Walk/Run
QT2 Run Calculator

Using the QT2 Systems Run Calculator to Help Set Your Race Pacing Plan
By Coach Reem Jishi

It's officially fall! If you are a runner, that means that you probably have a race (or two or three …) on your schedule. As your race approaches, you will want to set a pacing strategy. There are several ways to guide your race effort, including pace, rate of perceived exertion, heart rate and power. In this blog, I will focus on using the QT2 Systems Run Calculator coupled with the findmymarathon.com* course-based calculator to help set a race pacing plan.

To get started, access the QT2 Systems Run Pace Calculator at http://runcalculator.com/ and follow these steps:

Step 1:   Enter a recent 5K time.

Step 2:   Enter your run training mileage (the average of the two highest   weeks of training in the six weeks leading up to your race).

Step 3:   Enter your bike training mileage (the average of the two highest weeks of training in the six weeks leading up to your race). If you are not riding, just enter zero.

Step 4:   Enter your years of run experience.

Step 5:   Enter your target race distance.

Step 6:   If appropriate, mark if the course is "extremely flat" or "extremely hilly."

Step 7:   Hit the "Estimate Race Time" box.

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Based on the information you input, the QT2 Systems Run Calculator calculates estimated projected finish times and paces for various distances, as well as guidance on training zones. Please note that the estimates are only as good as the data you put in - so be as accurate as you can.   For example, the Run Calculator will estimate a different marathon finish time based on whether your average mileage is 30 miles per week or 50 miles per week. Also note that the calculator is calibrated to give a best case scenario race time on an average course. Factors including the specific course profile, weather (e.g., temperature, humidity, wind), nutrition, injury, rest/fatigue, overrunning the course, unanticipated breaks and pacing errors (e.g., going out to fast), will all impact actual race day performance.

Now that you have your projected finish time, the next step is to use the Find My Marathon Course Based Calculator to provide mile by mile pace guidance based on the course. This calculator may be accessed at https://findmymarathon.com/paceband-coursebased.php. Course-specific projections are available for most marathons (and if you don't see yours listed, you can request for it to be added).   Follow these steps to get your mile by mile plan:

Step 1:   Find Your Race

Step 2:   Enter Your Goal Time (based on the QT2 Systems Run Calculator).

Step 3:   Enter your Start Strategy. Here you have three options: Evenly Paced Start, Conservative Start, or Very Conservative Start. Review the descriptions provided, and select the one that matches the start strategy that you plan to follow. You will note, that there isn't a "Go Out Fast" option!

Step 4:   Enter your Pacing Strategy. Here you have six options: Even Effort, Even Pace, Negative Split, Aggressive Negative Split, Positive Split, Aggressive Positive Split. Review the descriptions provided, and select the one that matches the pacing strategy you plan to follow.

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As you input your goal time and pacing strategies, the calculator will automatically provide mile by mile split times as well as total elapsed time after each mile. In estimating the split times, the calculator uses an effort-based algorithm, adjusting split times based on the start and pace strategies selected as well as the course profile (uphills and downhills) for that mile of the course.

You now have a mile by mile pacing strategy!   Use this pacing strategy, coupled with heart rate, power and/or rate of perceived exertion, to nail your race.

As a departing note of caution, race day can bring unplanned obstacles and it is likely that your race will not go exactly as you planned. Be prepared to adjust your approach if the weather conditions are much different from what you trained for, if you are sick or injured, if you have to take unintended breaks, or if you make mistakes along the way (e.g., going out too hard, failing to take in adequate nutrition or hydration, dressing inappropriately for the weather). Your race time also assumes that you run the actual race distance, which is often not the case, especially for longer events. Stay tuned for coming blogs discussing some of these X factors.

Happy running!!!

About the Author
Reem Jishi is a Coach with QT2 Systems/QT2 Run, and the Program Director for QT2 Run. She is certified as a RRCA Level 1 Run Coach, USAT Level 2 Coach, RunDNA Level 1 Gait Analyst and ACSM personal trainer. Reem has been an avid runner for since her youth, participating in hundreds of races over the years.

*Neither the author nor QT2 Systems/QT2 Run are affiliated in any way with the Find My Marathon.

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