



12 WEEK TREKKING TRAINING PLAN



Hi Trekkers!

You're about to get training for your trek and here is a gym based training plan, as well as some top tips, to help you along the way.

It's worth keeping in mind the best training programmes are those that have been specifically designed for you. It will take into account your current fitness levels and experience, as well as availability and motivation. This training plan is generic and has utilised equipment found in most gyms. There is some guidance on page 4 regarding the focus options of the programme, but ultimately, I feel that any supplementary training is better than none, whatever it may end up looking like—but hopefully this plan can help bring some direction and efficiency. If you do want a bespoke training plan, please don't hesitate to get in touch to discuss options.

Couple this training plan with some hill walking, and you are well on the road to getting your body into good condition for your upcoming expedition.

Happy training!

Matt Le Voi

Photo: Summit push on Mera Peak—6476m

BEFORE YOU START

If you're new to strenuous exercise and have any underlying medical conditions then it probably isn't a bad idea to get the all clear from your GP before you suddenly start loading up the training.

Make sure you're well-nourished and hydrated before commencing your workout

Before you start your workout you should warm up and stretch to help mobilise the body, awaken the mind, and lessen the risk of injury.

Warming Up

With any warm up you want to be warming up muscles you're about to use in the main workout, just at a lesser intensity. In the gym this is easily done by jumping on a treadmill, stationary bike, rower, step machine or cross trainer. If you are looking at getting some cardio gains in as well then this is best reserved for after your resistance / strength session as to not fatigue the muscles too much before the main workout.

Aim for a 10-15 minute warm up, or longer if required to get the body to that exercise state.

Stretching

As part of your routine, you want to do some dynamic stretches. A dynamic stretch is one that goes through a full range of motion, rather than just holding one position. You obviously want to target the areas of your body you will be working out. My best advice is to get on YouTube and watch some videos of dynamic stretches to get some in mind.

Prepare the Session

Get your space and equipment prepared to enable a smooth flow to your session. This can be hard to achieve in a gym setting sometimes, so you may have to get imaginative if it's busy. Again, YouTube is a great place to go to check the appropriate form for each exercise before commencing the workout.

Each session will take roughly 60minutes. For each week, you can repeat the session 2-3 times, but remember to allow the body to rest.

You don't get fitter when you exercise, you get fitter when you recover!

Strength or Endurance?

The sessions outlined on the following pages can be oriented towards either of the above, but the way in which you conduct them will be different.

In an ideal world, you'd do a block of strength training, and then follow this up with a block of endurance training. If you are within 4 months of your expedition departure date then I would go straight into endurance focused sessions. If you have more than 4 months then I would start with a strength cycle for at least half of the available time, as long as that leaves at least 3 months for muscular endurance training.

Strength Training—This isn't about getting big and bulky, this is about forming better neurological pathways and getting your muscles strong and resilient. The stronger your muscles are, the easier actions such as trekking up steep hills or a flight of steps will become. The stronger your muscles, the more scope you will have to play with when you head into muscular endurance.

Strength training requires LOW REPS (3-6) and HIGH SETS (4-5). Rest for 3 mins between sets.

You don't want to exercise to absolute failure, but if you can do 6 reps with more than 2 quality reps left in the tank you need to up the weight. Small increments of weight is fine, and always give yourself a week or two at the start of a programme to get the form dialled in before going super heavy if you're new to such training.

Muscular Endurance Training—As you'd expect, this is about building the muscles ability to repeat a movement over and over—such as hiking up a really big hill, or jumaring on a rope. This type of training really brings the burn to the muscles. It can be achieved by using bodyweight exercises, or by adding weight you can achieve the aim with fewer repetitions.

Muscular Endurance training requires HIGH REPS (12-20) and LOW SETS (2-3). Rest for 30-60 seconds between sets.

Find a weight that will allow you to achieve up to 20 good form reps, and then increase it.



SESSION 1

All Body Workout

Exercise
Squat - Smith Machine / Hack Squat / Leverage Squat / Belt Squat / Barbell Squat (Pick One)
Press - Bench Press (Barbell / Dumbbell) Smith Machine / Chest Press Machine (Pick One)
Lunge —Dumbbell Lunge (Front Lunge / Back Lunge)
Row — Cable Row / Machine Row / Plate Row (Pick One)
Weighted Calf Raise —Dumbbell, Smith Machine, Calf Press
Core Finisher —Plank, Side Planks (Pick a time to execute and complete 3 circuits)

‘Supersetting’ is a great way to save time in the gym. Do two exercises back to back before resting. It’s easier to do this in some gyms than others without taking over—easier to achieve during off-peak hours.

