



Camino Training Programme

CAMINO TRAINING PROGRAMME

The Camino itinerary you are walking will take you between 4 and 6 hours each day going at a moderate pace. We calculate the time it takes to walk a set distance at an average of 2 - 2.5 miles per hour. So 10 miles takes around 4-5 hours, 15 miles takes around 6-7 hours.

Here's table of sample daily walks. On the Camino there is ample opportunity to stop rest and refresh - this will not be a route march! Do build in time for rest stops along the way, whether it's a picnic stop, refreshment at a cafe or simply to enjoy the view and take a few photos. Most people will be on the trail by 10 am at the latest , arriving at the next destination between 3pm and 5pm.

ON THE TRAIL TIMINGS	MILES	AVERAGE TIME
1	14	5.5 hours
2	15.5	6 hours
3	9.1	6 hours
4	8.9	3.5 hours
5	11.9	4.5 hours
6	12.6	5 hours

The two key elements are to be **'walking fit'** and have the **correct footwear**. Most walkers will use two walking poles - on the basis that 4 legs and better than 2. More on that further on...

Starting Your Camino Training - 4 Month Programme

If you are not accustomed to long distance walking, start off gently. Just get into the habit of walking regularly. Taking part in other activities like swimming or tennis or jogging - all helps improve your stamina. Aim to get out walking twice a week on proper training walks. Take it easy and don't push your body too hard - your training programme should be pleasurable and not punishing. As the programme progresses you can mix up shorter and longer walks. Don't feel you have to do a 5 or 10 or 15 mile walk each time.

But - if you only do your training walks on the flat, you'll find the Camino is noticeably harder. The terrain on the Camino is gently rolling, with no great ascents or descents, but it has ups and downs. Walking round your local park 100 times won't do the job, you need to get some ups and downs into the mix. No need to conquer mountains though...

Wear The Correct Footwear Wear lightweight, waterproof shoes or boots with good support that are well fitting. These are your essential items. Add proper walking socks that wick the moisture away from your feet - key to avoiding blisters.

4 Month Walking Programme

If you have any medical conditions, such as a problem with knees, back or hips, that could affect your ability to walk longer distances, do consult your doctor, physio or even trainer if you're a member at a sports centre. Undertake your training by taking measures to ensure you don't increase these problems. So if necessary get yourself some professional advice.

Weeks 1 & 2 In the first two weeks you should begin with gentle walks of about 30-40 minutes. Don't over do it and if you feel you need a rest - then rest! Get out two or three times a week if you can manage.

Weeks 3 & 4 Increase the time and distance you walk each week to an hour each time. Try to get out around 2-3 times weekly. The more short walks you do the better.

Month 2 Increase the distance you walk gradually each week, reaching 5 miles by the end of your second month. You should be wearing the walking shoes you intend to wear on the Camino so they have a chance to get properly broken in. If you think walking poles will help you - it would be a good idea get them now. You can get them from about £5 each.



You might consider buying yourself a pedometer so that you can check your target distances as your training programme progresses. You can buy these cheaply online for a few pounds or in any sport equipment shop

Month 3 Focussing on distance is becoming more important now. You gradually increase the distance each week, reaching 10 miles around one month before you travel. You

should be walking with your small daypack to get you used to the weight of 1.5l water and essential items like rainproof jacket, hat etc.

Month 4 Continue with a mix of shorter walks and a few walks of up to 15 miles over this period. Your walking shoes will be well broken in. It's a good time to review any changes to your kit as you'll now know what it's going to be like on the Camino. Now is the time to review your gear or purchase other accessories.

Warm Ups and Cool Downs

Warming Up is exercising at a lower intensity in order to get the blood circulating and let your body know that you are preparing for exercise. For many of your walks it will only be necessary to warm up about five minutes. **Flexibility Exercises** can be done after warming up with 5 to 10 minutes of easy walking as follows -

Toe Points -- Stand on one leg and lift the other foot off the floor. Gently point your toe and hold for a few seconds. Next flex your foot pointing your toes up. Do this five or ten times on each foot.

Ankle Circles -- While standing on one leg lift the other foot off the floor. Gently point your toe and rotate your ankle. Do about ten circles in each direction. This exercise can be performed while standing, sitting, or lying on your back with leg raised.

