

Trek Training Guide

Although walking is something most people do every day, you need to train for a trekking challenge. This training guide is designed for a person of average fitness and allows you to build up over several months. Be honest with yourself regarding your current level of fitness and start training early so you have enough time to improve before the event; you will enjoy the trip far more if you are not exhausted after the first hill! If you already have a good level of fitness it probably won't take you as long to reach the stages shown but you still need to build up your trekking stamina.

Long-distance Walking: 16-week Training Programme

It's important to build up your training over a long period; this is a sample training programme that you can follow to develop your fitness specifically for trekking.

Week 1 – 3:

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Rest day	30 mins walk & Exercise circuit	Rest day	30 mins walk & Exercise circuit	Rest day	2 hour walk over the weekend*	

*On week 3 complete 2 hour walk on both Saturday and Sunday

Week 4 – 6:

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Rest day	30 mins walk & Exercise circuit x2	Rest day	30 mins walk & Exercise circuit x2	Rest day	3 hour walk over the weekend*	

* On week 6 complete 3 hour walk on both Saturday and Sunday

Week 7 – 9:

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Rest day	1 hour walk & Exercise circuit x3	Rest day	1 hour walk & Exercise circuit x3	Rest day	4 hour walk over the weekend*	

*On week 9 complete 4 hour walk on both Saturday and Sunday

Week 10 – 12:

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Rest day	1 hour walk & Exercise circuit x4	Rest day	1 hour walk & Exercise circuit x4	Rest day	6 hour walk over the weekend*	

* On week 12 complete 6 hour walk on both Saturday and Sunday

Week 13 – 15:

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Rest day	1 hour walk & Exercise circuit x5	Rest day	1 hour walk & Exercise circuit x5	Rest day	8 hour walk over the weekend*	

* On week 15 complete 8 hour walk on both Saturday and Sunday

Week 16:

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Rest day	1 hour walk & Exercise circuit x3	Rest day	1 hour walk & Exercise circuit x3	Rest day	4 hour walk over the weekend	

The training guide is just that, a 'guide'! With work, family and fundraising commitments you might not be able to follow it to the letter, but you can maximise your training time by making some small changes to your routine.

- Get up an hour earlier and go out for a quick walk with some stretching in the morning before work, it will get you moving and ready for the day!
- If you can walk to work, do so. If you get to work by public transport, get off a stop or two earlier than usual, so that you walk some distance each day. If you drive, park further away than usual, or walk a longer route from the car park to your office.
- Use your lunchtimes to take regular brisk walks where you work, not just a stroll around the shops!

- Find a steep set of stairs i.e. five floors of a department store/office block and climb them five times, at least three times per week.
- Use the forum on our website to get in touch with other people on the challenge; if you live near someone meet up and train together. Or train with a friend (maybe they'd like to do the challenge too!)
- Try your local leisure centre or gym. You may be able to get a fitness instructor to design a programme specifically for you! Or make use of the treadmill and stair climber to really work your legs hard; make sure you get outside too though!
- Try to get to some hilly country at the weekends to experience walking on different surfaces, gradients and of course the weather. Wear the boots and rucksack you will take with you on the trek.
- Try to walk some consecutive long days: you might ache a bit after one full day's trekking but the best way to improve your fitness and stamina is to go out again the next day!

Walking is very beneficial to your body and the best way to prepare for your challenge but you can add other activities to your training to improve your general fitness. Playing squash, tennis or badminton, going to the gym, cycling or swimming for an hour or more will improve your fitness and keep you interested in your training.

Note: Before using any gym equipment, please ensure that you are properly instructed by the staff at your gym / leisure centre.

Why Walk?

Walking can help:

- Strengthen your heart
- Improve your circulation and breathing
- Tone muscles and strengthen bones
- Reduces blood fat and cholesterol
- Burn calories!
- Reduce stress, improve psychological well-being

Walking Techniques - ways to avoid injury and discomfort

- Touch the ground heel first, roll forward through the arch, over the ball of your foot to your toes, which push off to start another step. This reduces the risk of shin splints and tendon pulls.
- Walk with your head up and eyes focused ahead.
- Keep your shoulders level, pulled back and down, lift your chest.
- Contract your abdominal muscles, pressing them towards your spine.
- Carry your arms at 90° angles and pump them forward and back, rather than side to side.

The faster you move, the better your cardiovascular workout. But try to keep an even stride and maintain a steady pace. To walk faster....

- Accelerate your arm movements.
- Take smaller, quicker steps.
- To prevent lower back pain avoid leaning forward and arching your back.

Footwear

Choose a comfortable pair of walking boots designed for the specific activity of walking. They should have a reasonably high ankle and a stiff heel counter to give lateral support. The midsole should be firm yet comfortable. It is worth investing in a good pair of trekking or hiking boots, and appropriate socks. **New boots must be worn in.** Wear them around the house, on the way to work, etc, and then on longer trips. Once they have conformed to the shape of your feet there is less likelihood of getting blisters.

Feet first!

There are some common foot problems which are very easy to treat and avoid:

- To avoid blisters, keep your feet dry and wear socks made with fibres which draw moisture away from your skin - steer clear of pure cotton. Don't lace your boots too tightly or too loosely. The irritation from the pinching and rubbing may cause blisters.
- Aching arches are usually caused by pounding when you walk. Make sure you touch the ground with your heel first and pushing off with your toe. Arch supports may help.
- Blackened toenails are caused by the big toe hitting the front of your shoe. Keep your toenails neatly trimmed. Make sure that if one of your feet is slightly larger than the other (as most are) that your boots fit the larger one.