

London Marathon: Race Weekend Plan

26 APRIL

RUN STARK COACHING

Precision preparation from Friday through to the start line. Your fitness is already there — this weekend is about letting it show up.



The Approach This Weekend



At this stage, **nothing will make you fitter** — but the next 48–72 hours can significantly influence how well that fitness performs on race day.

Glycogen

Maximise carbohydrate stores through structured loading

Hydration

Consistent, measured intake — not reactive gulping

Clarity

Remove all decision-making before race morning arrives

Calm

Reduce digestive stress and protect mental composure

Carbohydrate Loading: The Numbers

Carbohydrate loading doesn't mean overeating — it means shifting the composition of your existing daily calories to prioritise carbohydrate. Total food volume may feel similar; what changes is the ratio.

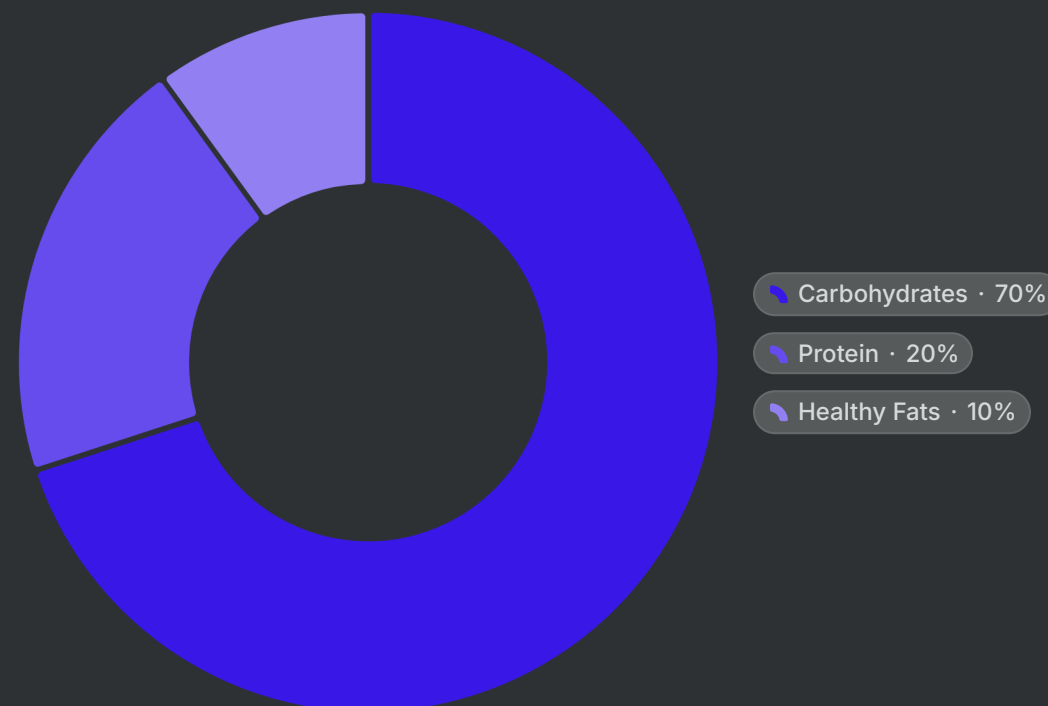
2 Days Out (Friday)

- Target: 5–6g of carbohydrate per kg of bodyweight
- Example: 70kg athlete = 350–420g carbohydrate
- Keep meals familiar, low-fibre, and well-spaced across the day

1 Day Out (Saturday)

- Target: 6–8g of carbohydrate per kg of bodyweight
- Example: 70kg athlete = 420–560g carbohydrate
- This is the most important fuelling day — maximise glycogen storage without GI risk

Recommended Macronutrient Split on Loading Days



i This is not about eating more — it's about eating smarter. Reduce fats and keep protein moderate so carbohydrates can dominate your plate without pushing total calories significantly higher.

FRIDAY

Beginning the Carbohydrate Load

Friday is intentional but controlled. Begin increasing carbohydrate intake to **5–6g per kg of bodyweight** across the day — enough to start topping up glycogen stores without overwhelming digestion.

