

THIS IDIOT'S GUIDE TO MARATHON DAY

Carb Loading

Don't go overboard, 3 bowls of brown rice/pasta the night before will just make you sluggish and bloated. Rather add a little extra for a few days before if you feel you have too. Top Tip - TUC biscuits are a great way to get some extra carbs & sodium into you and yummy as well (though not gluten free).



Toe Nails

Cut them by Wednesday, preferably after a bath/shower when they are a little soft - don't cut them the day before just in case you cut a little short - oh the pain...

Leg waxing/chest shaving etc

Don't leave it too late - it will hurt if you do - sweat = salt water ouch!!!

Water

Don't guzzle 3 litres of water on Sunday morning, this week get plenty of water in by sipping throughout the day rather than practicing for a beer drinking competition by downing a pint at a time. 2 to 3 litres a day should serve you well enough. You're looking for your pee to be lemonade colour rather than Kilkenney amber. Don't drink too much on the morning of the race, that way you can avoid endlessly queuing for the portaloos until the race starts or doing a Paula Radcliffe on Stephens Green.

Gear

Start laying out your gear early, the last thing you need is to be panicking on the morning looking for your lucky socks. As a man I can only guess at what women need over & above men's requirements so I'm not even going to try. Bottom line is lay out all the things you usually wear for a long run (nothing new), tops, shorts, sports bra, compression socks, gels, hydration belt (bottles filled) etc... Carry some money just in case (not coins). Make sure the night before you fill in your details on the back of your number (if you're running with someone else's number this is even more important). Attach your number to your top or at least put your safety pins on the bib so they are there in the morning.



Pre-Race

You'll be standing around for a while so pack accordingly. A black bag with holes cut for your head and arms if it's going to be wet, an old top you don't mind throwing away at the start (these are collected up and distributed to charities), old hat and gloves. If you don't have gloves you're happy to throw away then an old pair of socks will do the trick just as well. Some people cut the toes off long socks and wear them as arm sleeves to be discarded later. Don't worry about looking ridiculous, there will be much worse than you - this is about running the marathon not a fashion parade.

Queues for the portaloos will be very long so get in early, bring a handful of moist toilet wipes or baby wipes with you - don't expect toilet paper & they can be disgusting so be warned.

Post-Race

Your race gear bag will be lovely and big (you have to use the one you're given at the expo), pack warm clothes to change into, even if it's a warm day you'll feel the cold quickly so change asap. Have a little snack in there if you can - chocolate is good and bottle of

bubbly if you can fit it. Take on some water as well, good to start the rehydration process early. Try to stay on your feet and walk around a bit, your legs won't like it but will thank you later. Good idea to put your stuff in a black bag, inside the race bag just in case it's wet - better safe than sorry!

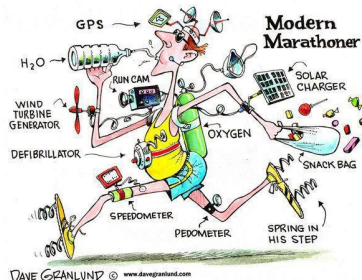
Lubrication

Lube everything and I mean everything! Whether your poison is vaseline or body glide make sure you apply liberally, those spots you don't think will chaff - well lube them too. If it's wet then chaffing will be a bigger issue so bear that in mind. I personally go for KT tape on nipples but shave area first.



Gadgets

GPS Watches - charge them fully the night before and then turn them off. As soon as you get into the bag area try and get a GPS signal (once your watch knows where you are it will pick up signal quicker). If your wave is starting at 9:10, try and get a signal at 9 or earlier. If you have an older model the battery may not last the duration of the race, if it goes dead then just run, don't panic as your watch doesn't actually run for you. Newer models of Garmin have a feature called LiveTrack, check it out, allows family and friends track you live (you need to carry your phone).



Phones - same as above for GPS signal. Bring a little plastic bag to put it in if you're carrying it in your pocket or a bum bag or an arm thingy. If it's wet then the plastic bag will protect it, if it's not then you will be sweating - a lot, so better safe than sorry.

Supporters

They will likely spot you before you spot them but best to be organised (particularly if you're looking to pick up gels or a drink) as you'll be in a sea of runners. Tell them which side of the road to stand on and if you're expecting them at a busy spot then best if they stand at either end of the crowd where they'll be easier to spot, there will be a lot of noise so you mightn't hear them shouting at you.



Other

Thank volunteers & supporters, high 5 as many kids as you can and maybe your thanks and high 5 will inspire them to do what you're doing some day.

Finish

Smile, you've only one finisher pic from this race. Enjoy the cauldron of Mount Street and no matter how you really feel, SMILE.

T-shirts - given the comments I've heard from people about the sizing of race series tops this year, there is normally a desk after the water and fruit at the finish where you can change your shirt if it's too small or too big, if you miss that desk then you'll be without a shirt you can use for bragging rights for the next year.

