

# No Gym Hike Training Program



Trailside Fitness  
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# Chapter 1

## Introduction



# Ready For Adventure

The benefits of training for a hike are many! Not only will the risk of injury decrease, there's also less negative self talk about being out of shape as the hike begins.

Each workout will help build confidence and physically prepare the body for the rigors of hiking - without going to a gym!

Another benefit to training? Staying present and engaged with the hike, not just surviving it.

Hear the birds, feel the breeze, take in the sights and enjoy your hike with improved fitness.

This simple 12 week program is just for YOU! It provides a framework that will leave you confident and ready for your hike!





**Reduce  
the risk of  
common  
injuries  
with  
training!**

## **Why Train?**

Each year hikers are forced to end their hikes early due to overuse injuries sustained during their hike. This is really unfortunate!

Sedentary people, those inconsistent with exercise, and even the regular gym goers who have been training for a while may not be prepared for the physical demands of a long distance hike. Even a short distance hike for that matter.

Training helps ready the body for the upcoming stresses, movements, and output that is needed for hiking. A good training program does this in a steadily progressing manner.

This steady progression allows the body to make physical and neurological adaptations to the exercise.

By not prioritizing training before a hike and covering too many miles too fast, the body is unable to handle the stress, which leads to injuries like stress fractures and tendonitis.

Be patient, prioritize training, play the long game and give yourself the best possible chance of completing your hike uninjured. Train a minimum of 12 weeks prior to your start day, it will change your experience for the better!

These changes take time and cannot be rushed!

## Why Train Without A Gym?

For a few reasons, this program was designed without needing gym equipment.

First, many hikers live in a flat geographical area offering limited hill training. Hills are only part of the training needed and this program will help give some guidance to flat land hikers looking to prepare for their hike.

Second, some hikers who don't have access to a gym. Gyms can cost money and many hikers are trying to save money for gear or other hike expenses.

Third, a lot hikers know they should train but aren't sure where to start. This program offers a great starting point with body weight exercises. Body weight exercises have a slightly shorter learning curve over other types of exercises and are approachable at all ages and experience levels.

**“A GOAL  
WITHOUT A PLAN  
IS JUST A WISH”**

**~ANTOINE de Saint Exupéry**

Your goal is to finish your hike and preferably injury free, right?

Perfect! Here is your training plan to help improve your hike experience, reduce injury risk, and allow you to meet your goal!

# Chapter 2

## The No Gym Hike Training Program





**“No one is disappointed they trained for a hike”**

**Start in 3..2..1..!**

# The Workouts

This is a 12 week program broken into three phases. Each phase has three weeks of programming followed by one week of recovery work.

The recovery week will offer specific exercises for glutes along with exercises to strengthen commonly injured areas for hikers. It will also offer stretches that can be employed easily at camp during your hike. Lock those techniques away for later!

Each week offers a schedule that allows for three day per week training. This will leave plenty of time for hiking and backpacking (or lunges!) on the weekends.

During each new phase, you will increase your sets and reps from the previous phase. Each new phase has updated sets and rep targets listed.

To determine where to start, here is a guide to help:

Beginners- New to exercise or back from a long break.

Intermediate- Currently working out 2-4 times per week regularly.

Advanced- Working out 4-6 times per week currently with heavy weights.

You may find that performing higher reps for lower body exercises is easier than higher reps for upper body exercises, like push ups. Example: You may easily perform 4 sets of squats but struggle with 2 sets of push ups. Work to find your balance of sets and reps for each exercise as you progress.

## **Soreness as a guide, not a rule**

Being more sore is not the sign of a better workout. Being more sore does not equate to a better workout. For those who believe that “no pain, no gain” is the best way, it’s time to reframe your thinking!

Monitor your soreness and if you are sore for more than 3 days past a workout, decrease either the sets or reps. Use that information as feedback and adjust accordingly.

**You cannot speed up fitness! Just be consistent and progress will happen.**

## Rest Breaks

These workouts should take around an hour to complete with rest included. For this program, exercise until you can't and rest until you can. This is known as rest based training.

