

The London Marathon



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The Running Boom

In 1980s Great Britain saw a great interest in sports and keeping fit. A lot of people started running and jogging in their spare time. Among the running races the London Marathon has become an internationally famous event.



The Aim of the Work

is to find out

- **what the London Marathon is**
- **what people and why take part in the London Marathon**
- **why the Marathon is so popular**

The London Marathon

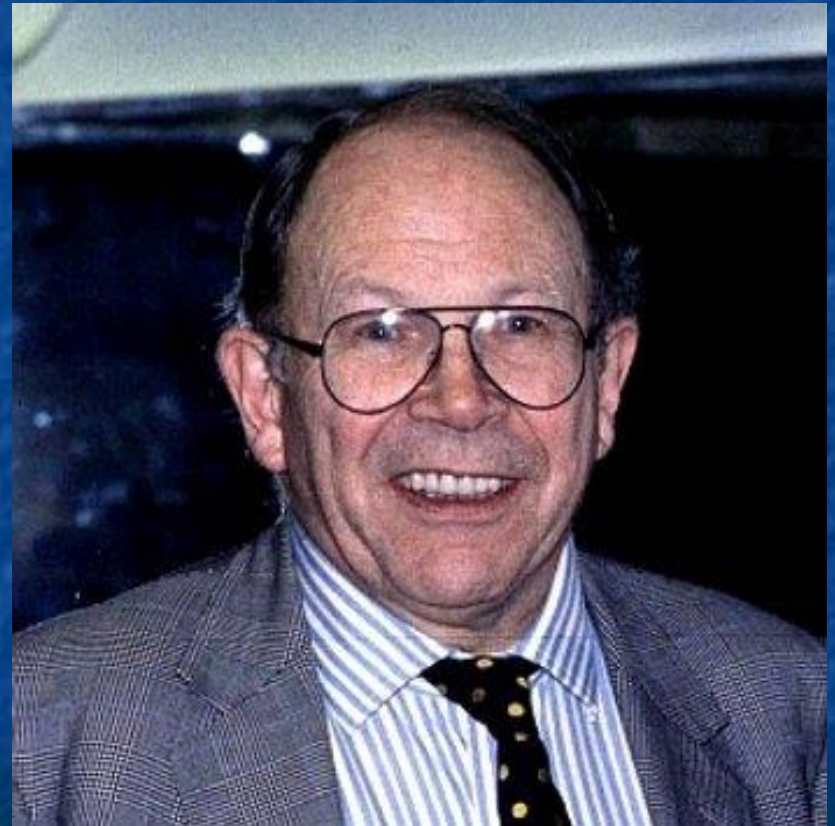
The London Marathon is a popular road marathon that has been held each year in London since 1981, usually in April. It is one of the top five international marathons run over the traditional distance of 42.195 km (26 miles and 385 yards).



The Marathon's History

The London Marathon was founded in 1981 by the former Olympic champion and renowned journalist Chris Brasher and his lifelong friend John Disley.

The race is now organised by David Bedford as Race Director and Nick Bitel as Chief Executive.



The Participants

Separate starts are made by elite men, elite women, wheelchair competitors and the general public, some of whom are over 80 years old. A great number of sponsored participants raise money for different charities. In 1983, the first wheelchair races took place.



Number of Participants

The number of participants grows steadily. For elite athletes the marathon is a very prestigious running event. Many overseas runners taking part in the mass start can get places through lottery.



The "Ever Presents"

A small number of runners are known as the "Ever Presents". They have completed each of the London Marathons since 1981. By 2010 their number was 21. The oldest runners amongst them are 75 year old Kenneth Jones and Jeffrey Gordon. The youngest runner is 52-year-old Chris Finill. They are all male.



Money For Charities

Large sums of money are raised for a wide range of charities. The London Marathon is now the largest annual fund raising event in the world. Money is given to charities all over the world.

Money is also distributed to recreational schemes through the London Marathon Trust.



Running for a Good Cause

Crazy costumes are a familiar sight around the course. In fact over 75% of participants run for a good cause.

