

PREPARING FOR A LONG WALK

While you need to keep in basic nick throughout the year, you need to build up our feet, knees and back gradually over the three weeks immediately before a long walk, spread the same preparations over several weeks, doing a little more each day.

Another problem can come from thinking that as you work at a physically demanding job you are thereby ready for a long walk.

Walk between half and one hour every day and intersperse that with two or three long walks in the final weeks before you go. After a few days of training wear a pack that is half the weight of what you will be carrying. You will have started to harden up your body in preparation for the walk. Then do about a ten mile (15-18 kms) walk. A week or two later do a fifteen mile (22- 26 kms) walk.

Pre-departure training toughens the soles of the feet, the ankle, knee and hip joints and the muscles at the base of the back, this minimises excessive soreness whilst attempting a long walk.

By now your rucsac should contain everything you need to be self sufficient whilst on the hills, food and water, map and compass, hat and gloves, waterproofs and spare pair of socks. You may like also to carry some safety equipment like whistle, head torch and foil blanket. Try and avoid cotton and jeans where possible, once these get damp or wet they take hours to dry and can reduce the body temperature considerably and even bring on hypothermia if the wind picks up. Wicking / breathable tops and jogging bottoms / lycra if not walking trousers.