

**Comrades 2026 Silver Medal Programme by Coach Parry – Official coach of the Comrades Marathon Association:**

To Ask Questions sign up to: [www.coachparry.com](http://www.coachparry.com)

It is only 11 months until the 2026 UP Comrades Marathon. The UP RUN is known for The Big Five Hills: Kowies Hill, Fields Hill, Bothas Hill, Inchanga and Polly Shortts. The 1<sup>st</sup> 3 are all run in the 1<sup>st</sup> 40km with Inchanga taking you to 50km and Polly Shortts with a little over 10km to go. There are also many other climbs like 45<sup>th</sup> Cutting, Little Polly's and Umlaas Road, however it's the unnamed hills that get you down and creep into your mind. In summary: The UP Run is an enormous challenge.

It is important to prepare physically, and equally important to prepare mentally for the challenge of running 87 odd kilometers from Durban to Pietermaritzburg.

The short-term focus will be on laying a solid foundation so that we can work on your speed and marathon time in the last quarter of the year. This will also get you ready for the large training volumes that are needed to run a great Comrades in 2026.

If this is your first attempt at Comrades but you are a regular runner and can do a Half Marathon in 1hr25min then this is the place for you to start. If you are not a regular runner and have not run a half marathon before or are slower than 90min then you will be better served by the Bill Rowan or Robert Mtshali programme which will start out gentler and allow you to build up without injury.

This programme is time-based so people with more experience and greater running ability will get relatively more out of the programme and progress faster. Time-based programmes also prevent you from settling on a route that you need to run faster every time you run that particular route. It is easier to maintain discipline and run EASY (E) on EASY days. The aim is to be able to run close to a sub 3:00 marathon before Comrades.

You can choose to rest on a Monday or a Friday and as the programme progresses you may be tempted to skip the rest day. You need to monitor your recovery: If you are in good shape, feel rested and ready for each workout then you can do cross training on your "rest" day. If however, you are always feeling tired and struggling through workouts you need to keep that as a rest day. This is crucial; it is during recovery that we improve and get stronger, in the absence of recovery we get sick and injured.

Also note that training days are interchangeable, if your club has Time Trials (TT) on a Tuesday or Wednesday you can swap Thursday with one of these days. Or if you prefer long runs on a Sunday, you can swap Saturday and Sunday.

Training Paces for 3:00 marathon:



Recovery (Rec):	4:43-5:05/km (7:35-8:11/mile)
E (E):	4:20-4:43/km (6:58-7:35/mile)
Long Runs (LSD):	4:27-4:54/km (7:09-7:53/mile)
Tempo:	3:37-4:09/km (6:22-6:40/mile)
2min Hill Repeats:	3:48-3:52/km (6:05-6:12/mile)
1min Hill Repeats:	3:28-3:32/km (5:35-5:42/mile)
400's:	79-80sec
1000's:	3:48-3:52

8km Time Trial (TT): 30:00

Start at the slower end of the training paces and move towards the faster end as you progress through the coming months of training.

**July 2025:**

Week	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
1 July	40min E running	50min E running	40min E running	50min E running	REST	1hr E running	40min E running
7 July	50min E running	1hr E running	50min E running	1hr E running	REST	1hr10 E running	50min E running
14 July	55min E running	1hr05 E running	55min E running	1hr10 E running	REST	1hr20 E running	55min E running
21 July	40min E running	50min E running	40min E run	15min E run; 8km TT; 10min E	REST	1hr E run	45min E run
28 July	45min E run	15min E; 6x2min hills; 10min E	1hr E running	1hr20 E running			

**August 2025:**

Week	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
1 Aug					REST	1h30 LSD running	1hr05 E running
4 Aug	45min rec run	15min E; 8x2min hills; 10min E	1hr10 E running	1hr20 E running	REST	1h45 LSD running	1hr10 E running
11 Aug	45min rec run	15min E; 10x2min hills; 10min E	1hr20 E running	1hr20 E running	REST	2hr LSD running	1hr15 E running
18 Aug	45min rec run	1hr E run	50min E running	20min E; 8km TT : Flat out; 10min E	REST	1h20 E running	45min E running
25 Aug	45min rec run	15min E; 15x1min hills; 10min E	1hr30 LSD running	1hr30 LSD running	REST	2hrs15 LSD running	1hr20 E running

**September 2025:**

Week	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
1 Sep	45min rec run	15min E; 15x1min hills; 10min E	1hr40 LSD running	1hr30 LSD running	REST	2hrs30 LSD running	1hr30 LSD running
8 Sep	45min rec run	15min E; 15x1min hills; 10min E	1hr50 LSD running	1hr30 LSD running	REST	2hrs45 LSD running	1hr E; 30min at planned Marathon pace running
15 Sep	45min rec run	1hr E running	1hr15 E running	TT – 8km: Flat out	REST	2hr LSD running	1hr E running
22 Sep	45min rec run	15min E; 8x1km with 1min rec; 10min E	2hr LSD running	1hr30 LSD running	REST	3hrs LSD running	1hr E; 30min at planned Marathon pace running
29 Sep	45min rec run	15min E; 8x1km with 1min rec; 10min E					

**October 2025:**

Week	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
1 Oct			2hrs LSD running	1hr30 LSD running	REST	3hrs20 LSD running	1hr E; 30min at planned Marathon pace running
6 Oct	45min rec run	15min E; 20x400m with 1min rec; 10min E	2hrs LSD running	1hr30 LSD running	REST	3hrs LSD running	1hr30 LSD running
13 Oct	45min rec run	1hr E running	1hr15 E running	TT – 8km: Flat out	REST	2hrs LSD running	1hr E running
20 Oct	45min rec run	15min E; 15x400m with 1min rec; 10min E	1hr20 E running	1hr E running	REST	1hr E run	1hr E run
27 Oct	45min rec run	15min E; 10x200m at race pace with 1min rec; 10min E	30min E running	20min E running	15min E running with 5x30sec pick ups  OR REST		

**November 2025:**

Week	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
1 Nov						Marathon  OR  15min E running with 5x30sec pick ups  OR REST	Marathon  OR REST
3 Nov	REST	REST	REST	REST	REST	REST	REST
10 Nov	20min rec running	REST	30min rec running	REST	40min E running	REST	45min E running
17 Nov	45min rec run	1hr E running	30min E running	1hr E running	REST	1hr15 E run	REST
24 Nov	45min rec run	1hr15 E running	1hr E running	1hr15 E running	REST		

**December 2025:**

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
1 Dec						1hr30 LSD running	45min E run
8 Dec	45min rec run	1hr15 E running	1hr15 E running	1hr15 E running	REST	1hr45 LSD running	45min E run
15 Dec	45min rec run	1hr E running	1hr E running	40min E Running	REST	1hr30 LSD running	45min E run
22 Dec	45min rec run	1hr15 E running	1hr30 LSD running	<b>Merry Christmas</b>	REST	2hrs LSD running	45min E run
29 Dec	45min rec run	1hr15 E running	45min E running	<b>Happy New Year!</b>	REST	2hrs LSD running	45min E run