

DIFFERENT TRAVEL

Trek Training Guide

The event is a challenge and requires a good standard of fitness. It is important that you get fit and stay fit before undertaking the trek, this will give you confidence and allow you to get greater enjoyment from it.

We have put together some guidelines to get you started however you may want to discuss a training programme with your local gym as they should be able to give you advice too. Also you may want to consider other activities such as swimming or workouts at the gym to tone your muscles.

We recommend that you always carry a small medical kit, water, energy snacks and a mobile phone with you when you go out walking. For safety, ensure someone knows where you are going and when to expect you back.

Getting Started

The amount of training you require depends on your current degree of fitness. This is a trek and a training programme is essential. Our trek will take you through rugged terrain with narrow trails and steep, high valleys. You will not only be trekking through them, but also down and up them and so we would like you to be prepared so you get maximum enjoyment from this trek.

Set aside plenty of time to train, the more you train the more you will enjoy the trek. You would be unusual if you had no trouble in incorporating a training schedule into an already busy lifestyle. If you work Monday to Friday, the weekend will probably be when you will have the time to arrange most of your training. If you can put this together with a few walks after work during the week then your training effort will be greatly enhanced.

Do not wait until a month before you leave to start training. Your body needs time to build up the strength needed to allow you to walk for six hours or more and this is best achieved by training consistently over time.

Putting a training plan together

1. If you have not walked for some time, begin by walking a few times a week for at least one hour.
2. Whatever your fitness, it is better to do separate hour-long walks per week than one long walk a week.
3. Weekends - start with three-hour walks with one or two stops en-route. It is advisable that you find some stretches of hilly terrain to get used to more strenuous walking.
4. As you get nearer the date of departure, plan a number of longer walks, three evenings a week for 1-2 hours and at least a 4-5 hour walk during the weekend, over more difficult terrain.
5. By one month before departure, you should be able to walk easily for 7 hours a day, over hills and public footpaths. Preferably, you should take a weekend off and walk both days over as difficult terrain as possible, each day 6-7 hours, with regular breaks every 2 hours or so. This will allow your body to acclimatize to the idea of non-stop walking.

6. During training, always wear the hiking boots and socks, which will be worn on your trek. If you are buying new boots for the trek it is imperative that they are worn in so purchase them as soon as possible.
7. During training it is also advisable to carry your small day rucksack weighing 5-6kg (equivalent to 3 bottles of water, camera etc.)
8. Before walking, it is a good idea to warm up for a few moments and exercise your arms in order to increase blood flow through your body. We have included some stretching guidelines for you.

Trek Training Programme

A detailed trek training programme, designed to help with your fitness can be fun to follow.

Monday

7 –8 Weeks to go: 30 – 50 mins steady
5 –6 Weeks to go: 30 – 50 mins steady
3 –4 Weeks to go: 40 – 60 mins steady
2 Weeks to go: 1 hr steady
1 Week to go: 1 hr steady

Tuesday

7 –8 Weeks to go: 50 mins Scouts pace, speed walking
5 –6 Weeks to go: 50 mins Scouts pace, speed walking
3 –4 Weeks to go: 1 hr Scouts pace, speed walking
2 Weeks to go: 1 hr Scouts pace
1 Week to go: 1 hr Scouts pace

Wednesday

7 –8 Weeks to go: 20 – 30 mins easy
5 –6 Weeks to go: 20 – 30 mins easy
3 –4 Weeks to go: 30 – 40 mins easy
2 Weeks to go: 40 – 50 mins easy
1 Week to go: 40 – 60 mins easy

Thursday

7 –8 Weeks to go: 30 mins fast
5 –6 Weeks to go: 30 mins fast
3 –4 Weeks to go: 45 – 50 mins fast
2 Weeks to go: 50 – 60 mins fast
1 Week to go: Rest

Friday

7 –8 Weeks to go: Rest
5 –6 Weeks to go: Rest
3 –4 Weeks to go: Rest
2 Weeks to go: Rest
1 Week to go: Fly/Rest

Saturday

7 –8 Weeks to go: 1 – 2 hrs, 4/5 kmph, incl. hills
5 –6 Weeks to go: 1 – 2 hrs, 4/5 kmph, incl. hills
3 –4 Weeks to go: 2 – 4 hrs, 3/5 kmph, incl. hills
2 Weeks to go: 3 – 5 hrs, 3/5 kmph, incl. hills
1 Week to go: Arrive at destination

Sunday

7 –8 Weeks to go: 3 –5 hours, 3 - 4 kmph
5 –6 Weeks to go: 3 –5 hours, 3 - 4 kmph
3 –4 Weeks to go: 4 – 6 hrs, 3/5 kmph, incl. hills
2 Weeks to go: 6 – 7 hrs, 3/5 kmph, incl. hills
1 Week to go: Time to Trek!

Scouts Pace: alternating easy / fast pace / easy fast etc.

Speed walking: fast walking 5½- 6 kmph

Easy: 3 kmph; Steady: 4 kmph; Fast: 5/6 kmph

Recommended walking techniques

To ensure that you are comfortable when walking long distances, you must pay attention to your posture and gait. Good form will help you to walk faster and for longer increasing your fitness levels. You will tire less easily, use more of your core muscles and improve the overall efficiency of your workout.

