

The Slow Finisher's Fuelling Guide

How to eat and drink your way through a 5-7 hour day on your feet.

SRC lead magnet (gated PDF) - Wave 1, BM-WP-004. Copy draft; branded design gated on canonical SRC visual DNA. General guidance, not medical advice - everyone's gut is different, and if you have a medical condition that affects how you eat, check with a professional first.

The whole idea, on one page

Fuelling a long, slow marathon isn't a fast-race plan stretched thin - it's a different job. You're not trying to hold a hard effort for three hours; you're keeping a steady tank topped up across six or seven. That changes everything, and mostly in your favour.

Four ideas carry the whole guide:

1. More hours, more total fuel. A six-hour day needs roughly double the total fuel of a three-hour race. Plan for the whole day, not a fast first half.
2. A steady drip beats big hits. Small amounts, often, sit better than occasional large ones.
3. Slow is an advantage. Because you're not redlining, you can eat real food a faster runner couldn't keep down.
4. Tie it to your walk breaks. Your walk intervals are the natural moments to eat and drink. Fuelling becomes a rhythm, not a chore.

That's it. The rest is detail.

Your hourly plan

Aim for a per-hour amount of carbohydrate your stomach is happy with - many runners land somewhere around 30-60 grams an hour, but the right number is the one you tolerate, found in training, not on race day.

The trick is to think in real things, not grams. One hour's fuel might look like:

- a gel plus half a banana, or
- a small handful of jellies plus a few salted boiled potatoes, or
- half a jam or honey sandwich, or
- a small bar plus a few crackers.

Mix sweet and savoury across the day - most people get tired of sweet-only by hour three, and a little salt is welcome over a long effort. Start within the first hour and keep going; don't wait until you feel empty, because by then you're already behind.

A simple rhythm: something small every 30-45 minutes, lined up with a walk break.

Real food that travels

Things slow runners often stomach well over a long day (test each in training first):

- Bananas
- Salted boiled or roasted potatoes
- Small sandwiches - jam, honey, or nut butter
- Rice balls or rice cakes

- Dried fruit (dates, raisins)
- Jellies / wine gums
- Plain crackers or pretzels (salt)

Carry a couple of options so you can listen to what you fancy. The best fuel is the one you'll actually eat at hour five.

Drinking over five-to-seven hours

Hydration over a long, slow day follows different maths than a quick race:

- Drink steadily, to thirst - small, regular sips rather than big gulps at a station.
- Include electrolytes, especially sodium, across the day - not just plain water. Over many hours, plain water alone isn't enough, and too much plain water can cause its own problems, so balance fluid with electrolytes and don't force it.
- Carry your own. At the back of the pack, aid stations may be packing up before you reach them. Don't rely on them being there.

Train your gut

Your stomach handles fuel far better when it's used to working while you move - and that's trainable. Use your long runs to rehearse the exact plan: the same foods, the same amounts, the same timing, tied to the same walk breaks. Build it up over the weeks so that by race day, nothing on your fuelling plan is new. A trained gut is the difference between fuelling that helps and fuelling that sits in your stomach like a brick.

Your printable race-day card

Fill this in once you've found what works in training, then carry it:

THE SLOW FINISHER'S FUELLING CARD

Every walk break: a few sips + a couple of bites
 Every hour: _____ carbs (e.g. 1 gel + 1/2 banana)
 Electrolytes: every _____
 What I'm carrying: _____
 Reminder: Start in hour 1. Don't wait until empty.
 Drink to thirst. Salt as well as sweet.

Keep it simple, keep it steady, and let your walk breaks set the rhythm. Fuel the whole day and the whole day gets easier.

Never first. Never fast. Never quit.

Made in New Zealand.