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GETTING WALKING FIT

How to prepare for a multi-day walking holiday.



RAW TRAVEL
ICONIC WALKS WORLDWIDE

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This company meets the highest standards of social and environmental impact



INTRODUCTION

Preparing well is one of the best ways to enjoy your RAW Travel adventure.

Whether you're walking a famous Camino, exploring coastal trails or tackling a mountain trek, arriving fit and confident will make your experience more enjoyable.

We recommend starting your training around six months before departure, gradually building your fitness and endurance to match your trip's distances, terrain and elevation.

This guide offers practical advice on training, equipment, nutrition and recovery to help you prepare. Everyone starts at a different fitness level, so focus on steady progress. Our experienced team is always here to help.

Happy training!
The RAW Travel Team

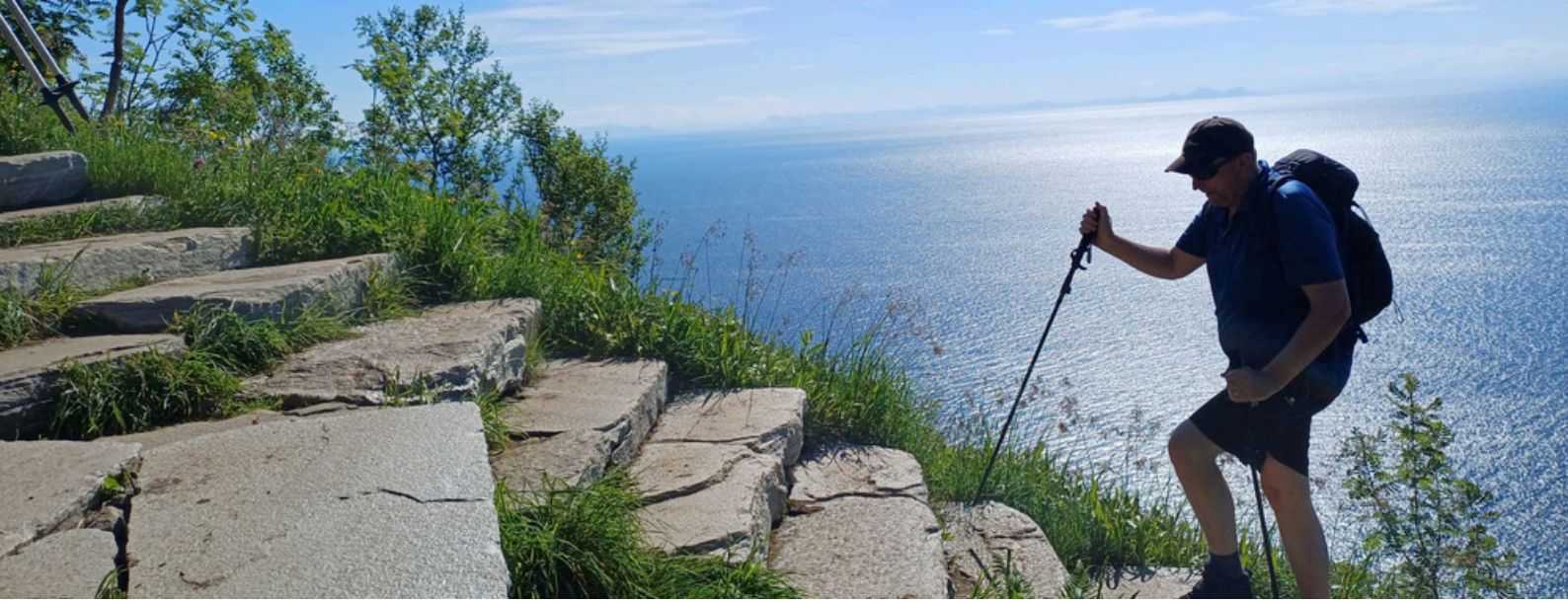


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GETTING STARTED

TRAINING FOR MULTI-DAY WALKS

Walking is the best place to start, but preparing for consecutive days on the trail requires more than the occasional weekend stroll.

Depending on your trip, you may encounter long days, steep climbs and descents, rocky paths, beaches, forest tracks or alpine terrain. You'll also carry a daypack. Understanding your chosen walk will help you prepare effectively.

Walking fitness isn't just about distance. Elevation, uneven terrain and consecutive walking days can be equally demanding. Alongside regular walks, include hills, stairs, strength training, balance exercises and cardiovascular activities.

