

TRAINING TIPS FOR A TREKKING CHALLENGE

INTRODUCTION

The one thing you should be reassured of is our trekking challenges are nothing to be afraid of, as people from all walks of life register for our challenges. The itineraries are designed to ensure you have an enjoyable trek; the number of hours you will walk are considered and your support team are there to assist throughout - they'll take the strain, leaving you free to enjoy the trek. You're in the best hands throughout the challenge, our challenge leaders are all very experienced. They identify signs of tiredness and are there to help.

Whichever trekking challenge you have chosen it will be more enjoyable if you're well prepared. You don't want to find yourself lagging behind the main group or reaching the top of that steep slope and be bent over gasping for breath, when you should be admiring the fantastic view with your fellow trekkers. And the best preparation for your trekking challenge? **Get Trek-fit.**

Getting trek-fit will increase your enjoyment when you're on your challenge and help prevent injury. Plus, training for your trek is a great way to improve your overall health and wellbeing.

A regular 1 - 2hr stroll is not enough to prepare you for a daily routine of 6 - 8hrs of trekking over multiple consecutive days.

Your training should start several months before the challenge, and the following notes will help you to Get Trek-Fit.

Before starting any training programme you should consult your Doctor. Remember - without training, you may not be able to complete this challenge.



“BELIEVE YOU CAN”

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WHAT TYPE OF TREKKER ARE YOU?

Training for your trekking challenge depends largely on your present fitness, age and the amount of walking you do. There are a number of ways to train and the notes below should be adapted to fit into your personal lifestyle. Training should be enjoyable - train with friends, other challenge participants or try joining a local walking club or your local gym and make some new friends.

Understanding where you're at with your fitness right now is the best place to start. It'll help you plan to get from where you are to where you're going.....

Are you a beginner?

Participants who haven't exercised regularly (other than incidental exercise) for a while or perhaps never, **will have to start training at least 4 months before their challenge**. You should build up gradually to avoid over-exercise and injury.

Your aim: is to move onto the intermediate plan. This can be done once you feel comfortable with the beginner's plan which you might complete 1, 2 or 3 times depending on your ability.

Are you an intermediate?

Participants who walk (run, ride, or swim) frequently but don't do any weight bearing exercise, or participants who do weight bearing exercise but little or no cardiovascular exercise. This category usually includes people who exercise regularly either:

- Walking, running or cycling or swimming 2 - 3 times per week.
- Go to the gym 2 - 3 times per week.

As you have a degree of basic fitness and confidence, 3 months or so of training should prepare you for your challenge.

Your aim: is to introduce a regular programme into your training and a balance of cardiovascular and strength training.

Are you advanced?

This category includes participants who have a regular and varied exercise regime (8hrs+ / week) including cardiovascular and weight bearing exercise. If you are in this category you should already have a good training schedule and should amply cope with the challenge, **therefore no schedule is provided**.

Your aim: is to be able to complete consecutive days trekking of 6 - 8hrs. Practice this before the trek by doing 6 - 8hr days back to back - go away for a couple of weekends leading up to the trip and should be able to easily walk both days. **Enjoy yourself!**



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WHAT ARE WE TRYING TO ACHIEVE?

The two objectives to prepare for a trekking challenge::

- Increase the capacity and efficiency of your body's cardiovascular system.
- Improve the endurance of your muscles. Building up their repetitive movement **strength**, thus allowing you to walk further before feeling physically tired.

It's simple - about half of the endurance required for walking 6+ hours comes from the improved ability of your body to pump blood and oxygen to your muscles.

The other half comes from increased efficiency (strength) of the muscles to extract oxygen and convert it.

Don't forget the top half of our bodies after all we have to carry our day sacks and walking poles.



DO'S AND DON'T'S

- The **best cardio exercise** to prepare for your challenge is walking, because it uses all the same movements and muscles that you'll be using on your trek. You'll toughen your feet, strengthen all the right muscles and get used to the kit you will be using.
- Don't do too much too soon, get too fatigued or even worse injured, and not be able to exercise for the next month!
- Always warm up (prior to) and warm down (after) exercise and include stretching. **It works.**
- As you get fitter keep the time that you spend training the same but increase the intensity (work harder) - you can fit it in to your busy lifestyle.
- Keep a note of the distances you cover using a pedometer - you will be able to monitor your improvement.
- Listen to your body and if you are tired do a little less, if you feel strong do a little more - the suggested plans aren't prescriptive.
- Do as many of your training sessions wearing the boots that you will be wearing on the challenge and also carry your day sack containing the things you will be carrying.
- Do get advice from the attendant/instructor at your gym on use of equipment and exercises.