That may mean resting for a few breaths, 20 seconds, or over a minute. Don't sweat the rest portion and just do your best to avoid long rest breaks.

## Pacing

With any program the focus should be on quality of reps, not quantity or speed to completion.

The goal is not to perform 15 sub-standard reps quickly. Rather, 10 perfect reps that are steady and controlled.

**QUALITY ALWAYS TRUMPS  
QUANTITY!**

## Warm up and Cool Down

The warm up are consistent each workout. For the cool down, repeat the warm up, but eliminate the jumping jacks or jump rope. Also stretch quads, calf muscles, hamstrings and shoulders. The recovery week stretches are a great guide for cool down stretches.

# Chapter 3

## Phase I - Foundation



# Phase I

Phase I helps build a foundation for the next two phases. After the first three weeks of the program are complete, the fourth week will focus on recovery techniques.

Using a 3 day per week schedule is most ideal, however, you can do this program using a 2 day per week schedule. If you elect the 2 day per week plan, try adding in more walking into the week.

Finally, using a 2-day per week routine, use the following schedule:

Week 1 & 3 - Monday/Friday workout

Week 2 - Wednesday (repeat the same workout)

## Phase I Sets and Reps

As the second and third phases begin, you will increase the sets and reps from your starting numbers. This will ensure you continue to build strength and endurance appropriately.

Beginners: perform 1-3 sets of 12-15 reps

Intermediate: perform 2-3 sets of 12-15 reps

Advanced: perform 3-4 sets of 15 - 20 reps

# Warm-up & Cool Down Routine

Repeat twice:

Jump Rope x30, OR Jumping Jacks x30,

Repeat 2x10 of the following: walking knee huggers, butt kickers, walking lunges, squats, arm circles forward & backwards.

## Week 1 & 3 - Monday and Friday

Squats

Bridge

Pushup (Knee push ups are ok!)

Dip

Standing Crossover Crunch

Side Plank (easier Knee version)

Windshield Wiper

## Week 1 & 3 - Wednesday

Lunge

Single Leg Bridge

Single Leg Deadlift

Wall Rows

Dirty Dog

Plank

Russian Twist (no weight needed but optional)

## Warm-up & Cool Down Routine

Repeat twice:

Jump Rope x30, OR Jumping Jacks x30,

Repeat 2x10 of the following: walking knee huggers, butt kickers, walking lunges, squats, arm circles forward & backwards.

## Week 2 - Monday and Friday

Lunge

Single Leg Bridge

Single Leg Deadlift

Wall Rows

Dirty Dog

Plank

Russian Twist (no weight needed but optional)

## Week 2 - Wednesday

Squats

Bridge

Pushup (Knee push ups are ok!)

Dip

Standing Crossover Crunch

Side Plank (easier Knee version)

Windshield Wiper

## Week 4 Recovery Stretches

Week 4 is primarily a recovery week. However, that doesn't mean just rest and stop exercising. Do some yoga or go for a walk, low intensity activity is important for recovery!

Work in the exercises as you see fit throughout the week.

### During The Week

Stretches should feel good! If it hurts, back off the intensity a little bit and and work to find a strong but gentle stretch.

The next page will show you the stretches that I like best for while hiking. They are easy to do and extremely beneficial.

Spend 10-15 minutes every day stretching what feels tight, quads, hamstrings, glutes, feet, shoulders, or whatever else needs attention.

