Coastal Bliss Adventures

Preparation for your Hiking Adventure

Hints & Tips

Poor equipment, improper clothing, and lack of conditioning will not only limit your ability to enjoy your experience and compromise your safety, but will also impact others in your group.

Much of the enjoyment and success of your trip will depend on packing the appropriate clothing and equipment. It isn't necessary to purchase expensive or trendy items. Remember that function is more important than style. It is also very important for you to be committed to the outdoors as a recreational past time before you invest significant sums to clothing and equipment.

If you do decide to shop for clothing and equipment, do so at outlets that specialize in these wares. Ask questions. Anything you need to know about the proper equipment is an important question. Take your time to decide. All reputable outdoors stores are more than willing to take the time to ensure that you are outfitted properly.

There is a direct correlation between the functionality/comfort of your equipment and price. It is not necessary to buy the top of the line (unless you can easily afford it) but you can be assured that if you buy the cheapest piece of equipment you'll end up regretting it.

CLOTHING

There are three categories of clothing; outerwear, insulation and under layers. In each of the categories there are a number of materials available.

Outerwear

This layer should be loose fitting to accommodate the insulation layer. It is advisable not to buy insulated outerwear. The idea is to add warmth with the insulation layer as it becomes colder and vise versa when it becomes hotter.

Freedom of movement is essential, especially in the neck and arms. Make sure there is a hood and that it is roomy enough to allow for a hat to be worn at the same time. The hood protects the neck and head from the worst weather conditions. Ideally the hood will be brimmed but, if not, a brimmed cap should be included in your gear. A brimmed hat will keep the rain from interfering with your vision, especially if you wear glasses.

The jacket should be longer than waist length to offer greater protection to the thighs and the rear in the rain and cold.

A jacket made from Goretex is a sound buy. Ideally it is desirable to have rain pants that are also made from Goretex. But, be prepared, it can be expensive, depending on how Goretex is incorporated into the coat, number of pockets, and other bells and whistles. You should determine, with trained assistance, what's best for you. The advantage of Goretex is that it "breathes". It allows body moisture to escape while retaining warmth and waterproofness.

We discourage the use raincoats or waterproof products. These do not allow body moisture to escape. After a short period of hiking you will be wet from your own perspiration and may become uncomfortably cold.

Nylon is wind resistant, quick drying and comfortable against the skin. Shorts, pants or shirts made of lightweight nylon are suitable for paddling in warm to moderate conditions. Nylon pants that convert into shorts are especially useful for hiking environments where temperatures change frequently.

We strongly advise against wearing jeans when hiking. Denim is a heavy material that, when wet, will become heavy and certainly more uncomfortable.

Insulation

The best all-around materials are pile, fleece or bunting. They trap body heat while absorbing little water. The warmth to weight ratio easily surpasses wool.

GORE-TEX & SALTWATER

Salt water does not contaminate, clog the pores, decrease the breathability, alter or harm GORE-TEX fabric in any way.
Salt water was once blamed for the poor performance of some GORE-TEX outerwear that was used around salt water. In reality, the poor design and construction of a few early GORE-TEX garments was the culprit. Today's GORE-TEX apparel, designed for marine and other watersport applications, provide the ultimate in waterproof, breathable, windproof protection for watersport enthusiasts.There is no need to refrain from using your GORE-TEX outerwear and GORE WINDSTOPPER apparel in a salt water environment. For optimum performance in any environment, GORE-TEX products and GORE WINDSTOPPER products must be properly maintained. Salt is a desiccant, it attracts moisture. The moisture that accumulates on a salt shaker in humid weather is a good example of this action. Any outerwear worn around salt water should be rinsed in water to keep salt from accumulating and attracting moisture. You can even rinse it with sea water to reduce heavy salt accumulations (sea water is approximately 3% salt).

Underlayer

Polypropylene and treated polyester (Capilene,Thermax) are your best bets. They transport perspiration away from the skin while providing some insulation. Wicking fabrics are available in both tops and bottoms, with different thicknesses for varying temperatures and levels of activity. The underlayer should be snug, not baggy or skin-tight.

Cotton is breathable, making it ideal for warm-weather activities. But it's also very absorbent and slow to dry. When wet, cotton holds the moisture next to your body, cooling you as it evaporates. This can be comfortable on a hot, sunny day but becomes dangerous in colder conditions. For all but very warm environments it's best to leave the cotton at home.