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FITTING YOUR TRAINING INTO YOUR LIFE

The programmes included in this document are rough training guides. Obviously with family, work and fundraising commitments you may not feel able to achieve what we have suggested for you. However, in order to get close to achieving your training it is vital you organise your time properly. There are many ways to ensure your time is maximised even if you feel that you have no time outside of work:-

- Organise your week to make sure you get out and do something!
- Don't beat yourself up if you miss a day's training; just get on with the next day. But try not to miss 2 days in a row.
- If you can't get outside, add another indoor session, but do try and walk as much as possible in 'real' conditions. The more you train in similar conditions to your challenge (terrain and weather) the better.
- Try and get up an hour earlier and take a quick walk before work.
- If you can walk to work, do so. If you can't walk the whole distance, why not walk part of the distance and leave your car in a nearby car park.
- Do the school run on foot and get the kids fit too.
- Get your family/friends in on the action and training with you at the weekend or in the evenings.
- Use your lunch hour to take a brisk walk around the immediate area.
- Go to your local gym or 'spin' class and substitute this for one of your midweek sessions.
- It is important at weekends to get in some 'hilly' miles to experience trekking on different surfaces and gradients. **Most of our trekking challenges involve hills and mountains!**
- It is important to try and make the time to trek on some consecutive long days.

Nothing will prepare you for your challenge better than actually going out for some long walks!

THE TRAINING SCHEDULE

The schedule is broken down into 4 week blocks as it is easier to maintain focus and motivation. Set yourself a specific target or goal at the end of each 4 week block. This can be: participating in an organised event, a group walk with your fellow challengers, your first 10 - 20km walk or your first walk with the local walking club. You set your own target and make it enjoyable.

Little and often is the key, and although you train several times each week (you will be walking nearly every day on your challenge so you need to train for this) the following training plans can be fitted into a normal working week, with a little adjustment and a certain amount of commitment.

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- Beginner:**
- Try to walk at least three times per week, building up the distance you walk each week.
 - Walk on varied terrains and surfaces in the boots you will be wearing for the challenge.
 - Do longer walks at the weekend.
 - Start out with a distance or time you're comfortable with. This might range from 15mins for someone who hasn't exercised for a while, to an hour or more for someone who walks regularly.
 - Record the distance that you cover in your initial walks. From there you can design a walking programme where you increase your distance a bit each week to get to your goal distance in the weeks preceding your challenge.
 - Include two sessions of strength training. Space them over the week to allow muscles to rest between sessions.
 - You can do strength training at home - squats, lunges, calf raises and core exercises. **But remember that they must be done correctly, if you are unsure seek advice.**

Your weekly training plan might start off looking similar to the table below. But we recommend completing the longer walks at the weekend.

BEGINNER:							
	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5	Day 6	Day 7
Week 1	Rest Day	45mins / 1hr walking	1hr gym (strength training)	45mins / 1hr walking	1hr strength training at home	1hr walking (not on roads)	1hr walking (not on roads)
Week 2	Rest Day	45mins / 1hr walking	1hr gym (strength training)	45mins / 1hr walking	1hr strength training at home	1hr walking (not on roads)	1hr walking (not on roads)
Week 3	Rest Day	1hr walking	1hr gym (strength training)	1hr / 1½hrs walking	1hr strength training at home	1hr / 1½hrs walking (not on roads)	1hr / 1½hrs walking (not on roads)
Week 4	Rest Day	1hr walking	1hr gym (strength training)	1hr / 1½hrs walking	1hr strength training at home	1hr / 1½hrs walking (not on roads)	2hrs walking (not on roads)



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Intermediate

- Try to walk at least three times per week, building up the distance you walk each week.
- Walk on varied terrains and surfaces in the boots you will be wearing for the challenge.
- You should be aiming to walk at 4 - 5km/hr.
- Aim to cover 10km over varied (**hilly**) terrain on your longer 3hr walks.
- Record the distance that you cover in your walks. From there you can design a walking programme where you increase your distance a bit each week to get to your goal distance in the weeks preceding your challenge.
- Include two sessions of strength training. Space them over the week to allow muscles to rest between sessions.
- You can do strength training at home - squats, lunges, calf raises and core exercises. **But remember that they must be done correctly, if you are unsure seek advice.**
- When you can't walk longer, walk faster. It'll elevate your heart rate more and get you fitter than if you stroll.

INTERMEDIATE:

	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5	Day 6	Day 7
Week 1	Rest Day	1½hr walking	1hr gym (strength training)	1½hrs walking	1hr strength training at home	2 / 3hrs walking (not on roads)	2 / 3hrs walking (not on roads)
Week 2	Rest Day	1½hr walking	1hr gym (strength training)	1½hrs walking	1hr strength training at home	2 / 3hrs walking (not on roads)	2 / 3hrs walking (not on roads)
Week 3	Rest Day	1½hr walking	1hr gym (strength training)	1½hrs walking	1hr strength training at home	Rest Day	4 / 6hrs walking (not on roads)
Week 4	1½hr walking	1½hr walking	1hr gym (strength training)	1½hrs walking	1hr strength training at home	Rest Day	6 / 7hrs walking (not on roads)



