

JSET-solo

The following document is provided to help you successfully train for, and race, a marathon using the JSET approach. It supports the document explaining the basics of the JSET system, so any questions you have that are not covered here will probably be answered in there. You should be sure to (re)read that one before you read this. This document is available at www.jset.run/jset-plans/, under the "Give me the details" button.

There is very little difference between the JSET-solo dashboard compared to the JSET-full dashboard. That's because the only significant difference is that **I will not be monitoring your training or giving training advice**; hence you're going solo. I will still check the dash once per week, so if you need any changes to the plan then leave me a message on the 'Talk to Josh S' box. Changes I can make include:

- Pushing the plan. If you regularly feel you could run more than the plan wants then let me know and I'll challenge you more by boosting your race goal.
- Reducing the plan. If you are regularly missing the targets it might be wise to ask me to reduce the race goal a little.
- Editing incorrect data. If you upload incorrect data to Starva you can let me know what you want it replaced with and I'll do my best to get the dashboard showing your true distance & pace.

Please remember that I will be checking your dashboard once per week, so these changes will not happen instantly.



Part 1: Using JSET to train for a marathon

Hopefully you're already familiar with how JSET measures training load and creates a training plan. In this section you'll find answers to some common questions that runners have during JSET training. Enjoy!

Speedy training

There are many runners who do not do any speedy training at all and are still able to run fast marathons. There are also runners who need a fair bit of their running to be speedy in order to achieve fast race results. In practice most runners are somewhere in the middle - a small amount of speedwork provides the necessary training stimulus. For this reason I recommend that once you've been training for around a month you add the occasional speedy session in your training. Exactly what format this speedy running takes is less important than the simple act of moving your legs fast and pushing yourself. I use my semi-regular attendance at Parkrun for my speedwork. It is only 5km each week but I really push myself during this 5k.

Easy / recovery / rest weeks

Unlike most training plans, JSET does not prescribe weeks where you reduce your training in order to recover. This is because how often 'easy weeks' are needed is very dependent on the individual. In my experience, some runners find they need easy weeks up to every 4th week, while others find they do not need easy weeks at all. This means it is your job to listen to your body and decide when to back off for a few days. I recommend taking easy weeks when you wouldn't be running anyway due to other life commitments (work, travel, family, etc).

Overachieving

It is absolutely fine to run more than JSET says, as long as you do not overtrain or injure yourself. JSET simply sets out the lowest training load you need each week, so doing more will mean you are ahead of the game. If you regularly do more than JSET is asking for then consider asking me to boost your race goal - there's every chance you can do better than you set out to.

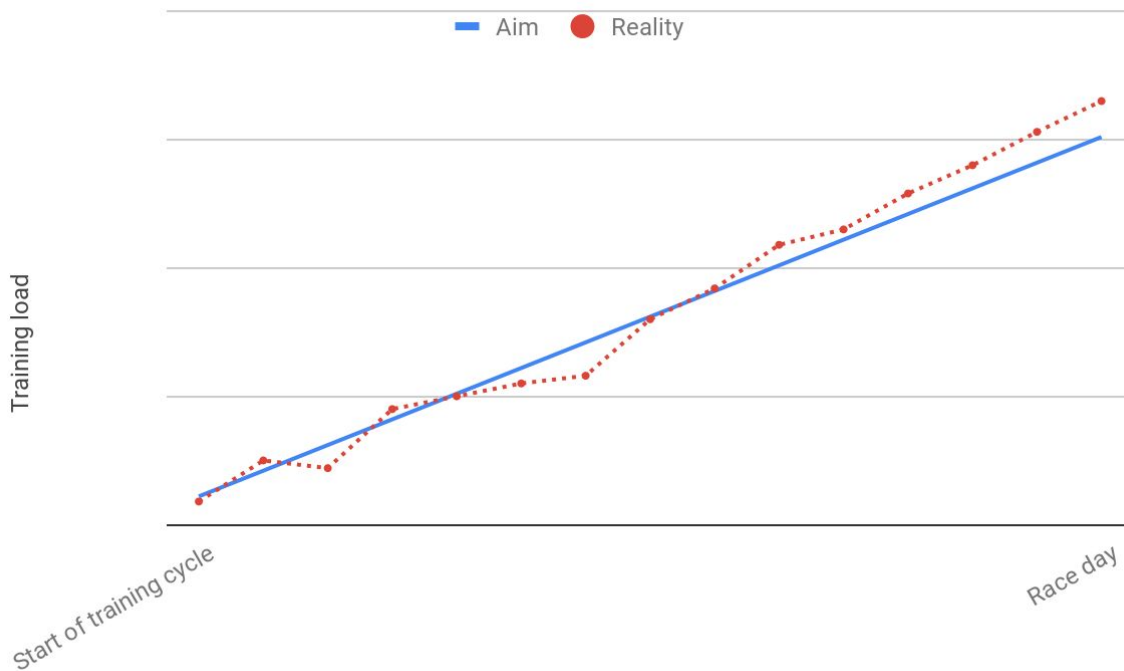
Avoiding injury

There is no way to be totally sure you are not going to pick up an injury during any training plan. However, there are ways to minimise your injury risk. Listen to your body and pay attention to

the aches and pains you feel. If you feel a pain that you are not accustomed to then this may be the early signs of an injury and you should ease off. My experience has also been that speedwork can result in more injuries than lower intensity running; so I also suggest keeping the volume of speedwork down.

