

Key Paces for Recreational Runners

	Slower-----Faster			
	Easy Pace (EP) <i>Also called Conversational Pace</i>	Marathon Pace (MP)	Tempo Pace (TP) <i>Also called Threshold Pace</i>	Goal Race Pace (GP)
Perceived Effort on Scale from 1-10	5-6	6-7	7-8	Depends on race distance and the runner's experience, fitness level and goals
Breathing	Little to no huffing and puffing. Easy. Comfortable.	A little bit of huffing and puffing, but comfortable	A little bit of huffing and puffing. Comfortably hard, but not too hard	Depends on race distance and the runner's experience, fitness level and goals
Talking	Easy	Easy-Moderate	Can still hold a conversation, but with some difficulty	Depends on race distance and the runner's experience, fitness level and goals
% of HR Max	65-79%	80-89%	88-92%	Depends on race distance and the runner's experience, fitness level and goals
% of Weekly Training Mileage	75-100% (some say 85-100%), depending on where you are in the training cycle	0-20% or 18 miles, whichever comes first	0-10%	Depends on race distance and the runner's experience, fitness level and goals
Benefits/Purpose In Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthens cardio-vascular system • Increase quantity and size of mitochondria in cells, improving muscles ability to use oxygen and conserve glycogen • Strengthens muscles in legs, torso and arms • Strengthens tendons, ligaments, joints and bones • Builds resistance to injury • Allows control over form • Allows for building mileage with less chance of overtraining or injury • Social 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepares you physically and mentally to reach goal marathon pace • Allows practice for fuel and drinking • Builds confidence • Also good for runners not yet training for a marathon to adapt to prolonged runs at a pace slightly faster than easy pace 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Builds speed • Increases efficiency of cardio-respiratory system • Improves endurance • Coverts slow twitch muscles to fast twitch • Teaches patience while handling low-grade physical discomfort 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepares you physically and mentally to reach your goal race time • Often used as a teaching tool (to teach pace judgment), rather than as a fitness tool

Additional Info	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 100% of base miles* should be at EP and 75-80% (some say as much as 90%) of later stages of training • Even Olympic athletes spend 70-80% of their training at Easy Pace. It's the strategic use of <u>small</u> amounts of tempo, speed work at appropriate phases of training that builds speed • Running too much at paces faster than EP can lead to overtraining, decreased performance or burnout 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is the pace you can maintain for 30-60 minutes, or for most recreational runners, ~10k • Represents your lactate threshold, where your body starts to produce more hydrogen ions and lactate than it can get rid of • Should be introduced only after base miles* have been completed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ideally based on time from a recent race, your current fitness level and realistic goals • For races up to a 10k, goal race pace for most recreational runners will be at or faster than tempo pace; for races longer than 10k goal race pace will be slower than tempo pace • Should be introduced only after base miles* have been completed
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**Base miles are miles you run prior to or during the first phase of a training plan to build a solid foundation of fitness from which to grow.*

How do I identify my paces? – Three common ways to identify your paces include: 1.) *perceived effort*- indicators include breathing, talk test, “weight” of legs, fatigue, etc. This will vary from day to day depending on a variety of factors including terrain, temperature, amount of sleep, diet, stress levels, hormones, etc. 2.) *heart rate*, which requires you to identify your max heart rate and monitor your heart rate during workouts or 3.) *a pace calculator*, which provides appropriate training paces and predictions for a variety of race distances based on your recent race stats. The more recent your past race and the more similar in distance to your goal race, the more accurate the pace calculator results. Paces provided are meant to be used a guide, or an average, not gospel. Pay as much, or more, attention to your body (breathing, talk test, heart rate, etc.) as you do your watch. Two popular pace calculators are Jack Daniels’ VDOT Calculator: <http://runsmartproject.com/calculator/> or the McMillan Calculator: <https://www.mcmillanrunning.com/>

“Do the minimum amount of work for the maximum payoff... It’s not about running fast workouts. It’s about running smart workouts that lead to fast races.”

~Jack Daniels, exercise physiologist, running coach, author

Sources:
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