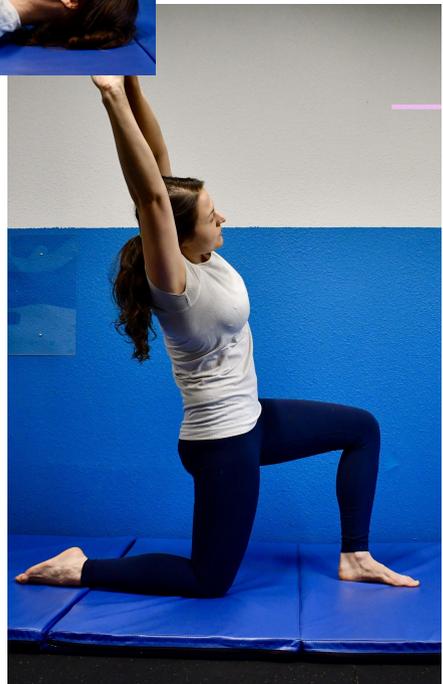
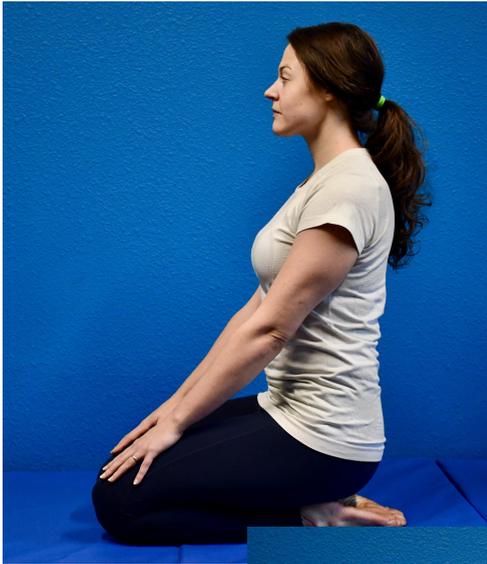
Hold each stretch for 20 seconds, repeat 3 times.

### Here's a great option for camp

[Trekking pole calf massage](#)

[Trekking pole shin massage](#)

# Recovery Stretches



## Week 4 Complimentary Exercises

Here are some complementary exercises to target common trouble areas for most hikers.

The glute series are important since the glutes control femur rotation and thus affect knee and hip function. If you're not familiar with Bret Contreras, consider this your introduction to the Glute Guy!

There are also exercises to focus on quad strength for downhills, foot strength and balance work.

### Glutes

Bret Contreras [Glute Series](#)

\*See equipment list for links to exercise bands

### Ankles, Feet, and Knees

[Figure 8 Hops](#)

[Lunge Matrix](#)

[Lateral Step-downs](#)

Foot Strength Exercises:

[Arch Builder](#)

[Short Foot](#)

Single leg balance: barefoot, accumulate 2 minutes balance on each foot total. Too easy? Close your eyes. Use wall, counter top or doorway opening for support. Can be performed while brushing teeth, folding laundry or doing dishes.

# Chapter 4

## Phase II - Building



## Phase II

During Phase II, sets and reps have been increased from Phase I for all levels. Many of the exercises have been changed also.

Some plyometric (jump) training is also introduced. Small hops are fine, no need to jump for the moon here.

Finally, using a 2-day per week routine, use the following schedule:

Week 5 & 7 - Monday/Friday workout

Week 6 - Wednesday (repeat the same workout)

## Phase II Sets and Reps

Phase II will work to improve strength and endurance! New exercises add variety and target key muscle groups for hiking.

Beginners: perform 2-3 sets of 12-15 reps

Intermediate: perform 2-4 sets of 12-15 reps

Advanced: perform 3-4 sets of 15 - 20 reps

# Warm-up & Cool Down Routine

Repeat twice:

Jump Rope x30, OR Jumping Jacks x30,

Repeat 2x10 of the following: walking knee huggers, butt kickers, walking lunges, squats, arm circles forward & backwards.

## Week 5 & 7 - Monday and Friday

Jumping Squat

Box Step ups (Use a chair or stair)

Skiers

Mountain Climbers

Dip (Use a chair or stair)

Side Lunge

Side Plank

Russian Twist (no weight needed but optional)

## Week 5 & 7 - Wednesday

Bulgarian Split Squat

Single Leg Elevated Bridge

Single Leg Deadlift

Diamond Push up

Jumping Knee Tuck

Plank

Windshield Wiper

# Warm-up & Cool Down Routine

Repeat twice:

Jump Rope x30, OR Jumping Jacks x30,

Repeat 2x10 of the following: walking knee huggers, butt kickers, walking lunges, squats, arm circles forward & backwards.

