

OCR BREAKDOWN

Bonus

TAPERING

BEFORE YOUR BIG RACE

"TAPERING"

It's a term recognized by most athletes as the time period in which we reduce volume just before a big performance day.

You are essentially "pulling the reins" so that your body can recover and make the adaptations and changes that you've been working so hard for.

INSTEAD OF THINKING OF THIS PERIOD AS A "TAPER", THINK OF IT AS A "CHARGE" PERIOD

Because that's what we are doing! Filling the tank and celebrating the hard work you've been putting in. And guess what? That charged battery will be at its peak on race day.

WHAT THE EXPERTS HAVE TO SAY:

A recent paper published in the International Journal of Sports Medicine reviewed more than 50 scientific studies on tapering to find out whether tapering betters performance, and how to go about it. The review showed that there is no question tapering works. Most studies found an **improvement of about 3%** when athletes reduced their training before competition. This translates to more than five minutes for a three-hour marathoner or more than a minute for those racing 10K in 40 minutes.

Exercise physiologist Greg Wells, Ph.D, and Author of Superbodies: Peak Performance Secrets from the Worlds's Best Athletes explained in a recent interview with SELF magazine that,

"It's counter intuitive because a lot of people want to train right up until the last minute, get in that one last workout," he says. But the research and evidence suggest that that's probably the last thing you actually should be doing."

The time that you should be tapering varies depending on the length of your race.

MORE ON THAT IN A MOMENT...



WE WANT YOU PERFORMING AT YOUR BEST ON RACE DAY SO, LET'S FIRST IDENTIFY YOUR RACES WHERE TAPERING WILL BE NECESSARY AND GET THEM ON YOUR CALENDAR.

BRAIN BREAK: Rank your races



Let's write down all of your races for the the calendar year
We will come back to "Taper Start"

Race	Location	Date	Length	Rank	Taper Start

"RANK" is going to help you to identify if a taper is necessary
DISTANCE will determine the duration of your taper.

This is how we want you to rank your races:



A races are your **MOST** important race(s) of the year. World Championship Races, National Series, Age Group awards or just a solid personal best. **These are your taper races.**



B races are challenging performance benchmarks but you don't consider as the big kahuna.



C races are your fun runs, social gatherings and others outside of your training program.



Now we have identified what your calendar looks like.
Studies conclude that the optimal taper length is as follows:

Race length	Taper Length
5K/10K	7-10 days
15K-30K	11-14 days
Marathon	19-22 days

SO...

- ✓ PULL OUT YOUR CALENDAR.
- ✓ WORK YOUR WAY BACKWARDS FROM YOUR RACE DATE TO IDENTIFY YOUR "BEGIN TAPER" DATE.
- ✓ FILL IN YOUR TAPER START DATE ON THE PREVIOUS PAGE.
- ✓ ADD A REMINDER IN YOUR CALENDAR TO BEGIN YOUR "CHARGE" ON THESE DATES.

You have the "When", now here's the **HOW**...

First, tapering is often misunderstood.

A taper is a reduction in **VOLUME, not necessarily intensity.**

Also, when we say a reduction in volume that does not mean you have to cut the number of days that you run, it would mean you are shortening the distance that you cover in each of those days.

For example: If you run 5 days a week. Do not cut to running 3 days. Simply run a shorter distance on those 5 days.

When we are referring to a HIIT/strength day, you do not need to avoid exercise, just lessen the repetitions that you are performing. And PLEASE...though you are stoked about your upcoming race, this is NOT the time to attempt a 1 rep max PR's. (Yes, it's happened)

Accessory work focused on "skill" can still be practiced during your taper period.

WEEKLY REDUCTION IN VOLUME (TOTAL MILES/REPS) DURING YOUR CHARGE PERIOD:

Race distance	3 weeks out	2 week out	Race Week
5K to 10K	0%	20%	50%
15K to 30K	0%	30%	50%
Marathon	20%	40%	60%

So your resting more and running less.

WHAT TO DO WITH ALL OF THIS “EXTRA TIME?”

- **MOBILITY**- Spend extra time, stretching and foam rolling. Tissues that are able to achieve an optimal range of motion are going to perform better than those that are short and restricted.
- **VISUALIZATION**- Spend time to envision you in your upcoming race. Your arrival, warm up, the start line, the journey and a strong finish. **YOU ARE WHAT YOU BELIEVE.**
- **PREPARE**- This will be leading you right up to race day. This is when you can research the weather for the event. Start to brainstorm about any challenges that may occur on race day and come up with strategies for surpassing those challenges.
- **NUTRITION**- Nourish your body with nutrient dense foods during this period and maintain proper hydration (your still using your cup, right?!))

COACHES NOTE: During a taper period it is common for athletes to experience “pre-race blues” or just feeling off. **This is normal.** You are going from a more intense training program in preparation for your race to spending less time training...which means your body is going to react. It also means that have more time to think and that thinking generally includes getting excited about racing and questioning whether or not you have done enough in preparation.

"Don't let these thoughts be an energy suck. Take a breath. You've done everything in your power to prepare and there is no need to waste your energy on worries of any sort. Use that energy to cross the finish line!"