As previously mentioned, we recommend starting your training around six months before departure, following a program suited to your fitness and trip grading. Gradually increase your walking distance, duration and difficulty as your fitness improves.

If you're new to training and needing guidance, an exercise physiologist, physiotherapist or qualified personal trainer can help you prepare safely.



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FIND SIMILAR TERRAIN

Train on terrain that reflects your chosen walk. If your trip involves 5 to 7 hours on rugged trails, aim to complete training walks of similar duration and difficulty.

MIX IT UP

Include a variety of surfaces, from rocky paths and muddy tracks to uneven ground with exposed tree roots. Practise both uphill climbs and downhill descents to build strength, balance and confidence.

Long walking days also require mental stamina. Some walks require 15-25km a day, try and replicate that in your training as well as adding consecutive walking days to get you conditioned.

RAIN, HAIL OR SHINE

Train in different weather conditions so you're prepared for whatever the trail brings. Some fatigue and muscle soreness are normal, but persistent pain shouldn't be ignored. Listen to your body and allow time for recovery.

TEST ALL YOUR EQUIPMENT

Use your training walks to test the clothing and equipment you'll take on your trip. Wear your walking shoes or boots, carry your daypack and practise using walking poles.

Check for anything that rubs or feels uncomfortable over longer distances. Carry water, nutritious snacks, basic first aid supplies and weather protection, including a hat, sunscreen and waterproof jacket.

STAY HYDRATED

Carry enough water for your walk and drink regularly according to your thirst, the weather and your level of exertion.

Longer walks and hot conditions may increase your fluid needs. Electrolytes or salty snacks can help replace sodium lost through heavy sweating.

Practise using various hydration tools during training to find what works best for you.



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UNDERSTANDING TRIP GRADING

Every RAW Travel walk is different. Our trip gradings help you understand the physical demands of your chosen adventure so you can prepare with confidence.

Grades consider daily walking distances, elevation, terrain and overall physical demands. A shorter mountain walk with steep climbs and descents can be more challenging than a longer day on relatively flat trails.

WHAT DOES YOUR GRADE MEAN?

INTRODUCTORY | GRADES 1–2
Gentler walks with shorter distances and less demanding terrain. A good introduction to multi-day walking.

MODERATE | GRADES 3–4
Longer walking days with some hills, uneven surfaces and moderate physical demands. Regular walking fitness is recommended.

CHALLENGING | GRADES 5–6
Longer days, sustained climbs and descents, and more demanding terrain. Good fitness and consistent preparation are important.

STRENUOUS | GRADES 7–8
Demanding walks with significant elevation changes, challenging terrain and extended walking hours. Strong endurance and specific training are essential.

TOUGH | GRADES 9–10
Our most physically demanding treks, requiring excellent fitness, stamina and preparation for challenging conditions.

TRAIN FOR YOUR WALK
Use your trip's grading alongside its daily distances, elevation and terrain to guide your training. The closer your preparation matches your chosen walk, the more comfortable and confident you'll feel on the trail.

Trip gradings are indicative and vary by itinerary. Refer to your RAW Travel trip page for specific details. Some example grades can be found on the next page.

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EXAMPLE TRIP GRADING



	INTRODUCTORY GRADE 1-2		MODERATE GRADE 3-4		CHALLENGING GRADE 5-6		STRENUOUS GRADE 7-8		TOUGH GRADE 9-10	
FULL LENGTH CAMINO				■	■					
SELF-GUIDED COAST TO COAST PATH						■	■			
JULIAN ALPS HIGHLIGHTS							■	■		
WALKERS HAUTE ROUTE									■	■
LOFOTEN ISLANDS NORWAY						■	■			
SELF-GUIDED KUMANO KODO						■	■			
TOUR DU MONT BLANC CIRCUIT TRIP							■	■		
HIGHLIGHTS TRIP GREAT OCEAN WALK			■	■						
LUCCA TO ROME - VIA FRANCIGENA				■	■					
DOLOMITES TRAVERSE TRIP							■	■		
QUEEN CHARLOTTE TRACK			■	■						

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HOW TO TRAIN

Every walker starts with a different level of fitness, and every RAW Travel trip presents different physical challenges. Use this guide as a starting point, adjusting your training to suit your fitness, trip grading, daily distances and terrain.

Building fitness takes time. A gradual approach will improve your endurance and strength while allowing your body to adapt to longer, more demanding walks.