Strike with heel first:

Your heel should hit the ground first. Roll your foot through to your toe with no unnatural pushing from one foot to the other. Take shorter rather than longer steps. More frequent short steps will give you a better workout and be easier on your joints.

Swing your arms:

Bend your arms at the elbow at a 90 degree angle and swing them towards the centre of your body. Swinging your arms properly will give you a better aerobic workout, burn more calories and engage more muscles throughout your torso.

Stretch your spine:

To maintain good posture stretch your spine tall reaching up to the sky with the top of your head. Your head should be resting comfortably in line with your spine, don't tilt it back or tuck your chin in. This especially important when walking up hills as looking up the hill can strain your neck and make it harder to breath.

Contract your stomach:

With your spine tall contract your stomach muscles slightly and lift them upward to support your lower back. This will help to maintain a good posture as well as avoiding straining your lower back.

Walking uphill:

When walking uphill it is natural to lean into the hill however try and keep this to a minimum maintaining an upright posture. Incorrect posture can lead to considerable back pain and imbalance:

Walking downhill:

Keep your body upright as you walk downhill. This may feel as if you are leaning backwards opposite the slope of the hill.

Breathe freely:

Your pace should increase your breathing rate even to the point where you are slightly winded, however if you cannot talk and are completely out of breath your over-exerting yourself.

Other alternatives to walking:

You may like to consider some of the following activities when putting together your own personal training plan.

Treadmill work:

Treadmill work should not be substituted for outdoor activities as this will not adequately prepare you for the conditions you may face on your trek. When walking on a treadmill bear in mind that your trek will take you up and down hills in addition to walking on a flat surface. Interval work should also be conducted to provide

variability, by using an incline and alternating between walking briskly and at your normal pace. Endurance levels will therefore improve.

Cross training:

Many forms of aerobic exercise can be used to help you train effectively for the trek. Sports such as running, cycling and swimming will all help in a cross training programme. All these use similar muscle groups to those that you will use on your trek, and help to increase your overall levels of stamina.

Resistance work:

You could try improving your strength by adding a weights session to your training programme. Strengthening your leg and buttock muscles using free weights or weight machines, as well as performing gentle exercises such as squats and lunges will increase your walking power.

Core Stability:

It is essential to strengthen your core muscles as weakness in this region can cause fatigue. Pilates and yoga are great forms of exercise that will help these muscles.

Injury prevention & warm up tips

If you push yourself too hard you are likely to injure and exhaust yourself unnecessarily. It is vital to use your energy wisely. Look around you. Take in your environment using all five senses and even while training you will discover new things.

Stretching:

Tight muscles hurt and perform less efficiently and are more prone to injury. In order to help improve flexibility within muscles and joints a warm is recommended. It is essential to make stretching a habit throughout your training as this will really help when it comes to your trek.

The guiding principles for stretching are outlined below:

Always warm up prior to undertaking a long walk - walk slowly for 10 minutes or walk in place for 3 to 5 minutes;

Don't stretch cold muscles, it is far better to stretch after a warm up rather than before;

After intense exercise hold each stretch for 30 seconds repeating once or twice on each leg;

Ease into each stretch, don't bounce or force it;

Stretch within your limits. If you feel any discomfort, stop;

Breathe slowly and with a normal rhythm.

You may like to incorporate some of the stretches outlined below into your training routine.

Suggested Stretching Exercises

1. Hamstring Curl

- Grasp leg behind knee
- Pull leg into chest
- Slowly straighten leg
- Repeat with other leg

2. Quadriceps Stretch

- Stand on one leg with other leg pulled up to bottom
- Grasp ankle and ease into stretch
- Keep knees together maintaining an upright posture
- Repeat with other leg

3. Calf Stretch

- Lean into wall lifting one leg off the ground keeping leg straight
- Repeat with other leg

4. Glutes Stretch

- Lie on your back on the floor
- Position one leg across the opposite thigh
- Grasp leg behind thigh pulling into body
- Repeat with other leg

5. Hip Stretch

- Kneel on the floor with a cushion underneath
- Grasp foot and pull up towards your bottom
- Thrust hips forward and upwards
- A stretch will be felt in thigh and across front of pelvis

6. Adductors Stretch

- Sit with back against a wall ensuring your bottom is positioned as close to the wall as possible
- Keeping an upright posture gently push down on knees until a stretch is felt

7. Back Stretch

- Kneel on the floor tucking chin into chest
- Arch back upwards pushing from shoulders maintaining relaxed breathing throughout

8. Bicep Stretch

- Put the heel of your hand against a wall with fingers pointing down
- Turn head to look in opposite direction
- Repeat with other arm

9. Chest Stretch

- Sit on floor with arms outstretched behind
- Keeping head up slide forward until a stretch is felt across chest

10. Shoulder Stretch

- Sweep one outstretched arm across body
- Position hand on the elbow of outstretch arm, applying pressure

Note: Before starting any kind of exercise routine, contact your GP or fitness training professional for advice. It is important to ensure to work out safely and correctly otherwise at worst, you could cause an injury or at best you could fail to achieve any benefit from your workout.