It is difficult to recommend how many articles of an item of clothing to bring, as individual preferences vary. Some people are content with wearing the same outfit during the entire trip (they usually make few friends), while others change daily.

	Cotton	**Wool**	**Merino wool**	**Polyester**	**Polypropylene**	**Nylon**
Water Retention	High	High	Medium	Low	Lowest	Medium
Drying Time	Long	Long	Medium	Short	Shortest	Short
Heat Conduction	High	Low	Low	Low	Low	Medium
Comfort Level (Dry)	High	Medium	High	High	Medium	Medium
Shrinkage	High	High	Medium	Low	High	Low
Durability	Medium	Medium	Medium	High	Medium	Low
Colour Choice	High	High	High	High	Low	High
Packing Suitability	Low	Low	High	High	Medium	Medium
Hiking Suitability	High	High	High	High	Medium	Medium

BOOTS & SOCKS

The materials used in a given boot or trail shoe will affect its weight, breathability, durability and water-resistance. Since boots made of different fabrics can be very similar in performance, however, personal preference is often the key when choosing between them.

Nylon mesh and split grain leather - Nylon and split-grain leather boots are lightweight and breathable, which makes them perfect for warm- to moderate-weather use and short to moderate backpacking trips. They tend to be softer on your feet, they take less time to break in, and they are almost always lighter than full-grain leather boots. They also cost less. Unfortunately, nylon/split grain boots tend to be less water-resistant than full-grain leather boots.

Full-grain leather - Full-grain leather is extremely water-resistant, durable and supportive (more so than split-grain leather or nylon). It's used primarily in backpacking boots designed for extended trips, heavy loads and hard terrain. Not as lightweight or breathable as nylon/split grain combinations, but it typically lasts far longer. Full-grain leather usually requires a break-in period.

The more seams a boot or shoe has, the higher the risk for leaks.

Don't buy hiking boots on your own unless you are knowledgeable. Store personnel should be trained to properly fit you.

Explain to them the kind of hiking you'll be doing, the nature of the terrain and how much weight you'll be carrying. They should be able to lead you through the many brands, styles and materials. Don't waste your time with someone who can't talk about these things. Move on to another salesperson or store. Some stores have a policy that allows you to try the boots in your home for a couple of weeks. If there is any discomfort, don't believe that it will go away with wear. If anything, it will intensify.

Feet swell during the day. **It is therefore best to shop for boots in the afternoon**. Bring the socks or sock combination you plan to wear on the trail with you when you go to the store.

Boot sizes can be misleading. Your regular shoe size may not dictate which size boot will fit you. Let comfort be your guide. Go up or down a size. Boots should be snug and not tight. When lacing them up, leave the bottom loose, snug at the instep and tight at the ankle. There should be very little
movement sideways or up and down at the heel. Allow for a finger's width at the toe. If you do purchase boots allow for a breaking in period. Lightweight boots usually require little more than a few days of street walking.

Leather boots will require more time. A quick method for leather boots is to completely soak them and wear them all day. As they dry they will mold to your feet.

Boot Care

Keep your boots and trail shoes clean between uses by brushing off dirt and mud (both can ruin leather over time). Most fabric boots/shoes can be washed on the outside with mild soap and water (not detergent). If your boots get drenched, stuff them loosely with newpaper and dry them in a warm place. Never rush the drying process by placing them near a fire, heater or other heat source. Boots, especially leather ones, should be conditioned from time to time to maintain your investment. This is true whether you hike in dry, hot condiitions or wet, temperate ones.

SOCKS

Selection of socks is equally important. You can have the best boots in the world but, without proper fitting socks, made of "friendly" material, blisters can happen.

Hiking socks should not be tight but should fit snugly. Make sure that there is a definite pocket for the heel and check the seams, especially at the toes. The stitching should not be bumpy or lumpy.

Stay away from cotton socks. They absorb moisture and keep it close to the skin. This leaves your feet feeling cold and also intensifies chafing. Any of the many synthetic materials are very good, as is wool. They carry moisture away from the skin thus allowing for some warmth even when wet. Wool has the additional advantage of bulk for cushioning.