THE FIVE PHASES OF TRAINING

1. **BUILD YOUR FOUNDATION: ESTABLISH A REGULAR WALKING ROUTINE**
2. **INCREASE YOUR ENDURANCE: GRADUALLY EXTEND YOUR WALKING TIME AND INTRODUCE HILLS**
3. **BUILD TRAIL-SPECIFIC FITNESS: COMPLETE LONGER WALKS AND CONSECUTIVE WALKING DAYS**
4. **REDUCE YOUR TRAINING: REDUCE INTENSITY AND DURATION BEFORE DEPARTURE**
5. **TAPER AND RECOVER: ALLOW YOUR BODY TIME TO ADAPT AND ARRIVE REFRESHED**



DISCLAIMER
RAW Travel does not accept any responsibility for death or injuries caused by any information contained within this guide. All information is provided in good faith. You should consult your doctor before embarking on any program of physical activity.

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HOW TO TRAIN



PREPARE FOR CONSECUTIVE DAYS

Multi-day walking requires more than completing one long hike. Include several full-day walks and, where possible, consecutive walking days to prepare your body for repeated effort. For more challenging trips, aim to complete a six to seven-hour training walk and consider back-to-back walks of 15 to 20 km over similar terrain. Adjust these targets to match your itinerary and ability.

BUILD YOUR WALKING FITNESS

Start with shorter walks of around one hour, two or three times a week. If you're new to regular exercise, focus on consistency before increasing your distance.

As your fitness improves, gradually increase your walking pace until you're breathing a little harder but can still hold a conversation.
Work towards longer walks of around two hours, then introduce occasional three to five-hour hikes over varied terrain. Include hills, uneven paths and descents that reflect your chosen trip.

TAPER BEFORE DEPARTURE

During the final week before your trip, reduce the duration and intensity of your training. Continue with gentle walks and mobility exercises, but avoid demanding hikes or unfamiliar activities. The goal is to arrive feeling rested, confident and ready to enjoy the trail.

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SAMPLE TRAINING PROGRAM

This training program is designed to as a guide to help you build strength, endurance and confidence in the final months before your walking holiday.

The example is based on an alpine trek, but can be adapted to suit your chosen RAW Travel trip. Consider your daily walking distances, elevation, terrain and trip grading when planning your training. Feel free to reduce intensity where relevant.

For example, a Camino with longer distances may require more endurance training with longer daily distances, while an alpine trek will benefit from additional hill climbs, descents and strength work.

START AT YOUR OWN LEVEL

This program assumes a moderate level of fitness and is best used after establishing a regular walking routine. If you're starting from a lower fitness level, allow more time to build up gradually.

An example of this might be:
Month 1: 2 walks a week, 30 to 45 minutes per walk, flat terrain
Month 2: 3 walks a week, 45 to 60 minutes, varied terrain
Month 3: 3 to 4 walks a week, 45 to 60 minutes, hilly terrain, include one walk of up to two hours per week

MAKE IT WORK FOR YOU

The weekly activities don't need to be completed in the order shown. Rearrange sessions to suit your schedule, allowing recovery time between walks.

If you're preparing for a cycling trip, replace the hiking sessions with cycling sessions suited to your itinerary. Repeat weekly examples as many times as you like until you feel you are ready to progress.

For trip-specific advice, speak with your RAW Travel Destination Specialist.



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SAMPLE TRAINING PROGRAM

START APPROX. 3 MONTHS OUT
BUILD YOUR FOUNDATION

MONDAY	Strength
TUESDAY	Mobility/rest
WEDNESDAY	Local walk/hike/ride
THURSDAY	Mobility/rest
FRIDAY	Strength
SATURDAY	Local walk/hike/ride
SUNDAY	mobility/rest





INCREASE YOUR ENDURANCE

MONDAY	Strength
TUESDAY	Local walk (w/ pack)
WEDNESDAY	Local walk (w/ pack)
THURSDAY	Mobility/rest
FRIDAY	Strength
SATURDAY	Hiking (w/ pack) 3-4 hrs
SUNDAY	mobility/rest



BUILDING YOUR FITNESS

BUILD TRAIL-SPECIFIC FITNESS

MONDAY	Strength/gym
TUESDAY	30-60 min walk with stairs/hill with daypack
WEDNESDAY	Strength/gym
THURSDAY	Hiking 2-4 hrs
FRIDAY	Mobility/rest
SATURDAY	Hiking (long) 4-7 hrs
SUNDAY	3-5 hrs walk with stairs/hill with daypack

REDUCE YOUR TRAINING AND TAPER

MONDAY	Mobility/rest
TUESDAY	30-60 min walk w/ stairs/hill + pack
WEDNESDAY	Strength/gym
THURSDAY	30-60 min walk w/ stairs/hill + pack
FRIDAY	Mobility/rest
SATURDAY	Hike: (2-3 hrs)
SUNDAY	Hike: 60 min walk w/ stairs/hill + pack



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BUILDING STRENGTH & STAMINA

The sample training program assumes a moderate starting level of fitness. Adjust each session to suit your ability, gradually increasing your walking time, terrain difficulty and daypack weight.