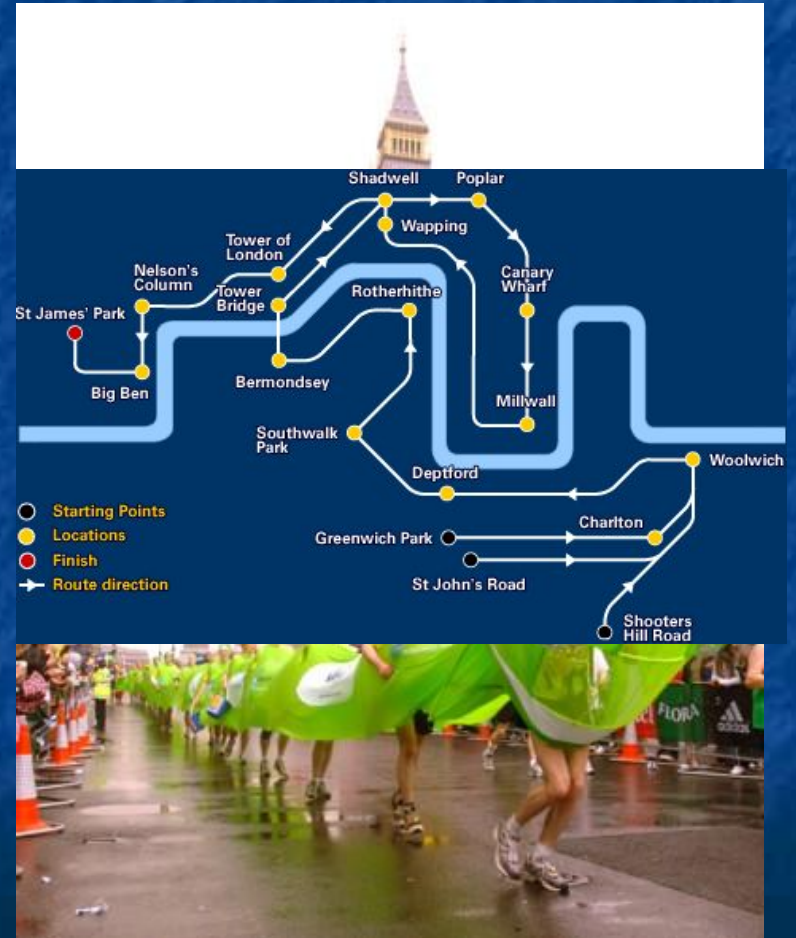
Since 1981, the London Marathon has raised over £400 million for charities worldwide making it the largest fundraising marathon in the world.



The Route

The London Marathon covers a 26.2 mile route. It starts on Blackheath and passes the Cutty Sark, Tower Bridge, Canary Wharf, Tower of London, London Eye, Houses of Parliament, and finishes in The Mall.

It is the only Marathon course in the world that is run in two hemispheres.



The Reasons of Popularity

The Marathon's popularity has steadily grown since 1981.

Thanks to TV coverage the London Marathon has become an internationally famous event.

It is known for its perfect organization.

Thousands of spectators encourage the runners on the way.



Mini Marathon

It is the sister of the London Marathon. Its course is the last 3 miles of the London Marathon.

Runners aged 11-17 are from all 33 London Boroughs, 13 teams from ten English counties and three Home Countries: Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. There is also a Mini Wheelchair race on the day.



Winners

The first winners of the marathon were the runners of the Men's Elite Race was shared by American Dick Beardsley and Norwegian Inge Simonsen. The marathon has seen a lot of records and is known for its fast times.



Sponsors and Partners

- The present sponsor of the marathon is Virgin.
- The original sponsor was *Gillette* 1981 to 1983.
- The other sponsors *Mars* (1984–1988), *ADT* (1989–1992), *NutraSweet* (1993–1995), and *Flora* (1996–2009).
- A number of other companies and organizations use the event for brand identification and marketing.



Running Marathons Is Not Easy

Some participants are treated as national heroes after completing the marathon. They try to do their best to cover the route.



The Highlight of British Sport Year

“The London Marathon is the highlight of my domestic programme. A great day out!” (Tanni Grey-Thompson, paralympic athlete from Wales, and a winner of the wheelchair London Marathon)



The 30th London Marathon

2010, April, 30th London Marathon. There were around 48,000 competitors with as many as a million spectators cheering them along the route. There was the first participant from the Royal family, princess Beatrice. Sir Richard Branson and his two children run the marathon as well.



Russian Athletes in the Marathon

In 1994 an unknown athlete Yakov Tolstikov won the Men's Elite Race.

Last year Svetlana Zakharova, Inga Abitova, Lyudmila Petrova, Maria Konovalova and Liliya Shobukhova took place. Liliya Shobukhova has won the women's London Marathon and her compatriot Inga Abitova finished second.



2011 London Marathon

- Sunday, 17, April
- 31st London Marathon
- 120,000 participants from the UK
- 5,000 overseas participants
- the official charity is Oxfam



CONCLUSION

- London Marathon has become one of the largest marathons in the world. It has become the all-inclusive "People's Marathon"
- Athletes take part in it for sporting awards, many people participate for pleasure and self-confidence.
- A lot of money for different charities is raised by sponsored participants.





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