



Why is the Georgia Marathon on Sunday, rather than on Saturday?

Public Safety

Public safety is the primary concern when a road race puts runners, walkers, and wheelchair athletes on public streets. The Georgia Marathon takes a number of actions to minimize traffic risks to participants and the public, including having Police at each intersection and scheduling the race on a date that has the least vehicular traffic.

Holidays

Holidays typically have low traffic counts so they are popular days for road races, including the Peachtree Road Race on July 4, the US 10K Classic on Labor Day, the Atlanta Half Marathon on Thanksgiving, and the ATC Resolution Run on New Years Day. The famous Boston Marathon is run each year on the 3rd Monday in April, Patriot's Day, a regional holiday in New England. Unfortunately, there are no Federal holidays during March, the target spring timeframe for the Georgia Marathon & Half Marathon.

Sunday versus Saturday Traffic

Since there are no Federal holidays during March, date selection for the Georgia Marathon is determined by the lowest traffic day of the week. According to the Georgia DOT Office of Transportation Data, vehicular traffic is consistently lower on Sunday than on Saturday or weekdays. The following GDOT vehicle count data was collected by permanent traffic counters at three locations in Atlanta and is consistent with traffic patterns across Atlanta, Decatur, and other cities in Georgia.

Daily Average Number of Vehicles

Location	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat	Sun	Sun to Sat ratio
14 th St @ Northside	12,002	13,221	13,191	13,417	14,795	11,008	7,193	64.4%
Northside @ Marietta	28,435	31,557	30,904	31,855	34,429	20,037	13,892	69.3%
Peachtree @ 14 th St	26,187	28,434	29,242	30,175	32,918	29,268	23,473	80.2%

Source: Georgia DOT Office of Transportation Data, 2007 Data

Examples of U.S. Marathons on Sunday during Aug, 2010 – July, 2011

8/15/10 – Humpy's Marathon, Anchorage, AK

8/22/10 – Pike's Peak Marathon, Manitou Springs, CO

9/12/10 – Erie Marathon, PA

9/19/10 – Boulder Marathon, CO

9/26/10 – Omaha Marathon, NE

Why is the Georgia Marathon on Sunday, rather than on Saturday, continued

Examples of U.S. Marathons on Sunday during Aug, 2010 – July, 2011, continued

10/03/10 – Milwaukee Lakefront Marathon, WI

10/10/10 – Chicago Marathon, IL

10/10/10 – Portland Marathon, OR

10/31/10 – Marine Corps Marathon, Washington, DC

11/07/10 – ING New York City Marathon, NY

11/21/10 – Route 66 Marathon, Tulsa, OK

11/21/10 – Philadelphia Marathon, PA

11/28/10 – Amica Insurance Seattle Marathon, WA

12/05/10 – Rock N Roll Las Vegas Marathon, NV

12/12/10 – Honolulu Marathon, HI

12/19/10 – Jacksonville Bank Marathon, Jacksonville, FL

1/09/11 – Disney Marathon, Orlando, FL

1/16/11 – P F Chang Rock N Roll Arizona Marathon, Phoenix, AZ

1/30/11 – ING Miami Marathon, FL

1/30/11 – Chevron Houston Marathon, TX

2/13/11 – Mercedes Marathon, Birmingham, AL

2/13/11 – Rock N Roll Mardi Gras Marathon, New Orleans, LA

2/20/11 – Austin Marathon, TX

3/06/11 – Little Rock Marathon, AR

3/20/11 – Honda LA Marathon, Los Angeles, CA

3/27/11 – Bataan Memorial Death March Marathon, White Sands, NM

4/03/11 – Knoxville Marathon, TN

4/10/11 – Big-D Marathon, Dallas, TX

4/17/11 – Toledo Marathon, OH

5/01/11 – Tacoma City Marathon, WA

5/15/11 – Rite Aid Cleveland Marathon, OH

5/15/11 – Delaware Marathon, Wilmington, DE

6/05/11 – Rock N Roll Marathon, San Diego, CA

6/12/11 – Lake Placid Marathon, Lake Placid, NY

6/19/11 – Vancouver USA Marathon, Vancouver, WA

7/10/11 – Missoula Marathon, Missoula, MT

7/31/11 – San Francisco Marathon, CA

Summary

Most large marathons are held on Sunday for public safety considerations, since traffic volume is consistently lowest on Sunday. The Georgia Marathon selects dates that avoid Easter, Palm Sunday, and Passover and works to minimize the impact on local traffic by having Police officers at each intersection, publicizing the race course, street closures, traffic advisories, and suggested traffic directions, and encouraging MARTA for participants, volunteers, spectators, and the public.