We recommend that, whatever your choice of material, that you wear 2 pairs of socks. The first layer should be a very thin silk - like sock [special hiking socks do exist for this purpose]. Its slipperiness will limit chafing and abrasion thus reducing the chances of blistering. The second layer would then be your synthetic or wool choice. One of the benefits of the silk layer is that it eliminates the itchiness that many
experience with wool.

There are socks available that are made specifically with a hiker in mind. They are reinforced in the heel and toes for additional protection.

BACKPACKS

There are two basic types of backpack; external frame and internal frame. There is no answer as to which one is better for backpacking. Personal preference seems to be the determining factor.

External Frame - Externals connect a packbag to a rigid frame made of aluminum tubing.
Internals have surged in popularity, yet externals are still a great choice for transporting heavy loads along trails. With an external, the pack's weight sits more squarely on your hips; with an internal, the back, shoulders and hips share the load. Because the pack is attached to the frame with special pins it is important to carry replacement pins in the event they are needed.

• **Cooler to Carry**—An external's load does not sit flat against your back, so it allows air to circulate.
• **Easier to Pack**—Externals feature at least two main compartments plus several side pockets. You can organize your gear into "zones" and locate it more easily.
• **Heavy Loads Won't Sag**—They might in an internal, depending on how you pack it. Plus, since your centre of gravity sits higher
in an external, it's easier to walk upright.
• **Cost**—You'll pay less for an external.
The shortcomings of externals:
• **Minimal Agility**—They tend to make you walk more stiffly, making externals cumbersome when you try to walk off-trail.
Attempting to scramble up rocks or hop across a boulder field while wearing one is difficult, even unpleasant.
• **Poor Travelling Companions**—Sometimes you can squish a loaded internal into a car truck or back seat; an external frame won't give an inch. Plus, in the luggage-transport systems of airports, externals sometimes can take a pounding.

Internal Frame.

• **Flexibility**—Stays make internals stiff, but not rigid. This allows the pack to more easily move in harmony with body movements, a big plus for climbers and skiers.

• **Balance**—Internals hug your body. This holds your equipment closer to your natural center of gravity and helps you keep your balance when it counts—for example, while you're scooting across a log above a stream.
• **Stability**—Compression straps are everywhere on an internal. You use them to cinch down your load and keep individual items bunched together. This keeps them from shifting and throwing you off-balance if you make any abrupt moves.
• **Maneuverability**—Because internals feature a slimmer shape, it's easier to swing your arms freely—another reason why these packs are popular with climbers and Nordic skiers. This narrow profile also helps hikers whenever they have to squeeze through tight spots or when they're bushwhacking through thick brush.
• **Adjustability**—Internals use suspension systems (involving the shoulder harness and hipbelt) that can be adjusted more precisely than external-frame systems.

The downside of internals:

• **The Black Hole**—Most internals have one cavernous main storage compartment, plus a separate section for a sleeping bag. Other than a lid pocket, nearly everything gets stuffed into that single, deep compartment. So, if it's necessary to find one particular item during a rest stop, you may have to hunt a while to locate it. You'll sweat more wearing an internal because it rides so close to your back. The design offers little room for ventilation.
• **Cost**—Internals typically cost more than externals of a similar size.

Size - The pack must be big enough to carry food, equipment and clothing for the length of your trip. Bag size is measured in either cubic inches/centimeters or liters. For long trips, 72 liters or more (5000 to 6000 cubic inches) is the norm. The size for you will also depend on your sex and length of your back. Women's torsos, shoulders and hips are usually shorter and smaller than a man's. For this reason it is recommended that women seek out a model especially designed for their needs. Several packs, both internal and external models, have been modified with narrower shoulder straps, smaller hipbelts and shorter torso lengths
Capacity - Figures vary for internal and external packs significantly**.** Sleeping-bag storage accounts for the discrepancy. Internals carry sleeping bags in a special compartment behind the hipbelt, and synthetic bags can consume a good portion of the pack's stated capacity.

Hip belt - This is an extremely important part of the pack as most of the weight you will be carrying should be borne by the hips and not the shoulders. Make sure that it has a good padded section. The padded section should not meet in front. The unpadded part should not rub your tummy. Remember to allow for any additional clothing you might have to wear.

