Dulux LONDON REVOLUTION TRAILS

ULTRA MARATHON 12 WEEK TRAINING PLAN

BROUGHT TO YOU BY THRESHOLD TRAIL SERIES COACH, KERRY SUTTON

MEET KERRY

THRESHOLD TRAIL COACH, KERRY SUTTON:



Sometimes there can come a point in life when we are looking for something else; something to shake things up, something which gives us the opportunity to stretch ourselves, test ourselves, something that takes us out of the ordinary flow of life….That or you made a drunken bet which you are now being held to! Either way ultra events are perfect to have a new challenge, and test yourself in a very different way.

I fell in to the former category eight years ago. It began with an endurance walk of 50 miles across Scotland. I trained hard, it wasn't always easy to fit sessions in, but I made it to the start line ready to give it my best shot - and absolutely loved it! Fast forward 8 years, and I now compete as a runner at ultra marathons of all distances and have raced all around the world. So first warning: beware, endurance events are hugely addictive, because, believe it or not, they are a lot of fun!

My experience from ultra walker to ultra runner and competitor means that I can understand first hand what it is like take on these challenges. I have written the plan below to get you to the start line of Dulux London Revolution, fit and ready for the challenge ahead of you. It is easy to follow and will lead you by the hand, gradually building your endurance base and fitness over the course of 12 weeks.

Coupled with these plans I am also able to offer bespoke coaching. Being personally coached by me will allow you to have a plan which is tailor made to you and your particular life challenges, sporting ability and goals. The plan I write for you will be backed up with phone, email and text contact providing guidance, support and motivation. If you would like further advice on this visit www.kerrysutton.co.uk and contact me from there.

'Believe and you can achieve'

5 RULES

THE KEY TO A HAPPY FINISHER

There are 5 rules to bear in mind when preparing yourself for an event of this nature.

1. **Consistency** is key. Improvement happens when we do the activity repeatedly, but not in a stop/start fashion. Decide how much time is manageable for you on a weekly basis and stick to it.

2. **Rest** is when the transformation happens. We train to break our muscles down, it's when we rest that they rebuild stronger.

3. Don't neglect your **mental game**. Be aware of the sessions that made you stronger. When you went out and walked when you didn't want to, when you carried on and did another 2km even though you had blisters. The day you finished your 10km in the driving rain. All of these scenarios make you mentally more able to deal with them next time they arise.

4. Have the right **kit**. If you don't, it'll either be the reason you don't train or training will be uncomfortable and less enjoyable. Don't 'make do'

5. Run in all **weathers**. You'll be fully prepared for what ever is thrown at you on the day itself.

Remember this:
No one ever regrets having completed a training session but one often regrets missing one.

NOTES

This plan assumes you can currently run 20 minutes without stopping. Pace isn't important at this stage, but 20 minutes should take you anywhere between 3 - 5 km.

The 12-week training plan is separated into three 4-week blocks. Each block contains 3 weeks where your training will build and increase, and the fourth week will be a recovery week. The final week of Block 4 will be a taper, ending with the marathon.

Consistency is the key to this training plan. Running two, three or four times per week on a regular, consistent basis will lead to huge gains, regardless of the pace and intensity of the session. So, make consistency your goal.

Training intensities

Easy – conversational pace. Effort should not be taxing at all.

Steady – a little harder, but you should still be able to speak long sentences.

Tempo – this is 'uncomfortably comfortable'. You can speak short sentences between breaths, but it's hard.

Hills – these feature in Blocks 2 and are written like this: 4x5 on 5'. This means complete 4 reps of running uphill for 5 minutes. Take 5 minutes rest as you descend between each hill. 3x6 on 3' means complete 3 hill repetitions of 6 minutes in length. Take 3 minutes rest between each. The uphill should be run at a steady to tempo effort.

Long – use the long runs as practice for the ultra marathon. Don't run them all at race pace, as will be tough. Aim for somewhere between easy and steady pacing and use them to test your shoes and to try out different clothing. Make the effort to run on a mix of trails and road for race specificity.

NOTES

Strength and conditioning (S&C)

S&C is an important piece of the puzzle when it comes to training for an ultra marathon, but is often neglected. The first 8 weeks include S&C and it's worth making the effort to get these sessions in. An ultra marathon, particularly the latter stages, is very much about strength rather than aerobic capacity, so building a strong foundation in the first half of the training plan will pay dividends in the second half of the plan, and in the race itself.

Each S&C session should be no longer than 45 minutes, 60 at a maximum. Include exercises that will develop running-specific muscles such as:

- Squats
- Lunges
- Circuit training
- Kettlebell workouts
- Hamstring curls
- Leg press

Finish each S&C session with 10 – 15 minutes of core work, including a mix of:

- Plank
- Side plank
- Crunches
- Russian twists

Recovery

Finally, ensure you pay attention to your recovery after each session. To be able to train consistently, your body needs the nutrition and rest required to build between each run. This means eating a balanced diet with plenty of protein, healthy fats, vegetables and healthy carbs (brown rice, pasta and bread, for example).

Steer clear from trans-fats and, as far as you can, abstain from alcohol, particularly as you get closer to the race.
Finally, ensure you pay attention to your recovery after each session.

BLOCKS

OVERALL TRAINING PLAN SUMMARY

BLOCK 1

- This block is all about consistency. Apart from a couple of *steady* runs, it's all very low intensity and designed to get you out the door without worrying that you have to push yourself too hard. Go easy on yourself and tick each run.
- If you struggle to get out, just put your shoes on and tell yourself to just do 5 minutes...chances are that after 5 minutes you'll finish the session.
- Do make the effort to include the strength sessions on a Thursday - they'll really pay dividends down the line.

