

ORIGINAL 1908 MARATHON

London's newest, oldest marathon

RUNNER'S GUIDE - 2026





Dear Marathon Runner,

Thank you for your entry and support of Original Marathon IX.

You are about to run the route of the first ever 26.2 mile marathon. The London 1908 Olympic Marathon Race was an event that brought marathon running to the attention of the world, set the now global standard distance for the event and laid the foundations of the sport of marathon running.

In creating Original Marathon, we wanted to honour the legends of 1908, celebrate their legacy and share their inspiring story. So, thank you for being part of this movement. Our aim is to build an annual heritage event, which inspires and motivates whilst raising thousands of pounds for charity. Please do consider fundraising for or donating to our amazing charity partner Aspire.

You are about to be one of the very few people ever to run this famous route. Firstly, only 28 of the 55 original starters (and 75 entrants) finished the London 1908 Olympic marathon race. The legacy event which grew from the success of the 1908 event, the Polytechnic Marathon, ran from 1909 to 1996, however only in the years between 1933 and 1937 did the route finish at White City and replicate the 1908 route. This year is our third Original Marathon event. Therefore, 2026 will be only the ninth running of this famous route, hence, we are calling it 'Original Marathon IX'.

We keep an ongoing record of all finishers, and hopefully your name will be on this list following Original Marathon IX.

VOLUNTEER – Please ask your friends and family to help us by volunteering. We have some great event day roles to fill in Windsor, White City and on the route. Please ask your friends/family to visit our [Volunteer registration](#) today to become one of our hi-viz heroes.

Thank you again for your support. We hope you enjoy the experience of 'running in the footsteps of legends' as much as we do from hosting it.

Kind regards

Diccon Loy and Dan Afshar

Original Marathon Co-Founders

Key information:

Event date:	Saturday 7 March 2026
Arrival time #1:	From 08:30
Start time #1:	First pace group start 09:30, final pace group start c10:00
Arrival time #2:	From 10:00
Start time #2:	First pace group start 11:30, final pace group start c12:00
Registration/bag drop/event briefing :	Windsor Guildhall, 51 High St, Windsor SL4 1LR. What3Words ///sage.reward.activism
ROUTE:	An open road event. Please note GPX file may be updated 1 week prior to the event Directions (click on links); Google Maps GPX file
Start venue:	Church Street Gardens, Windsor, SL4 1PB (or What3Words ///walks.tight.sheep).
Finish venue:	White City Place, W12 0BZ, What3Words: ///pocket.flames.precautions
Terrain:	Mostly pavement, but some short, unpaved grass/trail sections (see the Route section below). The route is not step free and some steps and curbs will need to be navigated.
Event control:	07935 259001 (please save this phone number into your phone, BUT only call on event day, if needed.

Original Marathon Sign:

You'll pass the only surviving London 1908 Marathon sign which is still on a wall at Barnes Pool, Eton. After the start and crossing the River Thames into Eton, you'll run along Eton High Street. Before you get to Eton School, you'll see the sign on your left. This is located at [///round.wakes.added](https://www.what3words.com/round.wakes.added). It is positioned high on a wall, below a Slough Road sign just after a small bridge on Eton High Street. Positioned just 0.7 miles after the start. Just think, Dorando, Johnny et al will have also ran past this same sign at the start of their epic and historic marathon race.



Pre-Event Checklist

Pre-Event, we recommend you do the following ahead of the event:



- Mobile phone ☐
- Money/debit/Oyster cards to run with ☐
- Running kit and running shoes ☐
- Small bag to drop in Windsor and collect at White City ☐
- Drink, food and energy bars/gels for your run ☐
- Drink and food that you may want at the end of the run (in your bag) ☐
- Warm top for post run ☐
- Collapsible cup to run with ☐
- Save the Event Control telephone number **07935 259 001** into your phone (and only use on event day) ☐
- Download the Original Marathon GPX file ☐
- Download What3Words app on your phone ☐
- Plan your journey to/from the event ☐
- Arrange with friends/family where you might see them on the route and at the finish ☐
- Plan to arrive at Registration/Start well in time before your start ☐

Getting there:

Travel:

We recommend that you plan your travel to/from the event. Original Marathon is an A to B route. The event starts in Windsor and ends in White City, London, so you'll need to consider how you either get to the start or back from the finish. We offer a bag carrying service for one small bag per participant from start to finish.

If you are driving - you can park in Windsor and get public transport back, post-run. We recommend the Windsor and Eton Riverside station car park (Datchet Road, SL4 1NA. Ringo location 77488, What3Words location (approx. ///lung.elaborate.chains) but there are other car parks in Windsor.

Alternatively, you can park in White City and travel to the start by public transport. The start times are from 9:30am and from 11am, so you'll need to consider your start time.

