

Everest Base Camp Training Guide





WHAT ARE YOU TRAINING FOR?

Trekking to Everest Base Camp is a tough endurance challenge. No matter your current fitness level, you must ensure you train properly. You will be reaching 5,500 metres plus and descending back down over a period of 11 days (15 days if on the Everest Base Camp & Gokyo Lakes Itinerary), trekking on varied terrain out in the elements, whilst combating the effects of altitude, this will require training. Even regular walkers must train as, due to altitude, the pace on this trek is slower so you will spend longer on your feet each day to cover 10 miles + (6-9 hours!). Preparation is key and will aid your enjoyment of the challenge, whilst ensuring that your body is up to the rigours of the mountains.

WHAT ABOUT ALTITUDE?

Combating the effects of altitude is not quite as simple. Altitude sickness can affect different people in different ways; and attempting to become as fit as possible may not ultimately help with the prevention of Acute Altitude Mountain Sickness. What an increased level of fitness will do, is ensure that the body's ability to cope with less oxygen in the air is increased, making both acclimatisation and the walking itself far less strenuous.

HOW DO YOU TRAIN?

Training is a very simple concept; it is all about progressively increasing your body's ability to do just that little bit more and giving it time to adapt, recover and to come back stronger. The trick is to train properly and gradually to ensure that you build up a good level of fitness, stamina and endurance before you set off.



You will need to get used to spending long periods of time on your feet (which will also toughen up your feet) and getting used to your walking boots. Equally important is increasing your resilience to the aches and pains you might experience during your trek and developing the mind-set required to cope with the nature of the challenge. You should plan a structured training programme, ideally starting now, leading up to your challenge. Suitable preparation for this challenge can be achieved with a mixture of walking, aerobic fitness, interval and strength training; eating the correct foods and staying hydrated. Within this guide is a brief summary of the types of exercise and activity you should work into your plan. If you don't go to the gym and are looking to start a new fitness regime to prepare yourself, we advise speaking to a member of staff at your local gym to work out a structured training plan which suits your current fitness level, and builds on areas for improvement suited to your end goal of reaching Everest Base Camp!

BESPOKE TRAINING PLAN

A training plan should be tailored to your physiology, requirements, timetable and budget. One option is to work with a Personal Trainer (PT) who will design your custom plan and meet with you regularly to guide you through it using their experience and expertise. Increasingly more budget/time conscious challengers are opting to employ 'online' PTs, who provide many similar services to a traditional PT without the face to face contact. There are a number of good Apps with 'responsive' training plans you can use with your laptop, tablet or smart phone to monitor and track your journey to Everest.



FITNESS AND EXERCISE

Many people signing up to the challenge use it as a great motivator to join a gym, exercise classes, a local sports club, or to take up running. You can plan and fit exercise into your current lifestyle (we recommend a rounded approach with a mixture of different types of exercise) and set out a weekly plan which is achievable and manageable – something you can stick to! These sessions aim to improve your cardiovascular system, core strength and stamina so that you have a solid basis from which you can gradually increase your overall general fitness level.

Aerobic conditioning - This will form the core of your training through regular walks, building up to longer distances and faster paces. Aerobic exercise trains the energy systems of the body that utilise oxygen and is used during all heightened activity. Don't neglect hill training as this is key to getting the body used to the terrain you will experience.

Varied exercises - Just walking to build up fitness levels can become monotonous so consider using different forms of exercise to keep your training varied and interesting. Team and racket sports or cycling, for example, can work well within a training programme and means you don't have to drop all of your other interests. The key is to undertake regular aerobic exercise with long walks in between.

Interval Training - Interval training is bouts of intense exercise interspersed with short rest intervals. The intensity and duration of the work intervals and the length of the rest periods dictate the output and effectiveness of your training. Alternate between brisk walking or running for up to a minute, and then return to the original pace for a set period before repeating.



Strength Training - Basic strength programmes adapt the body for more strenuous resistance training. This targets the major muscle groups, tendons, ligaments and joints to help prevent injury. Relevant exercises can include squats, bench presses, overhead presses, leg presses and calf presses, leg extensions and leg curls.

A Good Long Walk!

Our best advice is to practice for the activity you are going to be doing – walking! Taking up hiking in preparation for the challenge will give you invaluable experience of the different stresses and strains that uphill and downhill walking puts on your legs and feet. Look for nature trails and head for hills and mountains if there are any nearby. Use the weekends to do full-day hikes. There is no reason why you shouldn't enjoy your training, and use it as a chance to get outdoors, see some of the countryside and get fit in the process! You can also test out your walking boots, kit and backpack that you will be wearing and using during your climb. Breaking in your boots properly is key to ensuring you don't suffer on the mountain. Only when you can walk a full day's hike up and down hills without getting any blisters, do you know you have fully broken in your boots! The backpack you buy must fit your back and shape (most retailers will fit your backpack for you) and only by wearing this during your training walks will you be able to tell if it is fitted properly. The weight in your backpack will determine how you walk, and the pressure you put on your feet and your stride, so it will also aid breaking in your boots too!

