



## **COURSE PREPARATION AND PHYSICAL FITNESS**

You do not have to be an athlete, or highly trained, to come on an Outward Bound course. You do have to be physically capable, and active. Our courses are demanding. If you are not already involved in a fitness program, now is the time to start. Every minute you put into training for your course will pay off in enjoyment, comfort and fun when you get here.

### **Attitude and Mental Preparation**

It is just as important to train your mind as it is to train your body. We can't really offer you a training regime to mentally prepare. We do suggest being prepared for a few things:

**Team Work:** Be ready to be a part of a team.

**Living with Less:** Look around your house, and the "real" world, and think about what you have and what you really need. Chances are it's less than you think.

**Being Away from Home:** Whether is the first time or the tenth time you have been away from home, you might not ever have been this out of touch. If you think you might feel homesick, let us know. We can help you come up with some ideas to address it.

**Compassion:** Compassion is one of Outward Bound's core values. Be prepared to offer it and expect it from your teammates.

### **Fitness and Training**

The most important thing is to find an activity that you enjoy doing. While exercising three times a week for at least 30 minutes is the minimum, five to six times a week is optimum. We strongly suggest that applicants with any of the following conditions consult with their physician to establish an exercise program

- High blood pressure
- A family history of heart disease
- Obesity
- Diabetes
- Smoking

Some of the most important exercise to prepare for your course is known as cardiovascular, or "cardio". Options for cardio include (but are not limited to):

- Running
- Swimming
- Cycling
- Hiking

Weight and strength training will also be beneficial to your training for course. Body weight exercises like pushups, sit-ups, squats, pull-ups and lunges work well and require little to no equipment.

Many people find more success with a plan rather than on their own. Here are some of our favorite app based programs:

- Couch to 5k
- Nike Training Club
- Zombie, Run
- 7 Minute Workout
- 30 Day Fitness Challenge

## COURSE-SPECIFIC ADVICE

**BACKPACKING:** Our backpacking course area is known to be some of the most rugged and challenging. Prepare for hiking with a weighted backpack. Take a backpack and fill it to 20-30lbs, slowly adding weight over time until it has about 50lbs of weight in it. If you do not own a backpack, you may be able to borrow one from a family member or friends, or rent one for a while from an outdoor sporting goods store. If none of these options are available, try with a smaller “book bag” with approximately 15lbs of weight in it. Start out hiking just a couple of miles in hilly terrain (or on stairs!), and increase your mileage and terrain intensity as you gain strength and fitness. On course, you can expect to be carrying a pack that weighs between 40-55lbs, and you may hike between 3-15 miles a day.

**SAILING/ CANOEING:** Prepare for the rigors of rowing our pulling boats or paddling canoes by endurance training at least three times a week on a rowing machine. If a rowing machine is not available to you, supplement with strength training three times a week – working on your core, shoulders and arms.

**ROCK CLIMBING:** Climbing indoors at your local rock climbing gym is a good way to prepare for climbing outdoors. If a climbing gym is not available to you, substitute pull-ups, sit-ups, and strength training with weights. While on course, you will learn and practice knots, climbing and belay techniques as well as safety procedures.

## FITNESS PROGRAM

The program outlined below is appropriate if you have enrolled eight weeks or more prior to your course start. If you don't have the full eight weeks to train, adjust this program accordingly. Take this conditioning program seriously – getting in good shape before your course will significantly reduce the chances of injury, and increase your opportunities for enjoyment.

The general rules of this conditioning program are these:

- ✓ aim for 30 minutes of activity daily;
- ✓ mix up your training so you aren't doing the same thing;
- ✓ don't hurt yourself;
- ✓ enjoy yourself;
- ✓ take a day off each week;

Week One	Week Two	Week Three	Week Four	Week Five	Week Six	Week Seven	Week Eight
Day 1: Cardio	Day 1: Cardio	Day 1: Cardio	Day 1: Cardio	Day 1: Cardio	Day 1: Cardio	Day 1: Cardio	Day 1: Cardio
Day 2: Strength Training	Day 2: Strength Training	Day 2: Strength Training	Day 2: Strength Training	Day 2: Cardio	Day 2: Cardio	Day 2: Strength Training	Day 2: Strength Training
Day 3: Stretching	Day 3: Stretching	Day 3: Stretching	Day 3: Stretching	Day 3: Stretching	Day 3: Stretching	Day 3: Stretching	Day 3: Stretching
Day 4: Cardio & Strength	Day 4: Cardio & Strength	Day 4: Cardio & Strength	Day 4: Cardio & Strength	Day 4: Strength Training	Day 4: Strength Training	Day 4: Strength Training	Day 4: Strength Training
Day 5: Stretching	Day 5: Stretching	Day 5: Stretching	Day 5: Stretching	Day 5: Cardio	Day 5: Cardio	Day 5: Stretching	Day 5: Stretching
Day 6: Cardio	Day 6: Cardio	Day 6: Cardio	Day 6: Cardio	Day 6: Cardio	Day 6: Cardio	Day 6: Cardio	Day 6: Cardio