## Week 6 - Monday and Friday

Bulgarian Split Squat

Single Leg Elevated Bridge

Single Leg Deadlift

Diamond Push up

Jumping Knee Tuck

Plank

Windshield Wiper

## Week 6 - Wednesday

Jumping Squat

Box Step ups

Skiers

Mountain Climbers

Dip

Side Lunge

Side Plank

Russian Twist (no weight needed but optional)

## Week 8 Recovery Stretches

Week 8 is primarily a recovery week. However, that doesn't mean just rest and stop exercising. Do some yoga or go for a walk, low intensity activity is important for recovery!

Work in the exercises as you see fit.

### Throughout The Week

Stretches should feel good! If it hurts, back off the intensity a little bit and work to find a strong but gentle stretch.

The next page will show you the stretches that I like best for while hiking. They are easy to do and extremely beneficial.

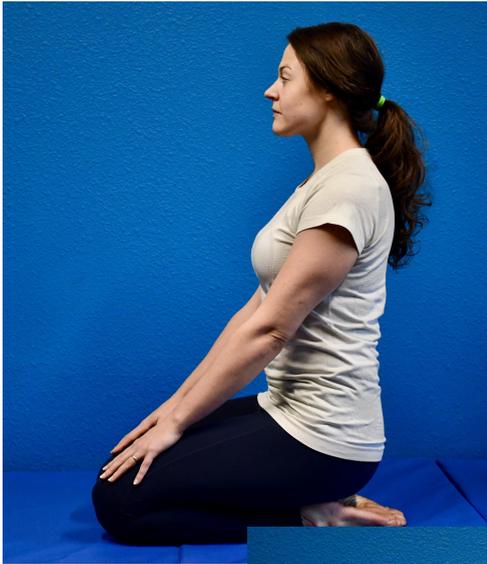
Spend 10-15 minutes each day stretching what feels tight, quads, hamstrings, glutes, feet, shoulders, or whatever else needs attention.

Hold each stretch for 20 seconds, repeat 3 times.

### Here's a great stretch for camp

#### Shin Stretch

# Recovery Stretches



# Week 8 Complimentary Exercises

During week 8, the glute series returns! Also, time spent working on balance, ankle and knee control.

## Glutes

Bret Contreras [Glute Series](#)

## Ankle, Feet, Knees

[Figure 8 Hops](#)

[Lunge Matrix](#)

[Lateral Step-downs](#)

Foot Strength Exercises

[Arch Builder](#)

[Short Foot](#)

Single leg balance: barefoot, accumulate 2 minutes balance on each foot total. Too easy? Close your eyes. Use wall, counter top or doorway opening for support. Can be performed while brushing teeth, folding laundry or doing dishes.

# Chapter 5

## Phase III - Finisher



## Phase III

Phase III is the final building phase and will leave you primed and ready for the trail!

Using a 3 day per week schedule is most ideal, however, you can do this program using a 2 day per week schedule. If you decide on the 2 day per week plan, try to walk into the week.

Finally, using a 2-day per week routine, use the following schedule:

Week 9 & 11 - Monday/Friday workout

Week 10 - Wednesday (repeat the same workout)

## Phase III Sets and Reps

Phase III brings it all together! Push for the extra set or extra reps. It should feel easier than the start of the program!

Beginners: perform 2-4 sets of 12-15 reps

Intermediate: perform 3-4 sets of 12-15 reps

Advanced: perform 4-5 sets of 15 - 20 reps

## Warm-up & Cool Down Routine

Repeat twice:

Jump Rope x30, OR Jumping Jacks x30,

Repeat 2x10 of the following: walking knee huggers, butt kickers, walking lunges, squats, arm circles forward & backwards.