Style - The number of compartments a bag should have is left to personal preference. Most experienced hikers opt for a single compartment, top loading model. This model has a drawstring at the top and all items are stuffed into the one single compartment. It's simple once you get the hang of proper packing. The downside is that it's not always easy to get at items packed in the bottom. Avoid bags with too many zippers, especially if the zipper closes the main compartment. Zippers tend to break or get dirty.

Detachable Pocket—Many internals allow you to detach the "floating lid" pocket from the pack and convert it into a fanny pack or daypack. That's a handy feature when you choose to make day hikes from a backcountry basecamp.

Fitting a Bag -Torso length is a crucial measurement. It is important to distinguish between your height and the length of your torso. Just because you are a certain height — say a 5' 9" female or 6' male — does not mean you automatically need a "large" or "tall" pack. Your torso length, not your height, determines your pack size. Here's how to measure yours:

• Have a person locate the bony bump at the base of your neck, where the slope of your shoulder meets your neck. Tilt your head forward to locate it more easily.

• Using a flexible tape measure, start at that spot and measure down your spine, following the curves of your back along the way.

• Place your hands on you hips so you can feel your iliac crest—the twin pointy protrusions on the front of your hips. (The iliac crest serves as the "shelf" of your pelvic girdle, the area that is gripped by your pack's hipbelt.) Position your hands so your thumbs are reaching behind you.

• Finish measuring at the point where the tape crosses an imaginary line drawn between your thumbs. This distance is your torso length. Generally, your measurement will fall into one of these frame-size categories: **Small**: Up to 44cm/17.5", **Medium/Regular**: 45cm to 49cm/18" to 19.5", **Large/Tall**: 50cm/20" and up. Pack manufacturers typically use general terms (small, medium, large) to identify their frame sizes; look at each pack's technical specifications to find the actual numeric range.

Start with weighted items supplied by the store; items of personal gear packed into stuff sacks. Distribute these throughout a pack's interior, keeping the weight close to your body with the heaviest portion near your shoulder blades.

Next:

1. Loosen the pack's shoulder straps, load-adjustment straps and hip belt.
2. Slip your arms through the shoulder straps.
3. Position the hip belt so it basically straddles your hipbones (iliac crest); close the buckle and make the hip belt straps snug. The belt should completely, comfortably cover your hips, but its 2 ends should not touch. If the belt is too loose or too tight, reposition the buckle pieces on the hip belt straps. If this doesn't give you a secure fit, you may have to try a different pack or hip belt. Do not tighten your hip belt excessively. Keep it snug, but if it's too tight or too long on the trail, you'll have sore spots on your hips the next morning.

4. Cinch the shoulder straps down tightly, then ease the tension slightly.
5. Look sideways in a mirror. Check the position of your shoulder straps:
• For internal-frame packs: The padded sections of the shoulder straps should wrap around the crest of your shoulders comfortably and attach to the frame about 2.5cm/1" below that point. No gaps should appear.

• For external-frame packs without load-lifter straps: The shoulder straps should attach to the pack frame at a point slightly higher than the top of your shoulders.
• For external-frame packs with load-lifter straps: The padded sections of the shoulder straps should wrap around the top of your shoulders comfortably and attach to the frame about 2.5cm/1" below that point.
6. Check your load-lifter straps. These should attach to your shoulder straps at a point just above your collarbone and just below the top of your shoulders. From there, they should rise up to join with the frame at an angle of between 40 and 50 degrees. If the angle is higher than that, your frame is too long. Any lower and your shoulders will carry too much of the load.
7. Check the shoulder strap length and width:
• The buckle on the strap should be a hand-width below your armpit that it won't chafe.
• The straps should be far enough apart that they don't squeeze your neck, but close enough together that they don't slip off of your shoulders during hiking. The width is sometimes adjustable.

• Women need to pay special attention to the fit of shoulder straps. On some unisex packs, the distance between shoulder straps may be too wide, or the straps themselves are wide enough to gouge an armpit or breast. If you find a good fit is elusive, seek out a pack designed specifically for women.
8. Check for a good torso fit. If the pack fits you correctly, you should be able to redistribute the weight of the pack between your shoulders and your hips simply by loosening and tightening your shoulder straps slightly. Adjust the sternum strap. Position it about 2" below your collarbone. You should be able to breathe comfortably when the strap is fastened. It is not essential that you keep your sternum strap fastened at all times. It is most helpful when you are negotiating uneven terrain.