Pushing the plan

If you are regularly exceeding your training load target then you can ask me to boost your race goal. There are two ways I can do this; best explained by the graph below:



Firstly, I can make the 'starting' training load higher. If you're near the start of your training that will have a large effect on the training load you need in the next few weeks, but is unlikely to affect the race time you could achieve. Or, I can increase the 'race day' training load. This will mean that the gradient of the blue line increases i.e. there will be a bigger step-up in training each week. **Please tell me how you want your training plan 'pushed'**. Of course I can do both of these at the same time...

Data quality

JSET is only as good as the data it is given. This means that if you upload a bike ride as a run, do not calibrate your treadmill properly, or feed JSET incorrect data, then the output will be incorrect. If you notice an error then let me know and I can fix it (although it will only be fixed when I do the weekly check-up of your dash).

Heart rate analysis

On the dashboard you'll see a HR race prediction, and on the progress chart you'll see how this prediction has changed over time. It is important to remember that the HR analysis will only work if you regularly wear a reliable HRM. While a HRM allows you to get more out of JSET (and your training in general), wearing one is not a requirement. You should change the "Marathon average HR" field on the dashboard to the HR that you can average over the course of a marathon in order to make the HR prediction more accurate.

Treadmill troubles

Although running on a treadmill is perfectly valid training, it can cause some issues with data. The pace & distance that your phone, watch and treadmill tell you can all vary by quite a large amount. Whatever is uploaded to strava is what JSET will see.

Speed changes

Depending on your style of training, your initial training load, and the phase of your training cycle you might notice the dashboard fills very fast. It may even be possible to fill the central circle with a single, fast run. If this happens, how much more running you do that week is your choice. My advice is to aim for a 'normal' weekly distance, but this may not be appropriate for everyone.

Improving JSET

If you notice any particularities with the dashboard that are not covered in this document then please let me know. I will do my best to fix the issue, and/or discuss it in an updated version of this document.

Part 2: Racing the marathon

Performing well in your race is obviously dependent on how your training has gone. However, 'on the day' variables will also have a huge impact on both your race result and how you feel about your result. Below are my answers to some common questions about racing the marathon. If you would like to arrange a skype call to discuss a race plan then please contact me. When using JSET-solo this call comes at an additional cost.

How to decide what time to aim for

Picking the right pace is a key element of marathon strategy. Start off too fast and you'll pay for it later in the race, start off too slow and you'll finish knowing you could have gone faster. The JSET race predictions on the dashboard show my estimation of the best time you could achieve if you manage to execute the race well i.e. good pacing plan, optimal weather, proper fueling, a flat course, etc. Hopefully the HR & training predictions will match within a few minutes, but if they don't then have a think about why this may be and make an informed decision. Although these predictions are often accurate, there is no guarantee they'll be accurate for any given race. Probably the two most important factors that might mean you have to adjust your race goal are hills and the weather.

Fuel & nutrition

Everyone has different fuel and nutrition needs. This applies both before and during the race. It is important to use past races as a template to start from, and then improve upon. So if something worked well for you last time then do it again, and if something didn't work for you then avoid it this time around.

Taper

The taper is also very individual. Most of the time I find that starting the taper one week out from the race is long enough, however, a traditional taper is longer. It's up to you to decide on the best taper plan for you. Again you should use past races as a template to start from, and then improve upon. If you felt your last taper was too short (or long) then adapt it for this race.

Principles you should always follow:

- Don't try anything new on race day i.e. wear tried and tested kit, practise your fuel & nutrition in training. That's pretty much rule #1 of racing.
- Wear the right kit. Normally that will just be a vest and shorts. Generally I suggest avoiding hats, arm-warmers, ect.
- Run a flat paced race. Running a marathon at a flat pace is the easiest way to get the most out of your race.
- Run the racing line. At most large marathons there will be a line actually painted on the ground. Follow it!
- Push yourself. To paraphrase legendary cyclist Greg LeMond; marathons don't get easier, you just get faster.

Final tips to give you the edge:

- Draft off other runners
- Wear racing shoes

(These final tips are risky, so be cautious. For example lightweight shoes may not be a good idea for heavier runners and you're likely to annoy other runners if you stick too close to them!)

If you would like to arrange a skype call to discuss a race plan then please contact me on josh@jset.run, or leave me a message on the dashboard. When using JSET-solo this call comes at an additional cost.



Part 3: Closing Thoughts

If you have previously worked with me on a full JSET training program you will probably find JSET-solo quite different to last time. One key difference is that I will not be looking over your shoulder; which means there's more of an onus on you to make decisions about your training. So, if you think something is not working with your training then change it. Additionally, I will not be there to monitor & encourage you, so you will have to be more self-motivated. But you are not completely alone; I will still be keeping an eye on how you are progressing!

If this is your first time using JSET it may take you a while to get used to how it works; but don't worry - that's normal. If you have a question about JSET you are likely to find the answer in either this document or the main JSET pdf. I find that the vast majority of questions I am asked are answered in the JSET documentation - so you'll probably get a faster answer to your question by checking the PDFs first. Plus, that frees me up to spend more time improving JSET for everyone.

On that note, if you have a suggestion for how you think the dashboard could be improved then please let me know. I am always looking to make changes that improve the experience and make you faster. Have fun and good luck in your training!

