

TRAINING AND FITNESS RECOMMENDATIONS

Fitness on any backpacking trip is crucial to its success. Fitness will enable you to complete the trip and actually enjoy it. Fitness is not something you can just acquire overnight - it takes time, effort, and a dedication to see results.

Here's what our fitness recommendations say in the MOHAB Leader's Guide:

Physical Fitness

Your fitness will be tested on this trip so preparing in advance is crucial to being ready for MOHAB. The following fitness regimen is recommended:

- 6 months prior to your MOHAB trek: day hiking on flat terrain four times/week for at least one hour per session (base training).
- 5 months prior to your MOHAB trek: day hiking on steep hills four times/week with a 10 pound pack for at least one hour/session (base training).
- 4 months prior to your MOHAB trek: day hiking on steep hills four times/week with a 15 pound pack for at least one hour/session (base training).
- 3 months prior to your MOHAB trek: day hiking on steep hills three times/week with a 30 pound pack for at least one hour/session (max strength).
- 2 months prior to your MOHAB trek: day hiking on steep hills two times/week with a 30 pound pack for at least two hours/session (muscular endurance).
- 1 month prior to your MOHAB trek: day hiking on steep hills two times/week with a 15 pound pack for at least one hour/session (tapering).

When training your fitness for backpacking you will want to train often. Get outside with a pack a couple of times per week and try to get in a lot of elevation change. You want your training to mirror the type of activity you are training for so we'll start there.

Backpacking is a relatively low-heartrate, long-duration sport. While backpacking you will be expected to be on your feet all day carrying a pack. This understanding is the foundation for your training. You want to develop your muscles to be able to function for long time at a low heart rate. Interval training is not for the backpacker. If you feel your heart racing dial it back some; you're either going too fast or your elevation change is too extreme.

The best thing you can do to improve your backpacking fitness is just to get outside often with a pack and walk around. No need for running or high intensity work. Train your legs to respond to hours of low-intensity stimulus.