BLOCK 2

- As the mileage rises, so does the specificity of training. Keep doing the easy runs, however short they are, as well as the strength sessions.
- Tempo runs are a great way to push your aerobic system a little harder. They should be "comfortably uncomfortable" efforts of around 10 minutes with relatively little rest.
- All Saturday runs are now *steady,* so focus on pace a little more than in Block 1. *Steady* should still feel comfortable - no hero efforts required, just tick the kms.
- Hill sessions make an appearance. Find a hill that's between 3 - 5% (nothing too steep) or use a treadmill if you don't have access to a hill. Aim to keep the effort level *steady to tempo* as you run up, and take it very slow coming back down to recover.

BLOCK 3

- After the 35km, it all starts to wind down. Don't get slack though - you've done so well to get here, you don't want to skip sessions at this stage. Although all the fitness has been gained, ensuring you complete these last few sessions will be good for you mentally.
- Really focus on keeping off your feet and eating a healthy, balanced diet. Make sure you have all your kit together on Thursday 9th May so you have a couple of days to buy any last minute bits.

BLOCK 1

MONTH OF FEBRUARY / MARCH 2019

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	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday	Tips and Comments
WC 18th Feb	Easy 5km	REST	Easy 5km	Strength & Conditioning	REST	Easy 10km	REST	This week is all about getting out there and taking the first steps on your journey. Ensure each run is super-easy. You should be able to hold a conversation if you're running with someone. Focus on being consistent. Week 1 total mileage: 20km
WC 25th Feb	Easy 5km	REST	Easy 5km	Strength & Conditioning	REST	Easy 12km	REST	Another week of gradual build, with a 10k this weekend. If you can incorporate a Parkrun into your Saturday run then go for it - just keep it all nice and easy paced. Week 2 total mileage: 22km
WC 4th March	Easy 5km	REST	Easy 5km	Strength & Conditioning	REST	Steady 14km	Easy 5km	Another solid week banked. If the distances don't seem too great at the moment, remember that it's all about consistency at this stage. Tick all four runs. Easy week next week before we enter Block 2. Week 3 total mileage: 29km
WC 11th March	REST	Easy 5km	Steady 5km	Strength & Conditioning	REST	Steady 5km	REST	Well done on completing your first block! Enjoy some down time, both physical and mental. Include two steady 5k's this week to keep the legs turning over. Week 4 total mileage: 15km

BLOCK 2

MONTH OF MARCH / APRIL 2019

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	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday	Tips and Comments
WC 18th March	REST	Easy 3km	Strength & Conditioning	Tempo 5km 2x8 on 4’	REST	Steady 16km	Easy 8km	As we start Block 2, I hope you enjoy the first tempo session on Thursday. If possible, complete this session with friends - it's much more enjoyable! Remember to get out even when you don't want to, consistency is king. Week 5 total mileage: 32km
WC 25th March	REST	Easy 5km	Strength & Conditioning	Tempo 8km 2x10 on 5’	REST	Steady 18km	Easy 5km	Make the tempo and steady runs your focus this week, but don't let the easy runs slip. We're getting into the meat of the training plan now, and every session counts. Week 6 total mileage: 36km
WC 1st April	REST	Hills 5km 4x5 on 5’	Easy 5km	Speed 5km 8x400m On 90s	REST	REST	Long 25km	Here we go, just over half way through the plan and it's time to hit your first 25km! If you can do this at an official event, then that'd be ideal. If not, make an adventure of it and run and perhaps try to get a friend to run some or all of it with you. After a hill, speed and easy run during the week, completing a half marathon this weekend is no mean feat. Well done! Week 7 total mileage: 40km
WC 8th April	REST	Hills 5km 3x8 on 4’	Easy 10km	Speed 5km 10x400m On 90s	REST	Steady 12km	REST	Here we come to the end of Block 2 with a nice easy week. It'll ramp up from here, but if you've ticked the sessions then you have a brilliant foundation for the marathon. Rest well this week. Week 8 total mileage: 27km

BLOCK 3

MONTH OF APRIL / MAY 2019

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	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday	Tips and Comments
WC 15th April	REST	Easy 8km	Speed 7km 4x1000m on 2’	REST	REST	Long 20km	Easy 10km	Block 3 and we hit our biggest mileage. Make sure you have tested all your kit and nutrition on these long runs so that nothing is new on race day. Week 10 total mileage: 45km
WC 22nd April	REST	Hills 5km 5x5 on 2’	Easy 8km	REST	REST	Long 35km	REST	After the hill and easy session, rest hard on Thursday and Friday before the big one! If you can run 35km, you can run 50km in a race. Treat this as a race practice: use the same equipment, fuel and pacing strategy you intend on using in the race. Choose a mixed route of trail and road. Week 9 total mileage: 48km
WC 29th April	REST	Easy 10km	Strength & Conditioning	Easy 5km	REST	REST	Easy 3km	This week we wind things right down. 3 runs of decreasing distance. Be sure to complete each at very easy effort, but include 5-10 x 60s at marathon pace just to stretch the legs out. Nothing too hard - there's no fitness to be gained now. It's all about getting your body feeling rested and prepared next week. Week 11 total mileage: 18km
WC 6th May	REST	Easy 4km	REST	REST	Easy 4km	EVENT DAY!!	Relax and revel!	It's easy to think carb-loading and moving as little as possible is the best plan of action in the last couple of days, but it lulls your body into a false sense of security! Certainly, make sure you fuel well, but do get out for the run on the day before the race. Take it very slow and include 5 x 30s strides - short pick ups to stretch your legs out. Week 12 total mileage: 58km