We have a baggage service, travelling from the start to the finish, so you have the ability to give us a small bag to carry, for you to collect at the finish in White City. These bags will be tagged with your race number.

The start location is Church Street Gardens, Windsor, SL4 1PB (or What3Words ///walks.tight.sheep). The start is just a short walk from Windsor Guildhall (registration and briefing venue).

If you decide to park at the finish, you can park at Westfield - more [info here](#). Car Park A is open from 5am to 3am. The Westfield Shopping Centre is open 10am to 9pm on Saturdays.

Getting to the start: Windsor is well serviced by trains, roads and buses. We recommend using public transport, where possible.

There is ample parking in Windsor - please checkout the parking [info here](#).

Trains to Windsor:

AM: There are 8 trains from Clapham Junction to Windsor on the morning of the event. Journey time is from 43 Mins. If you park at the finish (Westfield), the overground train from Shepherd's Bush to Clapham Junction will be a useful connection. These generally run every 15 mins and take just 12 mins.

Another way to Windsor by train is via the new Elizabeth Line. Travel from White City or Shepherd's Bush, west to Ealing Broadway via the Central Line. Then via the Elizabeth Line to Slough (please note that Oyster Cards are not valid past Hayes and Harlington, so you'll need a ticket. You can then either get a train to Windsor Central (takes 6 mins) or a bus to Windsor. Please check travel updates online before leaving home.



The Original Marathon route:

Original Marathon finishers will cross the same finish line as Dorando Pietri and Johnny Hayes did back in 1908. The finish line has been thoughtfully preserved and marked in stone by the developers of the White City Place office and retail estate.

The 1908 marathon did start inside the grounds of Windsor Castle. The legend has it that the Queen wanted the event to start in front of her children's nursery. However, in reality the real reason for the start location inside the grounds of Windsor Castle may have been more about providing a secure, safe location for the Olympians. Our event is not able to start inside the grounds, however we are very close by.

The route is waymarked and the Pacers know the route. We do recommend that you download the GPX file of the route and upload on your favoured app. Please run with your mobile phone. This will enable you to navigate using the GPX file, if necessary. It will also enable you to call Event Control, if required.

The route follows the route of the first ever 26.2 mile marathon from the Marathon Race of the London 1908 Olympic Games. Over the course of the years since this historic event, roads have changed and some of the busiest roads have been enlarged. The Original Marathon route follows the 1908 route as closely as possible.

The route is 'open road' and not 'closed road'. There are no road closures. Runners run on pavements and will need to yield to other pavement users and cross roads, often at pedestrian crossings. Therefore, our route very slightly deviates from the original route

at some road junctions, which all can add a little extra distance.

Safety is paramount and as such there is one section of the route where we deviate from the original route. At 4.7 miles, while running on a footpath along the Uxbridge Road (A412) we deviate (turn right) onto a Bridleway, through a small gate. At this location, the pavement ahead up the A412 looks good, however it soon disappears, and the rest of that section of road is unsafe for pedestrians, as this section of the road is 60mph limit with no footpath. The deviation onto the bridleway may be muddy (200 yards), especially if there has been heavy rain in the days preceding the event. The Bridleway then leads to a shale footpath (1 mile). Therefore, we recommend considering your choice of footwear (maybe not wearing your brand new shoes?)

Because of the deviation and route on footpaths, the total distance of the Original Marathon route is 27.5 miles.



Event day:



Arrival time:

Please arrive at the event 60-90 minutes before your start time. This should give you enough time to arrive, register and drop your bag off at Windsor Guildhall before making your way to nearby Church Street Gardens (the start location) and check in with the start team.

Please see pages 8 and 9 for detailed arrival information.

Any runner not able to start the run before 09:55/11:55 will not be permitted to start.

Only participants will be allowed into the Guildhall. Sorry but no spectators are permitted inside. Proceed upstairs to check in with the Registration team and collect your event pack.

Baggage:

One small bag per runner may be given to the team at Windsor Guildhall. You will place a tag on your bag (from your event pack), with the same number as you are running with. Your bags will be loaded onto our baggage vans to transport to the finish. We recommend that you do not include any items of value in your bags and all bags are left at owner's risk.

Registration:

Registration at Windsor Guildhall. On arrival please check in with our team. They will give you your event pack and any merchandise purchased and be on hand for any questions you may have. Your wave start time will be confirmed and you'll then be introduced to your pace group and pacer.

Please write on the back of your runner bib and complete your details etc. Attach your runner

bib to the front of your vest/t shirt with safety pins.

