



## Get fit for your active adventure in Nepal!

You don't have to be a professional athlete - or even close - to enjoy your trip with Active Adventures. You'll be surprised at what you can achieve with our experienced guides at your side and a little camaraderie. That said you'll definitely enjoy yourself more if you do some preparation so your body is conditioned and ready to enjoy and make the most of the outdoors. We recommend that you start training for your trek in Nepal about three months prior to stepping off the plane into the vibrant city of Kathmandu. Create a diary and plan your progression, starting with as little as a gentle 2 kilometre (1.2 miles) uphill stroll, three times a week. By the end of the twelve weeks, you should be able to comfortably hike fifteen kilometres (9.5 miles) in hilly terrain with a daypack.

Here are some guidelines to help you get ready:

1. **Take every opportunity you can to be active.** You can improve your fitness a lot just by adopting some new habits; take the stairs at work, go for a walk at lunchtime, and park your car away from work and walk. These behavioural shifts may sound trivial but they will certainly help you to prepare for more specific training.
2. **Rev up your ticker!** Think 'interval training', which means doing short bursts of high intensity work with recovery time in between. Depending on how fit you are this can mean strolling with bursts of power walking, or jogging with sprints. Either way the aim is to get your heart rate up.
3. **Join a local walking or running group.** This is a great way to get fit and you'll also see new places, meet great people ... and make them all jealous when they find out what you're about to do on your travels.
4. **Hill training.** The most spectacular views aren't from the bottom of a valley - so the places we go on our trips aren't flat. Training on hills and stairs is an investment that'll pay off big-time when you're on your trip. When it comes to hills there's no hurry - get into a slow steady rhythm and you'll be at the top before you know it. Nepal is famous for the largest mountains in the world, so their hills are slightly larger too! We suggest you aim to be able to hike a 1000 metre (3000 feet) elevation gain comfortably at a steady pace.
5. **Warm up, cool down and stretch.** If you're doing a workout then make sure you start and finish gently and stretch any tight muscles - this will help you avoid any aches, pains and pulled muscles. If you're a member of a gym try some yoga, tai chi or pilates classes to build up your flexibility, stability and balance.
6. **Practice 'backpacking'.** Grab your daypack and head for the hills! Remember, you'll have a porter on the trek who will take most of your gear, so you'll only need to carry things such as your drink bottle, extra layers of clothing, camera, waterproof jacket, personal items and snacks. Make sure your daypack is comfortable and ensure you've spent some time adjusting the various straps so you know how it feels in different positions.
7. **Break in your hiking boots.** Blisters and sore feet are no fun at all! Make sure that while you're getting yourself ready, you're doing the same for your boots. Start by just wearing them around the house, then down the road, and walking the dog. Then ideally do a couple of decent length weekend hikes to prepare them for what is to come. We recommend a pair of waterproof hiking boots with good ankle support and a solid tread.

**8. Practice using hiking poles.** We're often asked 'should I use hiking poles?' and really it's a matter of personal preference, but we can't stress enough how helpful they are on our treks in Nepal. There are many steep hills and steps which poles just make a whole lot easier. They particularly help those who have knee or ankle issues and they're useful on rocky, uneven ground. They're also great to help you balance when going downhill. The modern poles are very light and ergonomically designed to be comfortable and prevent jarring. If you don't own a pair of hiking poles, no worries, we can supply them free of charge!

**9. Understand the effects of altitude.** Altitude sickness or acute mountain sickness (AMS) typically only occurs at altitudes above 2500 metres (8300 feet), so for those of us that don't live at these altitudes, we can only guess at how our bodies may react. Altitude is caused by a decrease in the density of the air and with thinner air it becomes harder for the body to sustain mental and physical alertness. Whilst fitness and even age have little bearing on altitude sickness, there are certainly some steps you can take to help you acclimatise and minimise your symptoms. Read on below to learn more.

**10. Go slow.** Hiking at altitude requires a different technique to what you may be used to at sea level. The days before you get to altitude are crucial to how your body will cope with less oxygen and more importantly how you will feel and enjoy your trip. In the mountains your guides will be pacing you from the first day to give you the best chance of feeling good at the top. This pace is more of a slow plod than a race up the hill, so work at training your muscles to find a constant slow pace (try one breath per step) and keep working at that level for a few hours. It can be a challenge for some, but once you've mastered it, you can hike safely at high altitudes any time you'd like!

**11. Stay hydrated.** When you suddenly ask your body to walk or be active, it needs a bit more fuel than it needs when, say, sitting at a desk all day! The main thing your body needs is water, especially in the cold dry air of alpine environments, so stay hydrated and practice sipping water often. When you are trekking, you'll be surprised at how much water you will consume, and you'll find it a great help to proactively train your body to handle the increase in water intake before you leave. Getting a water bottle or hydration bladder is a great way to make sure you have it on hand at all times. In the Himalayas your guide will be asking you to drink around 4 litres of water a day (sounds like a lot, though you'll be surprised at how much you'll need it) so getting used to drinking 2 litres of water at home will put in a good footing. You won't need to carry that much water as there are plenty of refill opportunities along the way, the most you'll carry is around 2 litres at a time.

**12. Nutrition.** Eating little and often will keep your body well fuelled for outdoor exercise. You may find at altitude that you have less appetite anyway, but it's important to regularly snack on super foods like nuts and dried fruit and avoid coffee and alcohol. The odd bit of chocolate and a few boiled lollies are good for keeping your blood sugar levels up while you're hiking as well!

**13. See your doctor.** Getting a medical check-up is a must before heading to altitude, as it will help you discuss your current condition with your doctor and receive advice for the trip ahead. If you have a travel doctor in your town or a doctor you know who has altitude experience they will be able to give you the best advice. Make sure you are prescribed Diamox, this is a safe medication proven to help at altitude.

**14. Have fun!** The most important point of all! You are about to embark on the trip of a lifetime. You're going to meet some amazing people, see some wonderful places and create memories that will stay with you for life. The more prepared you are to tackle the various challenges, the more fun you will have. Also, with all the endorphins you create from all this training, you'll be smiling from ear to ear! It's a great way to boost your happy vibes.

If you have any questions about what to expect on your trip, or what else you can do to prepare, give us a call any time. It's our mission to make sure you have an awesome time!

See our blog posts for an in-depth look at [dealing with altitude](#) and what you can expect on the [Annapurna Sanctuary Trek](#).