9. Check for comfort:
• Does the pack feel good on your back?
• Does it pinch or bind or unusually restrict your movement?
• Can you look up without hitting the pack with your head?
• Can you squat down without cutting off the circulation to your legs?
This may seem like a lot to keep in mind, but all of the above will become automatic as you gain experience. Now walk around with your pack. Climb and descend a flight of stairs. Hop from spot to spot. Reach. Walk a line. If anything is pinching, try adjusting the various straps.

Your guides will help you fine tune your pack during the trip.

SLEEPING BAGS

The insulation or "fill" inside a sleeping bag largely determines a sleeping bag's weight (and thus its "warmth-for-weight" ratio), compressibility, and durability.

Down

Down is the wispy, fluffy undercoating found just beneath the outer feathers of geese and ducks. This natural fiber is an extraordinary insulator.

Plus side:
• It offers tremendous warmth for surprisingly little weight
• It can be compacted into very small sizes.
• Its effectiveness outperforms synthetic insulation by years—decades, even.

Downside:
• If it gets wet, it is of no value until it dries—and in the field, that can take a long time.
• It is expensive but in the long term more economical.

Synthetic

Synthetic materials are basically plastic threads. The threads are most commonly a continuous filament (a long, single strand). The most popular synthetic material in use is Polarguard®.

Plus side:
• It's less expensive than down.
• It's non-allergenic.
• It still provides some insulation when wet; plus it dries fairly quickly.

Downside:
• It's bulkier than down (so it takes up more space when you're carrying it).
• It's heavier (it takes more weight to get the same warmth down provides).
• The filaments gradually degrade over time.
• Does not drape over the contours of your body as effectively.

It is extremely difficult to recommend a bag as there are so many considerations. Where will you be using the bag? During which seasons?
Do you like to move around allot inside the bag or do you like a snug fit? How much money are you prepared to spend? Do you get cold easily? You should consider the following if you are going to purchase a bag:
• Down works well for just about everyone except people who frequently find themselves in rainy conditions.
• Women often value down's warmth, softness and minimal weight. (Note: Some bags are cut to accommodate a woman's body shape and preference for extra insulation.
• There is no correlation between weight and warmth. One bag may be double the weight of another yet have the same temperature rating. (It is important to note that the temperature rating designated on a bag is not set by any independent standard. The rating assigned to a bag is the manufacturer's.)
• An important consideration when selecting a sleeping bag is how claustrophobic you are. Bags are either rectangular, mummy, or tapered (comprise between rectangular and mummy). The rectangular bag allows the sleeper to move and turn inside while the mummy bag restricts movement. Mummy bags are very popular and have many advantages. However, if you hate to be confined, it's not the bag for you. When the salesperson is discussing the merits of the different bags ask if you can try out the sleeping bag.
• Mummy bags are narrow, close-fitting bags are designed to save weight and maximize heat retention. They start narrow at the feet, get wider toward the shoulder, then taper to an insulated, fitted hood. Nearly all backpacking bags are mummy-shaped. **Positives:** The slim cut increases efficiency and saves space and weight. Hoods retain a lot of warmth. **Negatives:** The narrow shape can feel restrictive to some people and inhibit sleep.
• Rectangular bags are warm-weather sleeping bags built to be roomy. As a result, they let a lot of body heat escape. Many rectangular bags can be unzipped and used as comforters. Few have hoods. **Positives:** Lots of interior wiggle room. **Negatives:** They're inefficient insulators, too heavy/bulky for most weight-conscious backpackers.
• Tapered models are narrow at the feet, broad at the hips and shoulders. You get more space than a mummy supplies, but also more weight and bulk. Some offer hoods. **Positives:** Good heat retention and a little more room to maneuver. **Negatives:** More room means your body has more space to keep warm; some thrashers still find them restrictive.
• Loft in combination with shape and size have a great bearing on warmth. A reasonable loft for our trips is 11 to 14 cm. (3 season bag). Remember, however, some people sleep warmer than others. You may require a greater loft.
• Make sure the sleeping bag is long enough to accommodate your body. Here's the general rule: If you are no taller than 6 feet, choose a regular length bag. If you are up to 6-feet-6, you want a long bag. If you are right on the border, maybe right at 6 feet or maybe half an inch taller, it's a judgement call on your part. If you choose a bag that's too short, you might tend to stretch a bag to make it cover you. Doing so flattens the bag (and its insulation) in spots, reducing its effectiveness. Sleeping in a bag that's too long means your feet have lots of space to heat up.

