



**YOUR
HIKING**

**TRAINING
GUIDE**

**WE ARE
MACMILLAN.
CANCER SUPPORT**



THANKS SO MUCH

Thank you for joining Team Macmillan. We think you're amazing for having the dedication and commitment to take part in this event.

At the finish, the sense of achievement will be huge, knowing that you've not only completed your challenge but you've helped people affected by cancer too. Completing a hike is no mean feat so you'll need to put in some training beforehand. But don't worry – we're here to guide you in the right direction.



GET STARTED

Although walking is something most people do every day, few of us spend many hours walking on rough, undulating terrain. So it's important that you train for this challenge – the better prepared you are the more you'll enjoy the experience.

Look after your feet

We'd strongly recommend buying a pair of good quality, fully waterproof leather or fabric walking boots. These should have a reasonably high ankle support and a stiff heel counter to give lateral support. There are lots of specialist stores out there where the staff will measure your feet correctly and recommend the right socks for your trek.

Slow and steady wins the training race

The length and duration of your first walk depends on how fit you are. The best approach is to start slowly and build up over time. Your muscles and joints will take a while to adjust to being on your feet for many hours. So, avoid overdoing it on your first few training walks to reduce the risk of injury.

Whatever your reason for taking part in your challenge event, it's important to set yourself goals. This will give you something to aim for, which will keep you motivated. And don't forget that every step you take will help us help someone affected by cancer.



Make sure you're eating a good mix of carbohydrates and stay well hydrated. You may also find eating a carbohydrate snack two to three hours before you train will help keep your energy levels topped up.



TRAINING TIPS

We've put together some handy training tips which will hold you in good stead for the work ahead.

Make time

Making a few small changes to your routine can help fit training into your busy life. For example, you could:

- get up an hour earlier and go for a quick walk before work
- walk to or from work a couple of times a week
- get off a stop or two earlier on the bus or train
- park further away than usual and walk part of the route to work
- take the stairs rather than the lift



Mix it up

To keep training interesting, vary the route you walk and invite friends to join you. The terrain varies along the route on most of our challenges and some will involve steep ascents and descents. So, try to vary the types of surface and terrain you walk on during your training.

Stretch yourself

To help prevent injury it's important to stretch your muscles before and after exercise. You should stretch about 10 minutes into your walk (once your muscles have warmed up a bit) and again at the end of your walk.

Have a good rest

Rest is as important as training. It's vital that you allow your body adequate time to recover, so make sure you have enough recovery days.

Keep fit and strong

There's no substitute for walking. However, cycling, swimming, playing sport, or working out at the gym for an hour or two will help with your general fitness. It's fine to add this to your programme instead of one of the short walks. Also, try out the exercise circuit on the next page and make sure you stretch properly after each session.

Blitz blisters

New trekkers usually get blisters because their feet are not toughened or they haven't broken in new boots. Avoid them by:

- buying boots early and wearing them in.
- making sure your feet are dry so they don't move around in your boots.
- wearing socks with fibres which draw moisture away from the skin – acrylic or polyester rather than pure cotton.
- lacing your boots correctly rather than too tightly or loosely.

EXERCISE CIRCUIT

These exercises are designed to strengthen specific muscle groups. It's important to use just your own body weight in the early weeks. But in the latter weeks you can add small weights to your ankles or put on your rucksack to help build strength.

The idea of the circuit is to complete each exercise then move on to the next. Once you've finished all the exercises (ie one circuit), you then go round the circuit three to five times, as shown in the programme. You can also increase the number of repetitions for each exercise from 20, 30, 40 or 50, depending on how strong you're feeling. Don't forget to stretch before and after the session.

Calf raises

Stand with your feet together, at arm's length away from a wall. Have your fingers just touching the wall for balance. Raise yourself slowly on to the tips of your toes and slowly lower. Repeat 20 times.

Squats

Stand with your feet shoulder width apart, hands on hips. Keep your back straight and head up while you slowly lower yourself so that your knees are bent 90 degrees. Then stand up so that your knees are locked straight. Repeat 20 times.





Step ups

Using the bottom step of a staircase or a low bench, start with your left foot on the step and your right foot on the floor. Stand up straight on your left leg, bringing your right foot up to the step above and then lower back down to the floor. Repeat 20 times. Change leg and repeat.

Leg extensions

Sit on a high sofa, bed or bench with the backs of your knees just on the edge and your feet hanging down. Lean back, with your hands behind you for support. Keeping the back of your knee on the seat, slowly lift your left foot up so that your leg becomes straight, and lower again. Repeat 20 times. Change leg and repeat.

Leg raises

Lie on your stomach on a mat or soft floor with your hands under your chin. Keeping your left leg straight, slowly raise it six inches off the floor and then slowly lower. Repeat 20 times. Change leg and repeat.

Enjoy yourself

You've signed up to take part in an incredible event so make the most of the experience. Enjoy getting out in the great outdoors, and know that you're helping to change lives as you do it. And, if you start losing motivation or finding training tough, just take a deep breath and remember this: we couldn't do what we do without you.

More support?

If you have any more questions about training for your trek, stroll over to macmillan.org.uk/hiking or email us at hiking@macmillan.org.uk

If you have any questions about cancer or if you'd like to talk about what you're going through, please give our support line a call on **0808 808 00 00** (Monday – Friday, 9am – 8pm). Or visit us at macmillan.org.uk



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