If you’re unsure of any of the exercises, then the best thing to do is to head to Youtube and get some pointers!

SESSION 2

All Body Workout

Exercise
Hinge —Romanian Deadlift (Barbell, Dumbbell)
Shoulder Press - Barbell / Dumbbell / Smith Machine / Shoulder Press Machine (Pick One)
Split Squat —Dumbbell / Barbell / Smith Machine. Try Bulgarian Split Squats to make it trickier. (Pick One)
Pull Down —Pull Ups / Assisted Pull Ups /Lat Pull Down / High Row
Weighted Calf Raise —Dumbbell, Smith Machine, Calf Press
Core Finisher —Deadbugs. Russian Twists. Planks (Pick a time to execute and complete 3 circuits)

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For more session plans, please get in touch for a bespoke training programme.



100 REP CHALLENGE

If you fancy putting your fitness to the test then why not try the 100 Rep Challenge?

The concept is a simple one

- Pick an Exercise
- Do as many reps as you can until you need a break
- Break for just 30 seconds
- Continue from the number of reps, and repeat the process until you reach 100 reps.

Make a note as to how many rounds it took you to reach 100,, as well as your longest continuous string of reps. Then next time you try the challenge you have a benchmark.

Bodyweight exercises are often the simplest to use, but really any exercise can be used, just try and stay strict with your form too. Make the challenge harder by adding weight, slowing the movement down or reducing the rest period.

Some suggested exercises include:

- Squats—Air, Jump, Weighted
- Lunges—Front, Back, Deficit, weighted,
- Press Ups—Normal, Wide, Alternating, Close Grip, Incline, Decline
- Glute Bridge—Bodyweight, Single Leg, Weighted
- Overhead Press
- Row—Bodyweight, Weighted
- Core—Leg Raises, Russian Twists, Alternate Toe Taps



CARDIO

Cardiovascular training is incredibly varied and individual. There are so many influencing factors, that means making a 'one size fits all' plan is near impossible. Instead of trying to achieve that, on this page you will find some ideas and considerations to apply to your own training. .

1. **It's all about building a base**—Often when folks train they believe they should finish the session as a sweaty heap on the floor, struggling for their next breath. These sessions do have their place, however they're not massively specific to trekking or mountaineering—sports which typically take a long time and require endurance. The bulk of your time doing cardio should be spent at lower intensities. Racking up hours of this low intensity cardio will help build big aerobic base, which in essence is your engine that will help you trek for hours on end, day after day.
2. **Specificity is Key**— If you're off on a trek in the mountains, then try and train in the mountains. The varied terrain, long ascents and drawn out nature of such days out are exactly what you're going to face when you go away. If you don't live near the mountains and can't get to them regularly then get inventive with a StairMaster or a treadmill on an incline.
3. **Weight your pack**—You will hopefully have an idea as to what you need to carry on a daily basis on your trek (often just a day back which is fairly light) and you should be more than capable of completing your training days hill-walking with this on your back. For an extra bit of stimulus, consider adding weight to your pack to surpass the expected weight you'll be carrying when away. It's a great way of building strength and stability, and it will of course make your trek feel that bit easier. Likewise, if you're completing stair climbing, do the same thing.
4. **Don't feel like you need to run**—So often, when people think about getting fit they feel running is the way forward. If you're not already running, then it may be wise to look elsewhere for your cardio, simply due to the fact running is notorious at causing niggles, and runners are notorious at over doing it and injuring themselves. If you're already running then great, but just remember point 1—low intensity, slow runs will aid you more for a trek than sprints
5. **Mix it up**—Keeping your training varied and fun is the best way to achieve it. Change the mode of movement (walking, hiking, swimming, biking, running) and even mix up the intensity, duration, aim regularly. For example, you may head on a hike and attack the first long climb fast. Overall the hike will be low intensity, but this effort will add a nice high intensity portion for your lungs and heart, as well as build up a level of tiredness in your legs for you to then hike with.

It's always hard to know when you're 'fit enough' to complete a trek or expedition. I tend to go with the ethos of 'when has being too fit ever been a problem'. Put the effort in beforehand, it's all part of the journey. The more you do before your trip, the more you will enjoy it, and the greater the reward will be when you achieve the end goal.

