

Key Strategies to Running Boston: by Coach Mike Reif

Pre-race thoughts

1. Have a game plan, race strategy in your head that you've rehearsed/visualized. Keep it positive.
2. Sleep well the two nights before the race. Hydrate well a few days before. Have a decent breakfast. Race start time is dependent upon your corral. See: <http://www.bostonmarathon.org/FAQs.asp> for detailed information
3. Some have found a cup of coffee before the race helps to charge them up a bit
4. Be sure your toilet needs are taken care of/planned for in advance.
5. Have an alarm clock plus a back up plan (wake up call) to make sure you don't miss the bus
6. Come prepared with 1-2 plastic bags (you can sit on one or wear it) of "stuff" you can have at the start – to keep you warm, dry, hydrated and ready for any conditions – and plan on tossing everything – just prior to the gun.
7. Have your race shoes, and clothes/equipment ready to go the night before. Do not run in Hush Puppies like Coach Reif did one year.
8. Be confident! You've done all the hard work and earned your way. Enjoy it. Run a great race . . . with your head.

The Race:

I. Hopkinton to Framingham (Start – 6 miles) Look at the course map and elevation map so you're prepared

Elevation drops from 462 to 177 feet – The first mile drops pretty rapidly and it continues dropping more gradually . . . with some minor ups and downs but overall it's down, down, down for the first 4 miles and then becomes rolling. Use the first 6 miles almost as a warm-up. Run relaxed, go with the flow, and don't brake. BUT DO NOT run it too fast. Enjoy the crowd, enjoy running, get comfortable and into your goal pace or a tad faster BUT do not go more than 10 seconds per mile faster than your average goal race pace during this overall stretch . . . or else it will come back to bite you in the butt. Expect the first mile to be slow moving because of the crowd . . . unless your name is Ryan Pauling or you're charging out of the elite corral.

II. Framingham to Natick (6 -10 miles). This section is relatively flat . . . some minor rolling terrain but the overall elevation remains at about 175 feet. In this section you really need to focus on getting into a comfortable marathon goal pace. Maintain a pace with groups around you. You're likely to find people at this point with similar goal times as you. Keeping a good rhythm and staying relaxed is key. Be sure you have started consuming energy replacement fluids so you will have sufficient fuel and fluid to carry you once you past the 2 –3 hour mark. Ingesting small quantities every 15 minutes from here on in will pay off later.

III. Natick to Wellesley Square (10-13.1 miles) Elevation drops from 177 to 137 feet. A few rolling, moderate hills but you'll roll over them easily. Watch out for runners slowing down who went out too fast and are starting to come back to you. Run the tangents to cut down the point to point distance but be careful as you do this.

IV. Wellesley Square to Lower Newton Falls (13.1-16 miles) Elevation drops from 140 feet to 49 feet. The drop at Newton falls is the steepest downhill on the course since the first mile. The downhill is about .75 of a mile. Let the hill do the work. Use a slight forward lean but be cautious to not go too fast and hurt your quads. Try not to "brake" (heel striking causing you to jolt the quads). Be fluid but not overly aggressive down the steep hills.

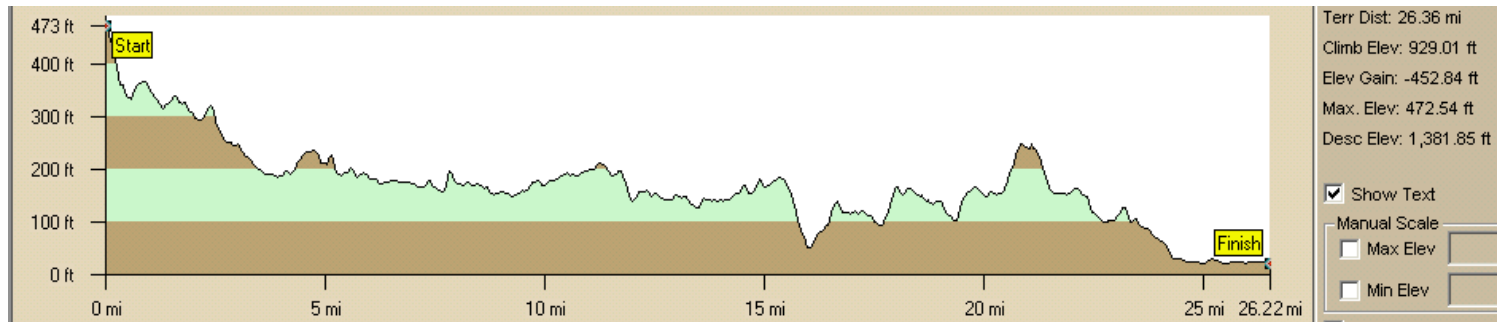
V. Lower Newton Falls to Cleveland Circle. (16-22 Miles) Elevation rises from 49 to 236 feet, then drops to 147 feet. This is a very tough section with a series, chain, of hills including the infamous Heartbreak Hill being the last of them. Keep your effort the same as on the flats but now with a slightly increased leg turnover to get you up the hills. Do not over stride and bound . . . there are too many hills to push up them too hard. Shorter strides will get you up easier. Push the down hills a bit in this section to stretch the muscle some and gain momentum up the next hill. The hills are gone once up Heartbreak. Boston College will be your right just after mile 21. **Maintain your stride rate at 90 strides per minute per side. Count your strides for one minute at each mile mark from here on in.** Periodically focusing on your stride rate will keep you moving with quick feet a bit faster and will keep you focused on the task at hand. Picking off slower runners who went out too fast can be a motivator . . . go by 'em when you can.