Aim to reach your peak training level a few weeks before departure, allowing time to taper and recover. Consistency is more important than pushing too hard, too soon.

TYPES OF TRAINING:

CARDIO

Why Cardio?
Cardiovascular training builds endurance, improves stamina and helps you manage sustained physical effort. Better fitness makes hills and longer walking days more manageable, reducing fatigue and helping you maintain energy throughout your trek.

Where and how?
Include hill walks, stair climbing, brisk walking or treadmill sessions. Walking with your daypack helps prepare you for the demands of your trip.

If you can't get outdoors regularly, cycling, swimming or using a stair climber are useful alternatives for building cardiovascular fitness.

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TYPES OF TRAINING:

STRENGTH

Why?
Injury prevention, in particular knee and lower back pain. It makes climbing hills easier. Reduces your overall fatigue especially when you have back to back days on the trail. RAW Travel highly recommends that you seek out a personal trainer to guide you through correct movements so that you don't risk injury.

HIKING

Why?
Regular hiking is one of the best ways to prepare for your trip. Practise on varied terrain, including hills and uneven paths, wearing your walking footwear and daypack.
If you can't hike every week, substitute another cardio session and include hills or stairs where possible. Joining a local walking group is also a great way to build confidence and motivation.

MOBILITY/STRETCHING/YOGA

Why?
Mobility exercises help maintain flexibility, balance and comfortable movement, particularly over uneven terrain. Yoga and gentle stretching can also help relieve muscle tension and improve body awareness.
Include regular mobility exercises in your routine. If you're unsure where to start, seek guidance from a physiotherapist, exercise physiologist or qualified instructor.

WARMING UP/COOLING DOWN

Why?
Begin each walk at a comfortable pace, gradually increasing your effort as your muscles warm up.
After walking, slow your pace before stopping. Gentle stretching of your calves, thighs and hips may help ease tightness. Stretching should always feel comfortable. Avoid bouncing, forcing movements or stretching through pain.

RECOVERY

Recovery is just as important as training. Allowing your body time to rest and adapt between demanding sessions helps build strength, maintain energy and reduce the risk of injury. It's important to not overdo it. Listen to your body, if you feel like it's too much, take it easy and recover.

REST AND SLEEP

Quality sleep and regular rest days are essential for muscle repair and recovery. Aim for consistent sleep and allow easier days between longer or more challenging walks.

ACTIVE RECOVERY

Gentle walking, swimming, yoga or mobility exercises can help ease stiffness and keep your body moving between training sessions. Light activity can be beneficial, but avoid pushing through fatigue or pain.

MASSAGE

Massage may help relieve muscle tension and temporary soreness after demanding walks. While it isn't essential for recovery, many walkers find it a useful way to relax and manage discomfort.

LISTEN TO YOUR BODY

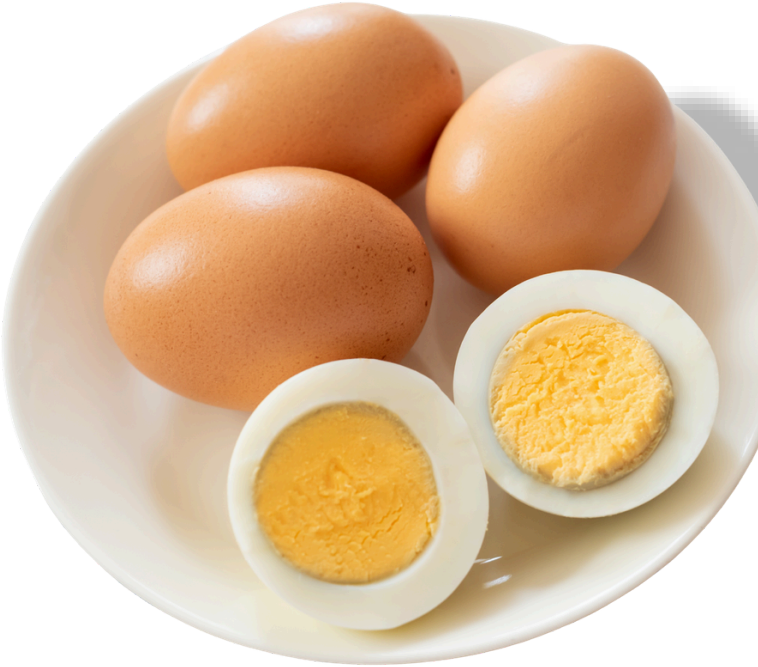
Some muscle soreness is normal when increasing your training. However, persistent pain, swelling or discomfort that affects your walking shouldn't be ignored. Reduce your training and seek advice from a qualified health professional if symptoms continue.