Limited merchandise can be purchased at the event, but if you want to be sure of your size/style, please make sure you pre-order by logging back into your Active account. Help available in our [FAQs](#)

Toilets:

At the start, there are toilets at Windsor Guildhall. Toilets on route can be found at many of the Tube and train stations the route passes. There is also public toilets at Ruislip, close to our Checkpoint 2.

Changing of the Guard:

The changing of the guards is from 11am and a crowd will gather from 10am to see this spectacle. Therefore, we recommend that you arrive at the suggested time. Access to the start will be restricted from just before 11am when the changing of the guards takes place.

We have hired the Corn Exchange in front of Windsor Guildhall for the event. This has an excellent viewing point for the Changing of the Guard. If you have any spectators who wish to join you at the start, please make sure they [register as a spectator](#) before 1 March, to claim a free Spectator pass for this area (Corn Exchange only, no spectator entry permitted for the Guildhall).

On Saturday 7 March the changing of the guards is performed by **xxx (to be updated closer to the event, when the battalion is announced)**.

Event day:

START WAVE 1

10:00 to 10:30:

Runners are placed in pace/start groups depending on your estimated completion times submitted when you registered.

Our fantastic pacers are supplied by [Race Pacing](#). We hope you'll enjoy running with other runners of similar pace and with our pacer. The likely size of each pace group is around 2-15 runners. You do not need to stay with your pace group, however we do recommend you run with at least one other if you are not running in a pace group.

You can also change pace groups mid run. The pace groups are arranged to start in order of slow to fast. However, the gaps between each start wave are short and it is likely that early on in the run, the groups will overtake each other and then be in order of fast to slow. When in this fast to slow order, if you are in a pace group and struggling to stay with it, simply tell your pacer, drop off the back of the group, and the group behind should be a slightly slower group, with whom you can join. The only group this will not be possible

for is the pace group that is final group.

The event has a Sweep, so we will be checking that no-one is left behind.

The pace groups are arranged in approximate minute mile pace (eg 10:00 minute mile). This is an approximate pace, and of course, as an open road event, where some road crossings are at pedestrian crossings, the pace will likely vary throughout the run.

When running as a small group, please take care for yourself, and not simply follow the runners ahead of your, particularly at road crossings. Just because the runner in front crosses the road ahead of you, it does not necessarily mean that the road is safe to cross for you. Please yield to other pavement users, and where necessary run in single file.

The actual [Start Times](#) list is available online. The 10:00 – 10:30 starts will be the slower runners, the 11:30-12:00 starts for the faster runners (based on the information provided in your entry form). Start confirmed in February 2026.

Key timings – START 1

08:30 Registration (Guildhall) OPEN for Start Wave 1 only

08:30 to 09:30 Registration and bag drop (Corn Exchange)

09:30 Bag drop and Registration CLOSED

09:40 Race Briefing 1

09:50 Depart Guildhall for starts at Church Street Gardens

1	10:00am – tbc minute mile pace group
2	10:05am – tbc minute mile pace group
3	10:10am – tbc minute mile pace group
4	10:15am – tbc minute mile pace group
5	10:20am – tbc minute mile pace group
6	10:25am – tbc minute mile pace group
7	10:30am – tbc minute mile pace group

11:00am Changing of the Guard

Event day:

START WAVE 2

11:30 to 12:00:

Runners are placed in pace/start groups depending on your estimated completion times submitted when you registered.

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The actual [Start Times](#) list is available online. The 10:00 – 10:30 starts will be the slower runners, the 11:30-12:00 starts for the faster runners (based on the information provided in your entry form). Start confirmed in February 2026.

Key timings – START 2

NO Start Wave 2 runners will be allowed into the Guildhall until 10:00 – please do not arrive any earlier as you will not be able to gain access to the venue until 10am

10:00 Registration (Guildhall) OPEN for Start Wave 2 only

10:50 Changing of the Guard

10:55 Registration closes

11:00 Race Briefing 2

11:15 Bag drop CLOSED

11:15 Depart Guildhall for starts at Church Street Gardens

8	11:30 am – tbc minute mile pace group
9	11:35 am – tbc minute mile pace group
10	11:40 am – tbc minute mile pace group
11	11:45 am – tbc minute mile pace group
12	11:50 am – tbc minute mile pace group
13	11:50 am – tbc minute mile pace group
14	11:55 am – tbc minute mile pace group
15	12:00 pm – tbc minute mile pace group

Event day:

Waymarking:

The route is waymarked using some arrows (see below), red ribbon and in some places sawdust. The route will also have 'Miles to go' markers (see below).

If you get lost, we suggest you first retrace your steps back to the last way marking tape or arrow that you saw and try to navigate from there. You can use your GPX file to navigate, use the [Google](#)

[Map](#), or, if these actions have not helped, you can call Event Control to assist you. We recommend that you download the What3Words (W3W) app on to your phone prior to the run, and when talking to Event Control give them your W3W location which will be in the form of 3 words to pinpoint any 3m x 3m square in the world. This location will help our Event Control to assist you back onto the route.