TRAINING WALKS

We run several Action Challenge Training Walks, Runs and Weekends throughout the year in both London and mountainous areas in North Wales, the Brecon Beacons and the Peak District.

What's included:

- Action Challenge Trek Leader
- Advice & briefings from the Leader team
- Meet fellow teammates
- Test your fitness + kit
- 2 nights' accommodation
- Meals for 2 days
- 1.5 days walking (Medical Advice - If you have any concerns about embarking on a serious training programme, or indeed the actual walk, please consult your GP).

FREE 50KM PLACE

As you have signed up to this challenge, you have qualified for FREE participation in one of our UK Ultra Challenges! This is the perfect opportunity to get some practise in, and test out your kit if you have not done so already! Please click on the link below to redeem your place and browse the options we have available.

<https://www.ultrachallenge.com/>

[Click Here To Sign Up Now >>](#)

FOOTWEAR AND CARE

Boots are worth investing in and we recommend going to a specialist retailer and getting advice on the right boots for you. Your footwear is integral to the Everest Base Camp trek and should have a high ankle and a stiff heel to give lateral support. When buying walking boots please remember the following points:



- Do so at the end of the day; feet swell throughout the day and you need to try them on when your feet are at their largest.
- Always wear socks and if possible the same socks you will be wearing when walking.
- We recommend medium - heavyweight gortex (or breathable) and waterproof walking boots. Please ask the store for help to ensure that you are fitted with the correct boots.
- Make sure you try both boots on, lots of people have one foot slightly bigger than the other.

DIET AND HYDRATION

It is vital to keep eating and drinking to maintain high energy levels when hiking both in training and on the mountain. This is especially important at high altitudes where the most common observation is the initial loss of body weight when energy and protein intake levels continuously decrease due to potential loss of appetite. Keeping both energy and hydration levels high will make strenuous portions of the climb far easier on the body. It is advisable to eat in sufficient quantities even if you do not feel particularly hungry, as stamina depletes quickly during the climb. We also recommend consuming ample amounts of carbohydrates, proteins, vitamins and mineral nutrients before the climb starts. During physical exertion, it is crucial to replenish fluids for optimal hydration and energy, essentially for the brain and muscles to continue their work. Sports drinks containing electrolytes and vitamins are significantly better absorbed and help to replace energy. Electrolytes, vitamins and other nutrients are essential for performance.



The importance of drinking water and energy drinks before, during and after training cannot be over-emphasised. Being thirsty and having a dry mouth are signs of dehydration. Other signs are dizziness, headache, mental irritation or depression, fatigue, water retention, lower back pain, recurring or chronic pain, decreased urine output and colour, heartburn, stomach ache, and sunken eyes.

TOP 5 TRAINING TIPS

Don't over-commit to training or overstretch yourself, you want to start the challenge in peak physical fitness but without being burnt out - these are the team's top 5 tips:

1. **Wear your gear in!** - Walk as often as you can and as much as you can. Wear the boots you will be wearing at the event (if they are new, then this is very important!) and find a way to carry your backpack comfortably – this will help to avoid blisters and any foot and back injuries.
2. **Go climb a hill!** - Before you set out on a high-altitude Himalayan trek, we recommend you try something a little closer to home. There are many fantastic walks you can do in the UK - either Mount Snowdon in Wales, Ben Nevis in Scotland, anywhere in the Peak District, the South Downs – or just the biggest hill you can find near your home! We recommend you aim to conquer a mountain at least two months before your planned climb, so you can judge your overall fitness levels, test out your boots, and gauge what areas of training and your fitness you might need to work more on.



3. **Fit exercise into your daily routine** -

Whether it is a case of getting off the bus a stop early, taking the stairs instead of the lift or even walking up escalators, you will be surprised at how much difference a few little changes can make to your day-to-day wellbeing and overall fitness.

4. **Keep hydrated** – Most people as a general rule do not drink enough water. Increase your standard intake before the climb and be more conscious about how much water you consume during the day. This will improve your general well-being and make you more sensitive to the early signs of dehydration, which will help you manage your hydration levels on the mountain.

5. **Don't panic** - If you miss a session it's not the end of the world. Don't push yourself to try and make it up - one session won't make too much difference in the end. However, if you start to try and fit your life around your training you will soon find yourself unable to keep up and more likely to throw in the towel. Keep your mind focused on the task at hand and remember your mental determination is just as important as your physical strength. In the week leading up to your challenge, we recommend putting your feet up, eating and drinking lots of water, and getting as much rest and sleep as you can!