Overhead Reach -- Stand with your feet hip distance apart. Reach up with one arm and then reach over your head and to the opposite side. Keep your hips steady and your shoulders straight. Relax and repeat with the other side.

Twist -- Stand with your feet shoulder width apart and your arms straight out, parallel to ground. Keep your lower body stationary while swinging your arms from side to side. Do this several times to loosen up your waist, back, and shoulders.

Arm Circles -- Hold your arms straight out to your side parallel to the ground. Make small circles going backward, gradually getting larger and larger. Rest for a second and do the same thing in the forward direction.

Cool Down - At the end of the walk slow your pace to cool down for 5 - 10 mins.

Stretching Exercises

Stretching is a neglected area. Taking the time to stretch **AFTER** every session can make a real difference to your ability to cope with walking longer distances. It will take you about 5 minutes.

As you increase distance and pace you will probably need to stretch longer. The following is a simple guide to stretching that you might find helpful.

Important rules for stretching:

* Never stretch cold muscles. The best time to stretch is **after** your walk. If you have problem areas they can be stretched prior to your walk, but only do this after you have warmed up. And take it easy, you don't want to pull anything - so, gently does it.

* If you have any known problems with muscles or joints do seek professional advice.

*Do not bounce. Go into a stretch slowly and hold gently. Stretch to the point of feeling a gentle pull, but never to the point of pain

*Hold each stretch for up to 30 seconds. If you have problems with a particular area stretch that area twice. (hold for 30 seconds release, then stretch again.)

Calf Stretch - Take a big step forward with your left foot, keeping your right heel on the ground. Hold the position and repeat on the other side. Be sure to keep your body upright and your abs tight, do not arch your back. You could use a wall, a bench or tree trunk for support.



Shin Stretch - Standing up, you can hold on to a stationary object if it helps. Stand with your weight on one leg and straighten it. Place your other foot on the ground behind, with toes pointed toward the floor. Keep your toes touching the ground, and pull the stretching leg forward till you feel a stretch through the foot to the shin. Hold 15 - 30 seconds. It can help to have both knees slightly bent. Release and repeat on the other side.



Hamstring - Stand or sit with one foot forward. Support yourself with hands above bent right knee. Slowly bend forward from your waist with left leg outstretched. Gently bring the toes of left foot upwards with heel on the floor. You will feel the stretch up the back of your leg. Only bend as far as comfortable.



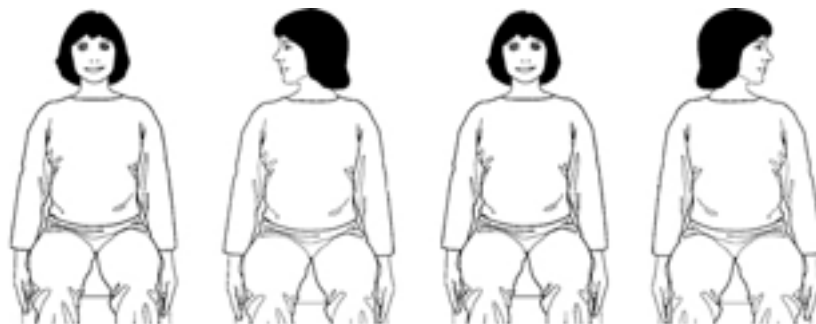
Quadriceps Stretch - Standing up, bend your right knee, bringing your foot up toward your buttocks. Grasp your foot with your hand. Slowly pull your leg up and back, bringing your foot at high as comfortable. Repeat with other leg. (To protect your knee, think of pulling the quads back rather than pulling the foot toward your buttocks. It may help to keep straight leg slightly bent.)



Shoulder Stretch -- Standing upright, cross left arm over chest. Place your right hand on your upper arm and pull arm in tight to chest. Be sure to keep shoulders down and do not pull at the elbow. Hold. and then repeat stretch with other arm.



Neck Relaxer -Turn and look over your right shoulder and hold. Repeat on the left side. Don't hyper-extend the neck, or tilt it backwards.



Next, gently drop the head so that the ear goes towards the right shoulder and hold. Return to upright position. Repeat forward and on the left side. Keep the spine in an upright position and don't hyper-extend the neck, jerk, or tilt the head backwards.