1

Breakfast

Oats with banana and honey

2

Lunch

Rice or potatoes with lean chicken or fish

3

Dinner

Same simple structure — familiar, low-fibre, carb-focused

- ① Begin reducing high-fibre foods: large salads, beans, and heavily fibrous greens. Include one electrolyte drink, especially if you sweat heavily or are prone to cramping.



SATURDAY

Full Carbohydrate Loading & Final Prep

Saturday is the **most important fueling day** of the weekend. Target **6–8g of carbohydrate per kg of bodyweight**, keeping meals simple and low in fibre to maximise glycogen storage without GI risk.

- ✔ Urine should be a **light straw colour** by evening — the clearest indicator of proper hydration without excess.

01

Breakfast

Oats with honey and banana, or toast with jam

02

Lunch

White rice or pasta with a small amount of lean protein

03

Dinner

Carb-dominant plate — add your carbohydrate drink mix alongside to boost intake without extra food volume

04

Evening

Lay out kit, organise gels, confirm sodium tablets and race timings. Everything ready before bed.

✔ Eat

White rice, pasta, toast, banana, honey, jam, carb drink mix

✗ Avoid

High fat, heavy spice, excess fibre, anything unfamiliar

Saturday Evening: Remove All Uncertainty



Kit Laid Out

Race vest, shorts, socks, shoes — everything visible and ready the night before



Gels Organised

Count, order, and attach gels in the sequence you will take them during the race



Sodium Tablets

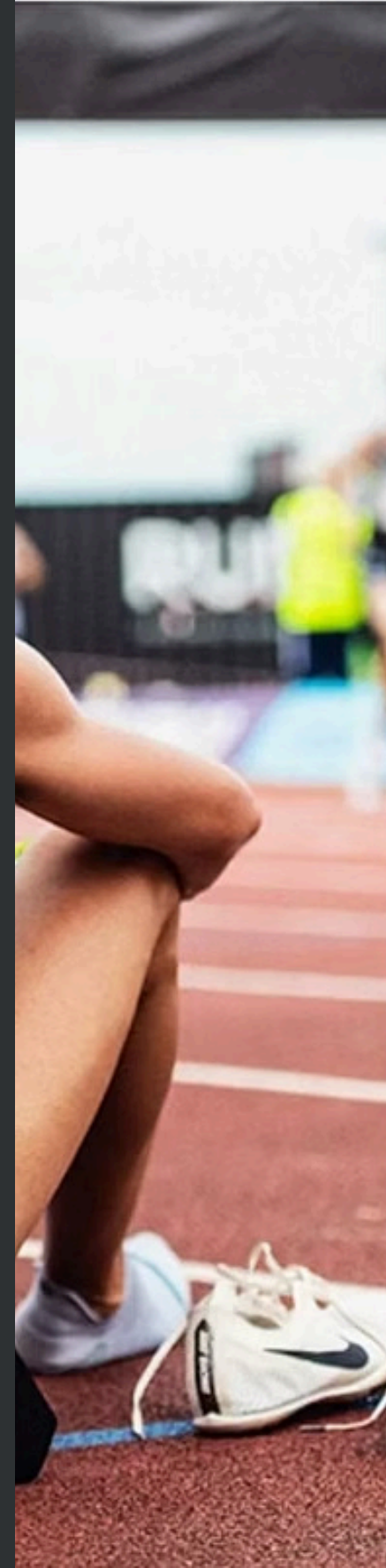
Pre-loaded and accessible — plan one tablet every 45 minutes from the start



Timings Confirmed

Set alarms, confirm travel, and know exactly what time you wake, eat, and arrive

- ❑ Sleep: Aim for **7–9 hours**. Nerves may disrupt sleep slightly — this is completely normal and will not harm performance if the previous nights have been adequate. Don't force it.



Controlled, Familiar, Prepared



Race morning should feel **calm and structured** — not rushed. Mirror exactly what you have practised in training.

