

How much kilometers are necessary for a marathon runner?

A month ago I was talking with my friend Fuco (Federico Pisani) and I asked him about what he considered would be the maximum number of kilometers in a day that a distance runner must train to run with success a marathon. To our gathering other coaches and runners joined us with suggestions that ranged from 70 to more than 200 kilometers per week and from 20 to 38 kilometers in a day in some cases .

Each one argued with vehemence his point of view. Actually, it is very difficult to know what is the appropriate length of it, since there are many factors to consider: distance, pace how those fast kilometers will run, characteristics of the athlete who will go through it and many other factors.

All the runners, regardless of their competitive level or their objective, we have once formulated this question, even those who wants to prepare for a race, as the one who has decided to start taking care of himself and runs with the only objective of maintaining his health.

Before giving an answer it is necessary to address the following questions: to what intensity will we run? what will be its duration of the running? How often? How will we increase it week to week? What are our goals? By responding and properly combining these factors both can obtain either professional runners or beginner runners will have an answer. Training effect, which is the result of combining the intensity by the frequency and the duration of the race, considering the objectives that are sought. That way they are produced changes in the cardiorespiratory, circulatory and muscular systems that contribute to improving general physical condition.

To obtain and maintain an optimal state of health and physical condition according to various institutions dedicated to the study of the benefits of sport in the body is enough perform an aerobic exercise (running) for 15 to 30 minutes, three or four times a week and an intensity that allows us to converse without feeling that we drown, with this level of repeated training over the years, cardiorespiratory capacity will improve progressively, that is, it will help you control your physical state. This is fine for people that they only train to feel good, but what about those who aspire to take part in a race, either 5 km, 10 km, half marathon or marathon?

If you plan to take part in shorter races, 5 km or 10 km and your level is beginner, it is enough to reach about 12 km in the Sunday sections. It is very important the quality of how those kilometers are run, for more advanced runners the length of those kilometers can reach about 15 to 16 km, considering that some of those runs will be either to recover from strong sessions of previous training, others to adapt your body to consume fats and others as specific training of the distance in which you will compete.

There are coaches that maintain the criterion that not runner should do sessions of race of more than 80 minutes since from that time the

transaminases enzymes rise. Those enzymes serve in our body as markers of muscle destruction. However, if you are preparing to run a marathon or even shorter, a race of 21 km and you are not able to reach volumes in a long training session that approaches 18 to 22 km it will be difficult for you to obtain the expected results. For marathon runners it is necessary to do at least some session that approaches 30 to 32 kilometers. However, if we evaluate most of the elite marathon runners in the international level we could find excellent results, since they require a very high volume of km (so high as 45 km from a single milestone and others with a maximum of 30 km, and we see that everyone achieved get times under 2 hours 10 minutes for the marathon)

What is certain is that if you are going to run a marathon you must reach an adequate volume in your long runs as it is a way to adapt to your muscles and organism for that distance. To my judgment that adaptation can be reached between 28 and 32 km for a marathon runner. So if you already had achieved a good physical condition and muscle strength, coupled with a good oxygen consumption and of course to a better economy of career, to add more km on your legs would be like trying to continue filling a full glass of water, once it will be full it would spill the water.