Runner briefing:

The 2 runner briefings will take place at 09:40 / 11:00 in Windsor Guildhall, ahead of the first waves departing at 10:00 – 10:30 and then 11:30 – 12:00. Attending the briefing is very important for the safety of all participants, therefore it is mandatory to attend.

Please note, spectators are not permitted inside Windsor Guildhall. Spectators are, however, welcome to stay on the Corn Exchange, if

registered as a free [spectator](#) and watch the Changing of the Guard, which is a great vantage point, and will be closed to the general public on 7 March 2026.

Medics:

Qualified medical professionals will be at the start and finish, if required. The medic at the start will also drive some of the route, in case required. Please report any medical incidents seen to Event Control immediately.



The Start:

The starts will be in small groups of 2-15 runners. We strongly recommend that you run with your phone, money/credit/debit and Oyster cards in case you need to retire from the event and continue your journey on public transport. Congestion on the footpaths at the start is possible due to the Changing of the Guard, so please proceed with caution, in single file and yield to other pavement users.

Checkpoints:

There are 3 Checkpoints along the route, located at approximately 6 miles, 13 miles and 18 miles (Checkpoint 3 has a cut off time at 3pm). Water and some snacks are provided at each of the Checkpoints. You do not have to stop at the Checkpoints, however when approaching the Checkpoints, please make sure your bib number is clearly visible to the Checkpoint team. They will be recording the numbers of every runner. If the Checkpoint team are dealing with other runners, you can shout out your number to them as you pass.

Timing:

The event is chip timed, with chip mats at the start and finish. The chips are attached to the event Running bib (number). Every finisher will be given a finish time. Interim results are

available immediately via a link on the OriginalMarathon.com home page.

Toilets on route:

There are few opportunities to use public toilets on the route, most will need a slight detour off the route. The toilets in italics are located behind ticket barriers at rail/Tube stations where you'll need to swipe in/out or ask a guard to let you through:

- 2.4 miles – Slough Station
- 9.0 miles – Pavilion shopping centre, Uxbridge
- 12.4 miles – West Ruislip Tube
- 13.1 miles – Ruislip Tube
- 16.0 miles – Pinner Tube
- 17.2 miles – North Harrow (women's accessible, men's located behind barriers)
- 18.4 miles – Harrow on the Hill
- 20.8 miles - Sudbury and Harrow Road station
- 21.0 miles - Sudbury Town station
- 21.7 miles – Wembley Central



Event day:



Retiring from the event:

In 1908, 75 entered the run, 55 started and only 28 finished (of which one was DQ'd). If you do need to retire from the event please make sure you call Event Control immediately. Event Control will record your number and if required, they can help direct you to relevant public transport, for you to get home or to the finish for your bag.

It is essential that you call Event Control immediately to register a retirement.

Cut off time:

The cut of time for the Original Marathon is 6 hours (for 11:30 starts) and 8 hours (for 09:30 starts). The route will be closed from 17:30. The cut off location is Harrow (Checkpoint 3) at 15:00.

Checkpoint 3 is a short walk from Harrow on the Hill station, which is serviced by the Metropolitan line (London Underground) and The Chiltern Line (national rail, which links to London Marylebone). Both lines link to central London, from where you can travel to White City (Central Line).

Finish:

The finish line is within the White City Place development at White City. On crossing the historic finish line, you will be awarded with your replica 1908 medal and presentation box. You will also be awarded a Diploma of Merit. In

1908, the feat of completing a marathon was deemed so great that every marathon finisher was awarded a Diploma of Merit. Something that we continue the tradition of.

There are toilets within the White City Place development and some retail and catering outlets. There are also toilets at the nearby White City /Wood Lane station and at Westfield shopping centre.

Results:

Results from the event will be presented alongside the 1908 results. On completion of the Original Marathon you will be sent your time/result. Results [found here](#).

As one of only a limited number of people to have completed the Original Marathon route, your name will be added to our Hall of Fame at: originalmarathon.com

Post Event:

There are restaurants and bars within the nearby Westfield Shopping Centre, should you wish to celebrate your achievements or thank your supporters.



ORIGINAL 1908 MARATHON

Social Media:

Please do share your experiences and photos on social media.
Use #OriginalMarathon and mention us @EventsWeRun

Please also encourage your friends and club mates to join you on our list of Original Marathon finishers by entering the event or registering their interest for a future event – they too can
RUN IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF LEGENDS.

More Great Events:

Finally, if you'd like to find out more about the awesome events that
Participation Sport run, [register your interest here](#).