POST EXERCISE

Cooling Down

After every session it is crucial that you dedicate some time to 'Cool Down'. For a session such as those listed above this will predominantly mean static stretching. Again, YouTube is an excellent source of information for static stretches that will target the areas you have been working. A post workout stretching session can not only prevent soreness the following day(s) but can increase your mobility.

Nutrition

You'll have burnt some calories and also caused some damage to your muscles. For your muscles to repair, grow and strengthen then you must get adequate amounts of protein in your diet. Without this then you will not be reaching your full potential from all that effort you're putting in. An active person needs 1.2-1.6grams of protein per KG of body-weight.

You will want to initially put in some carbohydrate to replenish energy stores too. Rehydrating is also hopefully an obvious one, and it is key to good body function.

Other Recovery Aids

Ice pods are becoming increasingly popular and they have been proven to have a great impact on your rate of recovery. Massage guns are similarly popular, and when used correctly can also help relieve muscle soreness. Be mindful that seeing a sports physio or getting a sports massage is better to sort out a niggle than prodding around with a massage gun and potentially causing further damage.

Easy walks, runs, swims or rides are a super way to promote the recovery of sore muscles. Swimming and riding a bike is particularly great due to the low impact nature of the movements. You may choose to do this immediately after your strength session, or maybe the next day.

Be Aware of DOMS

DOMS stands for 'Delayed Onset of Muscle Soreness' and I'm sure you'll have all felt that next day soreness—or in reality, the day after the day after! DOMS can kick in 24-48 hours after exercise and often feels like your muscles are super tender and full of lead. The more conditioned your body gets, the less you'll find you get DOMS, unless you put in a big session. It is OK to train with DOMS though, just listen to your body! Employing elements mentioned on this page will all help decrease the severity of DOMS—which can only be a good thing!

MORE TIPS

Sleep – It is advised that you should aim for 7-9 hours sleep a night in order to really reap the rewards from your training. If you're consistently getting less than this figure, then you can expect to work a lot harder or longer for the same transformations to your fitness you'd have gotten if you slept for this duration. If you're dramatically under this figure often whilst training hard then you can expect to be heading for a nice bout of fatigue too.

Whilst we sleep the pituitary gland releases Human Growth Hormone and Protein Synthesis occurs. In short, your body is recovering and developing - meaning that when you wake you will be that bit fitter and (potentially) ready to exercise again. Key points to getting the best nights sleep include limiting screen time before bed, keeping the bedroom cool, sleeping on a comfy mattress and also having a routine.

Rest – You can't expect to tax your body day after day and expect it to keep on getting fitter and fitter. Plan in at least one complete rest day from exercise a week, and every 6 weeks or so have a week where you decrease the amount you do a tad or make the workouts less intense. Some days you just won't feel like training, and on these days, I'd recommend trying to start, but if after ten minutes you're still not fired up then it's probably your body giving you a big indicator to not train, and that is A-OK. It happens to us all.

Goal Setting—The chances are your trek or expedition is your main goal and the reason why you're looking at getting fitter, however, if that is a while away you may want to think up some intermediary goals to keep you focused and motivated. Your goals can be whatever you want them to be, but try and fit them into the SMART acronym

S— Specific—Make the goal specific and narrow—e.g To be able to hike up Scafell Pike in 1 hour

M—Measurable—Is there a time to beat, or a number of reps to achieve?

A—Achievable—Yes, a goal should be worked towards, but it should also be achievable for you.

R—Relevant—Does this goal aid your long term aspirations?

T—Time Based—When do you hope to achieve the goal by?

A photograph of two mountaineers standing on a snowy mountain peak. The climber on the left is wearing a blue jacket and a blue helmet, while the climber on the right is wearing a red jacket and a red helmet. Both are wearing climbing gear, including ropes and harnesses. The background shows a vast, snow-covered mountain range under a cloudy sky. The text 'FURTHER TRAINING' is written vertically in large, white, sans-serif capital letters on the right side of the image.

FURTHER TRAINING

If you want to take your training that one step further, then why not get in touch for a fully individualised training plan.

Our plans are designed for you, taking into account whether it's home or gym based, the amount of time you have available, the end goal and your current abilities or limitations.

Prices start from just £80 for 12 weeks of training plan, all of which is fully dynamic and can be altered along the way. You'll also have the support of myself (Expedition Leader, Personal Trainer, Ultra Running Coach) to call upon at anytime.

If you wish to enquire about a bespoke plan simply drop me an email to Info@imgtreksandexpeditions.com