VI. Cleveland Circle to Kenmore Square (22-25 miles) Elevation drops from 147 to 20 feet . . . going down in a gentle manner . . . but that's not always so easy. Keep your focus on running this section with a good rhythm while trying to stay relaxed/recovering from the hills. Keep your leg turn over going. You've gotten this far . . . now you're on your way home. Yeeha! Even here, count your stride rate for one minute once every mile. . . aim for 90 strides per side per minute. 180 total. You're on your way to a fun, hard earned finish. This is where you need to be tough, be determined and give it your all. You'll be excited knowing the finish is near.

VII. Kenmore Square to Finish (25-26.2 miles) Once you are by the big Citgo sign you've got a mile to go. There is now an underpass by Rt.90 (roll down, then a gradual incline) then it's flat with a slight incline on Hereford Street, then a 1/4 mile gradual downhill finish. Focus on good biomechanics . . . run tall, chest forward, good turn over, good arm swing. Smile! Be tough. Know you are going to feel the rush of finishing this awesome race down the homestretch. Enjoy it. Enjoy the crowd! Have fun! Congratulations on getting here.

Call Coach Reif with results when you get a chance 585-749-5897 :-)

Boston Marathon Course Profile:



Here are some target times, running with even splits:

Men's Olympic Trials qualifying time for 2012 = 2:19		Women's A Standard to qualify for the Olympic Trials = 2:39		Women's B Standard to qualify for the Olympic Trials = 2:46		3 Hour Marathon		3:30 Marathon		4:00 Marathon	
Mile	Split	Mile	Split	Mile	Split	Mile	Split	Mile	Split	Mile	Split
1	00:05:18	1	00:06:04	1	00:06:20	1	00:06:52	1	00:08:00	1	00:09:09
2	00:10:36	2	00:12:08	2	00:12:40	2	00:13:44	2	00:16:01	2	00:18:19
3	00:15:54	3	00:18:12	3	00:19:00	3	00:20:36	3	00:24:02	3	00:27:28
4	00:21:13	4	00:24:16	4	00:25:20	4	00:27:28	4	00:32:03	4	00:36:38
5	00:26:31	5	00:30:20	5	00:31:40	5	00:34:21	5	00:40:04	5	00:45:48
6	00:31:49	6	00:36:24	6	00:38:00	6	00:41:13	6	00:48:05	6	00:54:57
7	00:37:08	7	00:42:28	7	00:44:21	7	00:48:05	7	00:56:06	7	01:04:07
8	00:42:26	8	00:48:32	8	00:50:41	8	00:54:57	8	01:04:07	8	01:13:16
9	00:47:44	9	00:54:37	9	00:57:01	9	01:01:49	9	01:12:08	9	01:22:26
10	00:53:03	10	01:00:41	10	01:03:21	10	01:08:42	10	01:20:09	10	01:31:36
11	00:58:21	11	01:06:45	11	01:09:41	11	01:15:34	11	01:28:10	11	01:40:45
12	01:03:39	12	01:12:49	12	01:16:01	12	01:22:26	12	01:36:10	12	01:49:55
13	01:08:58	13	01:18:53	13	01:22:21	13	01:29:18	13	01:44:11	13	01:59:05
14	01:14:16	14	01:24:57	14	01:28:42	14	01:36:10	14	01:52:12	14	02:08:14
15	01:19:34	15	01:31:01	15	01:35:02	15	01:43:03	15	02:00:13	15	02:17:24
16	01:24:53	16	01:37:05	16	01:41:22	16	01:49:55	16	02:08:14	16	02:26:33
17	01:30:11	17	01:43:10	17	01:47:42	17	01:56:47	17	02:16:15	17	02:35:43
18	01:35:29	18	01:49:14	18	01:54:02	18	02:03:39	18	02:24:16	18	02:44:53
19	01:40:48	19	01:55:18	19	02:00:22	19	02:10:32	19	02:32:17	19	02:54:02
20	01:46:06	20	02:01:22	20	02:06:43	20	02:17:24	20	02:40:18	20	03:03:12
21	01:51:24	21	02:07:26	21	02:13:03	21	02:24:16	21	02:48:19	21	03:12:21
22	01:56:43	22	02:13:30	22	02:19:23	22	02:31:08	22	02:56:20	22	03:21:31
23	02:02:01	23	02:19:34	23	02:25:43	23	02:38:00	23	03:04:21	23	03:30:41
24	02:07:19	24	02:25:38	24	02:32:03	24	02:44:53	24	03:12:21	24	03:39:50
25	02:12:38	25	02:31:43	25	02:38:23	25	02:51:45	25	03:20:22	25	03:49:00
26	02:17:56	26	02:37:47	26	02:44:43	26	02:58:37	26	03:28:23	26	03:58:10
FINISH	02:19:00	FINISH	02:39:00	FINISH	02:46:00	FINISH	03:00:00	FINISH	03:30:00	FINISH	04:00:00

At Boston you will want the first few miles to feel extremely easy and be within about 10 seconds (slower) than your goal pace. Miles 6-20 should be 5-10 seconds faster than goal race pace. Miles 20-26 will likely be a few seconds slower than goal pace. Be sure to know the major landmarks of the last few miles so the crowd does not confuse you.