

Classic Tours Training Advice – Climb Kilimanjaro

This route is made harder by the altitude and long dirt road sections. It is very important that you understand the importance of preparation beforehand. No-one should take part without undertaking suitable training. This is a very challenging event.

Climbing Mount Kilimanjaro will pose a particular challenge because of altitude. Thinner air means less oxygen, so the pace of hard endurance training gets slower at altitude. The last part of the climb will be tough, having to overcome the altitude and the climb. However the route is designed to allow you to adjust to the increasing altitude. The body needs to get used to increasing altitude, and by setting an appropriate pace will help you to achieve your challenge.

“Trek – a long and often difficult journey” (Collins English dictionary).

Whilst not meant for specialist trekkers it is nevertheless a challenge and requires a high standard of fitness and understanding of how to climb hills and walk along narrow paths at different altitudes.

Below are a number of guidelines, which if adhered to will undoubtedly improve the trekking and physical ability of each and every participant.

1. Start by fast walks 2 to 3 times a week for at least 1 hour each time with the hiking boots you will be using for the trek. Look for trails/paths through woodlands or countryside in order to get used to trekking over stones and uneven ground. Also carry a rucksack weighing approx. 5 kg in which you should have a water bottle, some food, toilet paper and other personal effects. You may also want to train with walking poles.
2. It is essential to find terrain that is hilly and has narrow paths climbing unevenly through the countryside. This will help overcome any vertigo concerns you may have, as much of the Kilimanjaro route includes trails fairly high along mountainsides. None of the walks are dangerous, however some of the paths do involve rock scrambling i.e. sometimes using both hands and feet but not requiring ropes.
3. Increase walks to 3 evenings a week and during the weekend try fast walks of up to 15 miles. Wherever possible this should take place over two consecutive days.
4. It is vital to do at least one weekend trek of 7 hours each day across the most difficult terrain you can find within your area. This does not mean climbing Ben Nevis or Snowdon. The objective is to find a rural rocky/hilly/stony terrain so that your muscles can get used to long periods of walking.

5. For people who are overweight it is important to also use the gym and do regular swimming during this period in order to reduce the waistline. This will make it much easier to walk for 5 consecutive days.
6. We also recommend using a step machine at the gym.
7. The Climb Kilimanjaro Challenge trek is at **altitude**, therefore any training, which incorporates trekking at altitude, would be beneficial, particularly in the weeks leading up to the event.
8. Refer to detailed training guidelines for trekking at altitude also.