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FUELLING YOUR BODY

Good nutrition helps you maintain energy, build fitness and recover between walking days. You don't need a complicated eating plan, just a balanced diet that supports your training.



EAT FOR ENERGY

Carbohydrates are an important fuel source, particularly during longer or more demanding walks. Include foods such as oats, whole-grains, rice, pasta, potatoes and fruit, alongside protein, vegetables and healthy fats. Eating a variety of nutritious foods throughout the day helps maintain energy and supports muscle recovery.

FUEL YOUR LONGER WALKS

Carry easy-to-eat snacks such as bananas, dried fruit, sandwiches, muesli bars or trail mix. For longer walks, eating regularly can help maintain energy and reduce fatigue. Practise eating on the move during training to discover what works best for you.

SUPPORT RECOVERY

After a demanding walk, enjoy a meal or snack containing carbohydrates and protein. This helps replenish energy stores and supports muscle repair, preparing you for your next walking day.

RAW TRAVEL TIP

Enjoy the local cuisine! Food is part of the travel experience, and discovering regional flavours is one of the pleasures of exploring a destination on foot.



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FUELLING YOUR BODY

PRACTISE BEFORE YOU GO

Use your training walks to test different foods, snacks and hydration options. Learn what keeps you energised and comfortable over longer distances. Avoid experimenting with unfamiliar foods or supplements during demanding walking days.

STAY HYDRATED

Drink regularly according to your thirst, the weather and your level of exertion. Hot conditions and longer walking days may increase your fluid needs.

For extended walks involving heavy sweating, electrolytes or salty snacks may help replace lost sodium. Avoid drinking excessive amounts of water.

EATING ON THE TRAIL

Food and meal arrangements vary between destinations. Breakfasts may be lighter than you're used to, while lunch options can range from packed meals to local cafés and restaurants. Research what's available along your route and carry enough snacks to keep you fuelled between meals.

If you have dietary requirements, discuss these with your RAW Travel Destination Specialist before departure.





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MY TRIP AT A GLANCE

TRIP NAME: .....

TRIP GRADE: .....

DEPARTURE DATE: .....

LONGEST DAY IN KMS: .....

LONGEST DAY IN HOURS: .....

BIGGEST CLIMB: .....

BIGGEST DESCENT: .....

TERRAIN NOTES: .....

MY TRAINING TARGETS: .....

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READY FOR THE TRAIL?

You've put in the training, built your fitness and prepared for the adventure ahead. Before you set off, use this checklist to make sure you're ready to enjoy every step.

YOUR PRE-DEPARTURE CHECKLIST

- ☐ I'VE REVIEWED MY TRIP'S DAILY DISTANCES, ELEVATION AND TERRAIN.
- ☐ I'VE COMPLETED TRAINING WALKS THAT REFLECT MY ITINERARY.
- ☐ I'VE PRACTISED WALKING ON CONSECUTIVE DAYS.
- ☐ MY WALKING SHOES OR BOOTS ARE COMFORTABLE AND WELL TESTED.
- ☐ I'VE WALKED WITH MY FULLY PACKED DAYPACK.
- ☐ I'VE PRACTISED USING WALKING POLES, IF NEEDED.
- ☐ I KNOW WHICH SNACKS AND DRINKS WORK BEST FOR ME.
- ☐ I'VE TESTED MY CLOTHING AND WET-WEATHER GEAR.
- ☐ I'VE ALLOWED TIME TO TAPER AND RECOVER BEFORE DEPARTURE.
- ☐ I'VE SPOKEN WITH MY DESTINATION SPECIALIST ABOUT ANY QUESTIONS.

NOW ENJOY THE JOURNEY!

Every step you've taken in preparation will help you feel more confident on the trail. Trust your training, walk at your own pace and take time to enjoy the experience. We look forward to seeing you out there!

The RAW Travel Team

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