3 Hours Before

1

Breakfast: toast with honey and banana, or oats with honey. 1–2g carbohydrate per kg bodyweight. Include your carb drink mix.

30 Min Before Start

3

Take your first gel (Caffine) if you use, with a small amount of water to elevate blood glucose ahead of the gun.

2

Through the Morning

Sip fluids steadily. Avoid large volumes at once — overhydrating is as problematic as underhydrating.



RACE DAY

In-Race Fueling: Structure & Discipline

London Marathon a major, it is exciting, this often tempts runners to start too aggressively, increasing early carbohydrate demand. Stick to your plan regardless of what those around you are doing.

60–90g

Carbohydrate per hour — based on your size and what you have trained and tolerated

25–30 Min

First gel into the race, then every 25 minutes consistently thereafter

Every 30–45 Min

One sodium tablet to maintain fluid balance and reduce cramping risk

Every Station

Small, regular sips of water — never skip early aid stations

Final 10–12km: Stay Composed

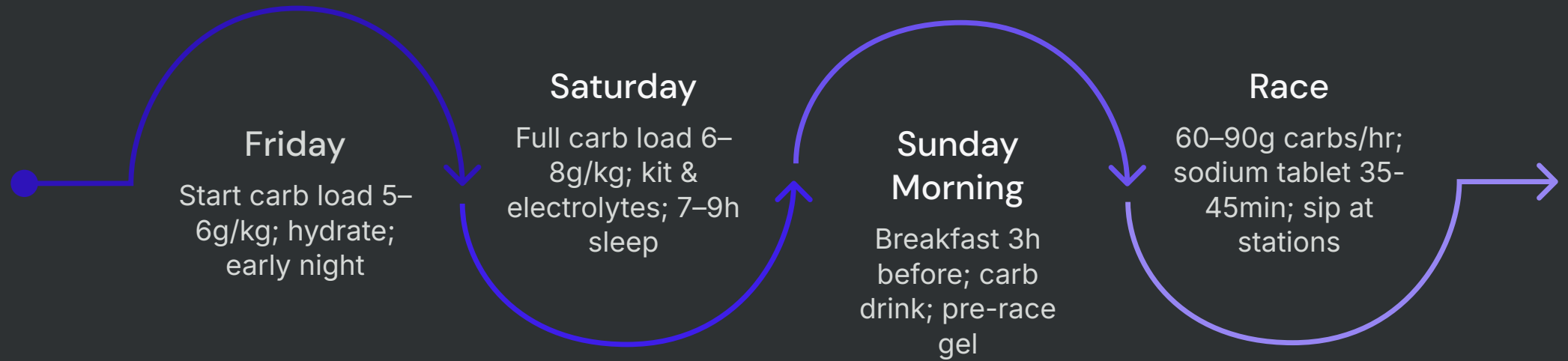
The final third is where glycogen stores are under the greatest pressure and where most runners begin to fade. **Your consistency becomes your advantage.**

Effort will feel higher even if pace holds steady — this is normal. Do not panic and do not deviate from your plan.

⚠ Do not stop fueling or hydrating in the closing kilometres. Many runners make this mistake when they feel fatigue setting in. Keep going — it works.



Weekend at a Glance



Follow this structure precisely — every phase builds on the last. Disrupting any one stage creates unnecessary risk on race day.

Trust the Work. Execute the Plan.

Run Your Training Pace

Don't outrun your training — stick to the marathon pace you've averaged in training.

Stay Even

Start and finish at an even pace. Negative splits are better than positive, that is when fatigue builds.

Stay Efficient

Your body is metabolically adapted to this pace and burns fuel most efficiently there.

Be Disciplined Early

Resist the London pace trap even more strongly and don't get pulled into others' paces.

Finish Strong

Trust your training, stay disciplined through miles 1-15, and follow the plan consistently to the line.

A well-fuelled, well-paced marathon rarely feels perfect — but it feels controlled. And that is what leads to your best performance.

Start Controlled

Resist the London pace trap in the early miles

Stay Consistent

Fuel and hydrate on schedule, every time

Finish Strong

Your preparation ends at the start line — race with confidence

