

# TRAINING TIPS FOR A RAFTING CHALLENGE



## INTRODUCTION

Our rafting Challenges should not be underestimated, as you will be doing a lot more than “sitting on a raft all day!”

**Before starting any training programme you should consult your Doctor/Health Clinic for further advice.**

You do need a reasonable level of fitness to get the most out of our Challenges. Remember, you are paddling for 4 consecutive days, in very hot temperatures – sometimes over 40°C! **The fitter you are the more you will enjoy this adventure!** This is not like a trekking or cycling challenge, where you will normally have to follow a regime in order to obtain the necessary level of fitness. Below you find some notes that will help you get the most of out of this adventure.

## TRAINING

Whilst much of our activity on this challenge will be ‘going with the flow’, you will still need some level of upper body strength in terms of steering the raft through rapids and rowing some sections of the river. It would be worth working on your upper body strength between now and the challenge.

Good levels of stamina, good cardio-vascular fitness and sound upper body strength are the three key areas for you to focus on.

**Cardiovascular fitness** - this is an exercise or activity that incorporates using your heart and lungs in order to improve fitness. Activities such as walking, running, cycling and swimming are great examples. A great cardiovascular exercise, especially for rafting expeditions is rowing. It is very useful to go to the gym as the rowing machines there inform you of your distances etc. Try by starting to row a small distance in the first instance (1km) and then each time you row, try to increase the distance by 0.5 km. This is also great for building stamina as you are slowly building up to rowing longer distances, and slowly increasing your fitness

The same principle of slowly increasing your distance, bit by bit, every time you train, can be used when you go walking, cycling, running or swimming.

**Upper body strength** - as you will be paddling your raft, for 4 days, it is very useful to have sound upper body strength. Free weights and press-ups should assist with this part of training. Again, for stamina reasons, try to increase the amount slowly over time.

**Stamina** - is the capability of sustaining prolonged exercise on the body. There will be times when you will need to keep paddling through the rapids, even though your arms are telling you not to! As described above, the best way for you to improve stamina is to SLOWLY increase your exercise time/weights/distance each time you exercise.

## A FEW MORE TIPS

With your work, fundraising and family commitments, you may not be able to dedicate a lot of time into your training, but it’s vital to your safety and enjoyment that you do train. However, in order to successfully train for the Challenge you will need to organise your time properly. There are plenty of ways to maximise your training, even if you feel you have no spare time:

- Get up an hour early to go for a brisk walk before work, or walk to work if you can.
- If you do drive to work, park your car further away than normal.
- Use your lunchtimes to take a walk
- Always use stairs instead of lifts / escalators.
- Try and get your family involved – take days out that involve exercise.

It’s always a good idea to join a gym or leisure centre in order to strengthen your lower and upper body - you will have access to fitness instructors who will design a programme specifically for you.

**You will enjoy your Challenge far more if you are physically fit!**