TREKKING POLES

If you have gone on steep climbs or hikes (whether on scree, talus, dirt paths, boulders, or snow) you probably have already noticed that ascending with trekking poles helps set up a natural pace or rhythm for the walk in, and descending with trekking poles helps you spare your knees to some degree. The short answer to both questions is *yes!*

In a recent study by Roithner and others in Austria ("Comparison of Knee Joint Forces During Downhill Walking With and Without Hiking Poles") authors showed that use of trekking or ski poles caused reductions of external and internal loads on the knee joint up to 20%. This means that if you already have weak knees and wish to protect them over the long term, having moderate support on the descents can save the knees and help prevent severe muscle soreness in the quadriceps. Authors of another study (from Muskuloskeletal

Dynamics, Locomotion and Clinical Applications, by Andriacchi and Mikosz, 1991) observed four times higher knee joint moments during descending stairs compared to walking on flat ground. Those people who have trouble walking down stairs in the city will almost undoubtedly have more difficulty on uneven terrain in the mountains, where your steps can be even steeper, and occur over longer time periods. It's best to strengthen (well in advance) all the muscles in the lower leg that will be needed for climbing and descending, but trekking poles are a viable tool especially in early season as you get your legs ready for longer and harder climbs. Wearing a properly fitting knee brace is another option, though again, you want to train yourself to be strong without the support as quickly as possible.

Bottom line: ski or trekking poles DO help reduce forces through the knee joint and can be appropriate for those who already suffer knee pain or for those beginning a long season of hikes and backpacking trips. However, whenever possible, try to develop the balance and leg strength necessary to be brace- free and pole-free when the need arises.

PACKING

It will be necessary to transport your personal gear in a backpack. Compartmentalize everything. Use ziplock or garbage bags to protect against things getting wet. Twist tie and double bag anything you don't want to get wet.
Keeping your sleeping bag dry is of extreme importance. Do not rely on the manufacturer's claim that the sleeping bag stuff sack is waterproof. Insert a plastic garbage bag in the stuff sack and then stuff the sleeping bag in. As additional protection, place that whole affair in another plastic garbage bag and twist tie it shut. One very important question to continually ask yourself when packing is whether you will
really need that item. If it's not on the packing checklist that we provide, it's probably not necessary.

BEFORE LEAVING

• Clip all fingernails and toenails. You will be grabbing and clutching along the way. A bent or broken fingernail can be very painful.
• Leave rings, bracelets, and necklaces at home.
• Carry a cheap watch or none at all. You may enjoy the freedom of not being tied to a watch.
• Leave behind any unnecessary credit cards. Bank cards and Visa/Mastercard are usually a good thing to carry. The means to access extra cash for unexpected needs may be welcomed.
• Post our equipment/clothing list on the front door. As you are about to leave your home, make a final check.
• Remember to pack personal medication. **Additional backup medication should be given to the guides in the event yours is lost.**
• Let someone know when you are due home. Leave a copy of the itinerary, with corresponding dates, with this person.
• If you are from out of town, let someone know where you will be staying when you get to your destination/origin.
• If you are entering Canada, remember to bring all pertinent documents. Stricter border enforcement will require that U.S. citizens carry
picture ID and either passport or birth certificate.
• For foreign visitors, we recommend that some form of travel or health insurance be purchased for the length of stay in Canada. It is a good idea that it cover medical evacuation, especially by air.
• For foreign visitors, it is best to convert currency to Canadian before entry. You will probably receive a better value from financial institutions than from individual merchants.

CONDITIONING

Preparing your body is as important as preparing with the right equipment.

Proper conditioning can put an older person in better shape than someone half his/her age. You will feel better and perform better when you are in good shape.

Common sense needs to be your guide. Start with a trip to your doctor. We strongly recommend that you discuss our conditioning suggestions with your doctor to ascertain their suitability to your medical circumstances. There are no shortcuts. Getting into shape requires work. **At least two months before your scheduled trip, you should begin a regimen that focuses on building stamina, strength, and endurance.**

STRETCHING

Stretching 10 minutes before and after daily workouts will help you stay limber and avoid muscle soreness. Stretches should be slow and gentle, breathing consciously. Hold each stretch for 30 - 60 seconds:

• Lay flat on your back. Extend your arms as far as they'll go above your head and at the same time point your toes as far as they'll go away from your body. Inhale as you stretch.

