

## 10 tips to get fit for your expedition

*Ask a parent, PE teacher or exercise professional for help if you're unsure about any of these exercises as you need to do them the right way to avoid injury. If it hurts, stop.*

1. Start now! Regular exercise over a long period of time is much better than a big burst later. Make one of these activities count towards the Physical section of your DofE award too.
2. Aim for 3 to 4 sessions of aerobic activity per week (running, cycling, swimming, team or individual sports such as football, rugby, hockey, tennis, squash) dancing. Pick something you enjoy. Give Parkrun a go if you'd like to try running.
3. Build in interval training (short bursts of high intensity) to whatever aerobic activity you are doing. If you're running, build in 5 times 30 second sprints; if you're swimming go as fast as possible every 10 lengths.
4. Walk more! Ideally take your parents out for long walks at the weekend – we have lots of beautiful countryside nearby – and practise your navigation skills at the same time. Build more walking into every day. Take the stairs; walk to school if you can; get off the bus or tram one stop earlier.
5. Warm up before you exercise. Before walking or running several repetitions (start with 10 and build up gradually) of each of the following are suggested in order to reduce the risk of ankle sprains and pulled muscles. Click the link below to find photos of exercises (ii) to (v) <http://www.backpacker.com/view/photos/skills-photos/dynamic-hiking-stretches/-bp=0/img2>
  - (i) Double heel lifts <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z9eytyFjmKs>
  - (ii) Leg swings
  - (iii) Twisting lunges
  - (iv) Tail kicks
  - (v) Walking high knees
6. Improve your balance – stand on one leg with your eyes closed. Start with 30 seconds then swap; over time, increase the length of time you hold the position. Do it every day for best results
7. Stretch after exercise. It's helpful to stretch the calf, hip flexor and hamstring muscles, also the muscles in the back and shoulders. There's a specific post-hike stretch routine demonstrated in the following link <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TOfgFciIkY>
8. Strengthen your core (abdominal and back muscles). Having a strong core is really important for all kinds of activities and sports. There's a routine you can do at home demonstrated in the following link <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ut4GJuNuOM4>
9. A month before your expedition, start wearing a weighted rucksack (put full waterbottles into it) and then go for a brisk walk or jog. Build up the pack weight gradually over the next 4 weeks. This will strengthen your back and shoulders eady for the weight of your full pack.
10. Don't forget to rest 1-2 days a week – this is an important part of training too!