

**Some training tips from
DARWIN RUNNERS' & WALKERS INC
PO Box 41421, CASUARINA NT 0811**

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If you can comfortably complete the 12.7 km City to Surf on Saturday June 18th, you are fit enough to train up for the 21.1 km half marathon.

The annual half marathon is organised by the Darwin Runners and Walkers Club and sponsored by the ABC. It will start at 6:30 am on Sunday July 24 from Lake Alexander.

After the City to Surf, you will be at a base distance of at least 12.7 km, so you only need to add a further 8.4 km to finish the half marathon. In the week following the City to Surf, take it easy to enable your body to recover, then gradually increase your distance by small amounts.

Do a long run once per week, interspersed with shorter runs of 4 to 10 km during the week. The shorter runs will help to maintain fitness and increase your speed.

Gradually increase the distance of your long run by about 1.8 km per week over the four weeks following the City to Surf. A gradual progression will allow your body to recover and reduce the chance of injury. By the weekend before the half marathon (July 17), your base distance will be about 20 km. Then leave the extra 1.1 km for the day of the run on July 23.

You should aim to have your hardest run two weeks before the event, then take it easy on the long run the week before. The hard run can aim at increasing speed, although surging can also be incorporated into the shorter runs.

An alternative to measuring weekly progression as a distance, is to gradually increase the time of the long run, so that by July 17 you should be getting close to the time you expect to run.

It is important to do stretching exercises before and after running, to help prevent injuries.

Being well hydrated on long runs is also very important. Make sure you either run past places where water is readily available, or wear a water bottle. If carrying a water bottle interrupts your style and pace, design a loop course where you can carry a water bottle for a short distance, drop it off where no-one will interfere with it, and come back to the same spot after about 5 km.

If it's your first half marathon, your goal should be to finish the run comfortably. Once you've done that, and found that it's within your reach, you can build on the achievement to increase your speed in future years.

The Darwin Runners and Walkers Club holds regular road running or cross-country events at 6.15 p.m. every Wednesday throughout the year. These are held at pre-determined venues in the greater Darwin area and are usually 2 or 5 km, with some up to 10 km. Walkers are welcome.

Varying levels of competition emerge on Wednesday runs due to differing ages and abilities. Some members are not out there to compete, but just wish to engage in regular exercise to improve their fitness. The club encourages people of all ages and abilities to enjoy the improvement in fitness that running or walking brings.

On Saturday July 9, the club is holding a 16 km run from Lake Alexander at 6.30 am as training for the half marathon.

Visit the club's website (www.darwinrunners.com.au) to find the weekly venue, or pick up an annual calendar at sports stores.

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