## Week 9 & 11 - Monday and Friday

Squats

Skiers

Mountain Climbers

Diamond Push ups

Side Lunge

Side Plank

Russian Twist (no weight needed but optional)

## Week 9 & 11 - Wednesday

Lunge

Single Leg Deadlift

Pistol From Bench

Diamond Push up

Jumping Knee Tuck

3-point Plank

Windshield Wiper

## Warm-up & Cool Down Routine

Repeat twice:

Jump Rope x30, OR Jumping Jacks x30,

Repeat 2x10 of the following: walking knee huggers, butt kickers, walking lunges, squats, arm circles forward & backwards.

## Week 10 - Monday and Friday

Lunge

Single Leg Deadlift

Pistol From Bench

Diamond Push up

Jumping Knee Tuck

3-point Plank

Windshield Wiper

## Week 10 - Wednesday

Squats

Skiers

Mountain Climbers

Diamond Push ups

Side Lunge

Side Plank

Russian Twist (no weight needed but optional)

## Week 12 Recovery Stretches

Week 12 is primarily a recovery week. However, that doesn't mean just rest and stop exercising. Do some yoga or go for a walk, low intensity activity is important for recovery!

Work in the exercises as you see fit.

## Throughout The Week

Stretches should feel good! If it hurts, back off the intensity a little bit and work to find a strong but gentle stretch.

The next page will show you the stretches that I like best for while hiking. They are easy to do and extremely beneficial.

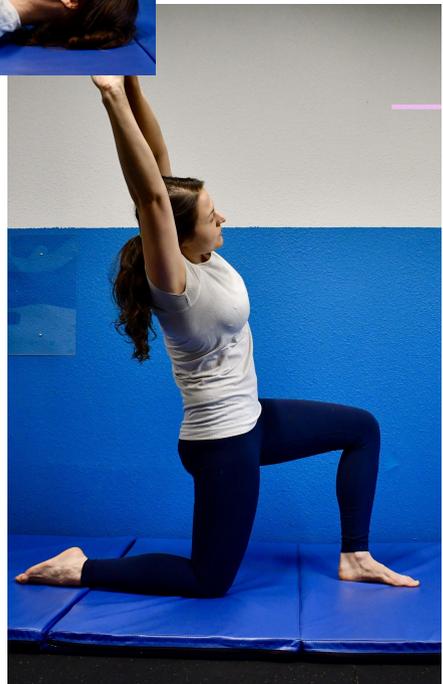
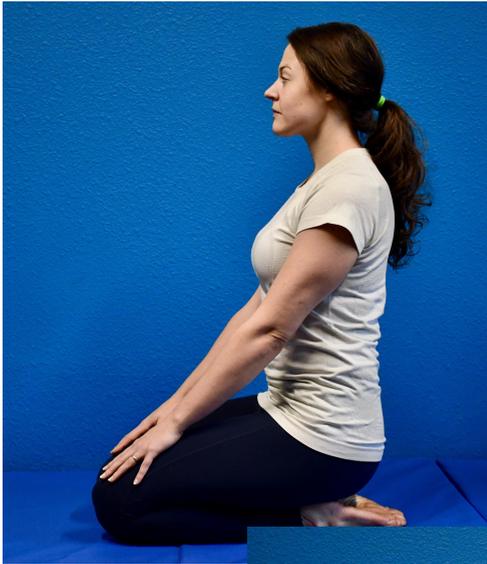
Spend 15 minutes stretching what feels tight, quads, hamstrings, glutes, feet, shoulders, or whatever else needs attention.

Hold each stretch for 20 seconds, repeat 3 times.

## Here's a great stretch for camp

[Deep Calf Bone Massage](#)

# Recovery Stretches



# Week 12 Complimentary Exercises

During week 12, the glute series makes a final return! Finish the program strong with work on balance, ankle and knee control!

## Glutes

Bret Contreras [Glute Series](#)

Spend 15 minutes stretching what feels tight, quads, hamstrings, glutes, feet, shoulders, or whatever else needs attention.