• Sit up on the floor. Exhale as you reach for your toes.

• Sit up on the floor. Spread your legs as far as comfortable. Inhale and exhale as you reach forward along the floor, first along one leg, then the other.

HEART TRAINING

Walking, running, biking, swimming and aerobics are all good for this. Expect some sore muscles, but do not strain yourself. The fastest gains are made when you exercise at an intensity level of about 85 % of your maximum heart rate. You can find this rate by subtracting your age from 220 and multiplying by .85 [220 - 40 (person's age) = 180 x .85 = 153]. Periodically take your pulse for 15 seconds and multiply by 4 to get your heart rate.

When you begin, start at 65 % and slowly work up to 85 %. Limit yourself to a 30 minute workout. One intense workout combined with three days of lighter workouts is a good start. Add speed and effort (i.e. going uphill) as you feel more comfortable. When you can do a 40 minute workout without much effort, build to a second and so on.

BACKPACK TRAINING

The best training program simulates the backpacking experience. You will need to incorporate steps, hills, inclined treadmills, or stair machines, while carrying a backpack, into your training. If you are active then you should begin at least a month before the trip. If not, then two months. Remember that pain is an indicator, and your doctor should be consulted if it persists or it is extreme.

The following program focuses on muscle groups and motions that will be needed when backpacking. Use the weekends to do practice hikes or cross-training activities such as swimming, skating, biking, etc.

Week	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
1 - 2	Walk or jog a course with rolling hills. 30 min. Carry 2 kg/5lb to 4.5 kg/10 lb in pack.	Strength, Balance Endurance Training	Rest	Strength, Balance, Endurance Training	Repeat Monday
3 - 4	Same. 45 min. Add 2kg/5lb	Strength, Balance, Endurance Training	Rest or crosstrain. 30 min.	Strength, Balance, Endurance Training	Repeat Monday
5 - 6	Same. 60 min. Add 2kg/5lb	Strength, Balance, Endurance Training	Rest or crosstrain. 30 min.	Strength, Balance, Endurance Training	Repeat Monday
7 - 8	Same. 60-90 min. Add 2kg/5lb	Strength, Balance, Endurance Training	Rest or crosstrain. 30 min.	Strength, Balance, Endurance Training	Repeat Monday

MUSCLE/STRENGTH/BALANCE/ENDURANCE TRAINING

These exercises should be completed after a cardio session such as running, biking, swimming or walking.

Develops: Quads, hamstrings, calves, glutes, hips, core and balance.
Action: 12 – 15 reps each leg

Use table, chair for support if needed. Stand straight up on selected leg and grab other leg as
depicted in drawing. Slowly bend upright leg to about 90 degrees while holding other leg in position as depicted. Complete all reps before switching to other leg.

Develops: Quads, hamstrings, calves, glutes, hips, and climbing/descent strength.
Action: 8 – 10 reps each leg. Do with a pack. Add weight over time.

Use a platform such as a step or stool that will allow for your raised leg to be parallel to the ground before stepping up. Step up with the selected leg completely before raising the other leg. When returning, ensure that your heel touches first.

Develops: Quads, hamstrings, calves, glutes, hips, and descent strength.
Action: 12 – 15 reps each leg. Do without a pack.

Using a stair, stand erect with both legs. Lunge forward with selected leg until other leg is in the position depicted. Keep head and chin looking forward. Step off with back leg. Return to starting position and repeat. Change lunge leg and repeat exercise.

Develops: Leg and core strength, ankle stability, balance.

Action: 12 – 15 reps.

Place feet shoulder length apart. Maintain arms with elbows tucked as depicted. Jump to a selected side as far as you can and hold for count of two with both feet planted. Repeated back to other side.

Develops: Quads, balance, and power.
Action: 3 sets of 10.

Extend your arms as depicted, with legs about shoulder length apart. Jump and simultaneously spread legs apart Land in a squat position as depicted. Begin again.

All this preparation will pay dividends when you finally begin backpacking on the trail.