 1mi cool down Strength Session	5 miles Easy run	REST	14 miles Slow and Easy  Strength Session	3 miles Easy run
<b>8/20</b> Recovery Week	4 miles Easy w/ 6x20sec strides then Strength Session	REST	3 miles Easy. 3 times: 5min @ 75%, 3min @ 60% 1mi cool down Strength Session	3 miles Easy run	REST	8 miles mostly easy, but last mile push it! Strength Session	3 miles Easy run
<b>8/27</b>	2 miles Easy 3X 4min @ 5K pace w/ 2min recovery jog. 2 mile cool. Strength Session	REST	3 miles Easy. 3 times: 7min @ 75%, 3min @ 60% 1.5mi cool down Strength Session	5 miles Easy run	REST	6 miles Easy 3 miles a <i>little</i> faster 2 miles a <i>little</i> faster 3 miles Easy. Then Strength Session	3 miles Easy run
<b>9/3</b>	6 miles Easy w/ 10x20sec strides then Strength Session	REST	3 miles Easy. 3 times: 8min @ 70%, 3min @ 60% 1.5mi cool down Strength Session	5 miles Easy run	REST	15 miles w/ 12 x 30sec strides starting at mile 10. Strength Session	3 miles Easy run

**Strength – Month 3:** Perform the following circuit 3 times, resting as needed.

**Leopard Crawl with water bottle** – 30-45 seconds. Stay tall, no breath holding, “move like a cat”

**Lateral Step Down** - 8-10 reps per side. Feel weighted leg side hip muscles loading up as you descend, with weight distributed through your whole foot. Then, strongly push the foot into the ground to stand up as tall as possible.

**Side Plank on elbow with top leg raises** – Start with 5 and build to 10 reps per side. Think “long and strong” with the legs. Tuck tail very slightly / don't let but stick out

**Forward Lunge** 8-12/side – Push through WHOLE foot to return to starting position. Think, “push the floor away”.

## MONTH 4 – Build Phase 2

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
<b>9/10</b>	2 miles Easy 6X 2min @ 5K pace w/ 1min recovery jog. 2 mile cool. Strength Session	REST	3 miles Easy. 4 times: 8min @ 70%, 3min @ 60% 1.5mi cool Strength Session	5 miles Easy run	REST	16 miles Easy  Strength Session	3 miles Easy run
<b>9/17</b> recovery week	4 miles Easy w/ 6x20sec strides then Strength Session	REST	4 miles Easy. 10 min tempo run @ 75% effort 1 mile Easy. Strength Session	3 miles Easy run	REST	2 miles Easy 5x 1mile @ HM goal pace, 1 minute rest. 2 miles Easy. Strength Session	3 miles Easy run
<b>9/24</b>	6 miles Easy w/ 8x20sec strides then Strength Session	REST	3 miles Easy. 3 times: 8min @ 70%, 3min @ 60% 1mi cool Strength Session	5 miles Easy run	REST	12 miles Easy 4 miles a little faster. Then Strength Session	3 miles Easy run
<b>10/1</b>	6 miles Easy w/ 8x20sec strides then Strength Session	REST	3 miles Easy. 3 times: 8min @ 75%, 3min @ 60% 1.5mi cool Strength Session	5 miles Easy run	REST	2 miles Easy 6x 1mile @ HM goal pace, 1 minute rest. 2 miles Easy. Strength Session	3 miles Easy run

**Strength – Month 4:** Perform the following circuit 4 times, resting as needed.

**Spiderman Crawl** – 45-60+ seconds. Head up, no breath holding, “move like a cat”.

**Hover Squat** - 5-10 reps per side. Sit back into hips, but feel weight throughout whole foot. On the way up, think, “push the ground away!”

**Side Plank with top leg raises** – Build to 10 reps per side. Think “long and strong” legs.

**Walking Lunge with overhead reach** – up to 12/side. Push through WHOLE foot to return to starting position.

## MONTH 5 – Peak Phase

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
<b>10/8</b>	6 miles Easy w/ 6x20sec strides then Strength Session	REST	3 miles Easy. 4 times: 8min @ 70%, 3min @ 60% 1.5mi cool Strength Session	5 miles Easy run	3 miles Easy run	4 miles Easy 6 miles @ HM goal Pace 1 mile easy. Then Strength Session	30 min brisk walk to speed recovery
<b>10/15</b>	6 miles Easy w/ 6x20sec strides then Strength Session	REST	2 miles Easy 5X 2min @ 5K pace w/ 1min recovery jog. 2 mile cool. Strength Session	4 miles Easy run	3 miles Easy run	2 miles Easy. 4x 2mile @ HM goal pace, 1 minute rest. 2 miles Easy. Strength Session	30 min brisk walk to speed recovery
<b>10/22</b>	6 miles Easy w/ 10x20sec strides then Strength Session	REST	2 miles Easy. 4 miles @ HM goal pace. Strength Session	3 miles Easy run	REST	2 miles Easy. 4 miles @ HM goal pace 1 miles Easy. Strength Session	30 min brisk walk to speed recovery
<b>10/29</b>	3 miles Easy w/ 6x20sec strides then Strength Session	REST	3 miles Easy. 1 mile @ HM goal pace.	REST	2-3 mile relaxed run	<b>RACE DAY!</b> Keep effort “medium” through mile 9. Goal is to finish strong, so run with that in mind!	30 min brisk walk to speed recovery

### Strength – Month 5

Perform the following circuit 2 times, resting as needed. We've built significant strength over the first 3 months, now we'll look to maintain it while our mileage peaks and we taper for the race.

**Spiderman Crawl** – 60+ seconds. Head up, no breath holding, “move like a cat”.

**Hover Squat** - 6-8 reps per side. Sit back into hips, but feel weight throughout whole foot. On the way up, think, “push the ground away!” Try to go slightly lower than last month.

**Side Plank with top leg raises** – Build to 10 reps per side. Think “long and strong” legs. Try positioning yourself on your hand instead of your elbow if you feel ready.

**Walking Lunge with overhead reach** – up to 12/side. Push through WHOLE foot to return to starting position.