## Ankle, Feet, Knees

[Figure 8 Hops](#)

[Lunge Matrix](#)

[Lateral Step-downs](#)

Foot Strength Exercises

[Arch Builder](#)

[Short Foot](#)

Single leg balance: barefoot, accumulate 2 minutes balance on each foot total. Too easy? Close your eyes. Use wall, counter top or doorway opening for support. Can be performed while brushing teeth, folding laundry or doing dishes.

## Congratulations!

Excellent work sticking with the program! Physical adaptations take time to develop and spending 90 days to help prepare the body for a big hike will serve wonders on the trail.

No one can predict injuries and things happen, but know that you did your best to stack the odds in your favor by completing a training program!

## Questions?

Feel free to reach out with questions regarding the program, I will be happy to assist in any way. Note, I typically check email 1-2x per week so if you don't hear right back, don't sweat it!

You can also reach out through [Facebook](#) Messenger or [Instagram](#) direct message. Typically the response is a little quicker than email!

## Feedback?

Feel comfortable sending feedback to any of the above means of contact. I'd love to hear your thoughts or ideas for modifying/improving the program!

**1 Hour is only  
4% of your  
day!**

Thank you for making the time to train! Fitness is one of the few aspects you can control that will have a direct impact on your level of enjoyment and safety. It's not always easy, but it's always worth it!

**Rock Star!**

# About Lee

Lee is the owner and content creator for Trailside Fitness. Trailside Fitness specializes in training, recovery and injury prevention for all levels of hikers. In 2018, Lee thru hiked the Pacific Crest Trail. He has spent about 20 years backpacking in Wyoming and Washington. He has also stood on the summit of Mount Rainier and the Grand Teton.

Lee blends his passion for hiking and backpacking with his education in physical therapy and personal training to help guide hikers through training and injury prevention techniques.

He has been a speaker for the Seattle Mountaineers, interviewed by REI and has written for Washington Trails Magazine. Learn more at [www.trailsidefitness.com](http://www.trailsidefitness.com)



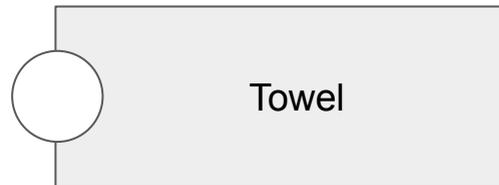
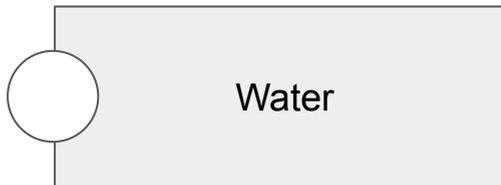
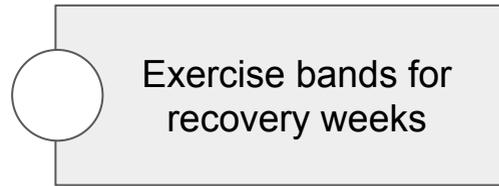
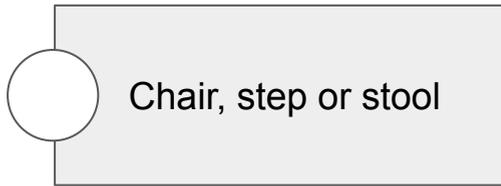
**Let Lee guide  
you to hike  
success!**

# Equipment

What You'll Need For This Program



# Equipment List



The exercise bands are great for building glute strength. Here are two brands that I currently use; I have no affiliation nor do I receive any compensation for these products!

[Exercise Bands - Soft](#)

[Exercise Bands - Latex](#)



**“You’ll never  
regret time  
spent training!”**

**THANK YOU!!**

**THANK YOU!**

It sounds cliché to say it, but I am truly humbled by the follows, likes, and overall response to the work I do at Trailside Fitness. I pride myself on providing actionable and quality content to help guide hikers through their hiking journey.

Thanks for sticking around and stay in touch!

Happy Trails,  
Lee “Flick” Welton  
PCT 2018