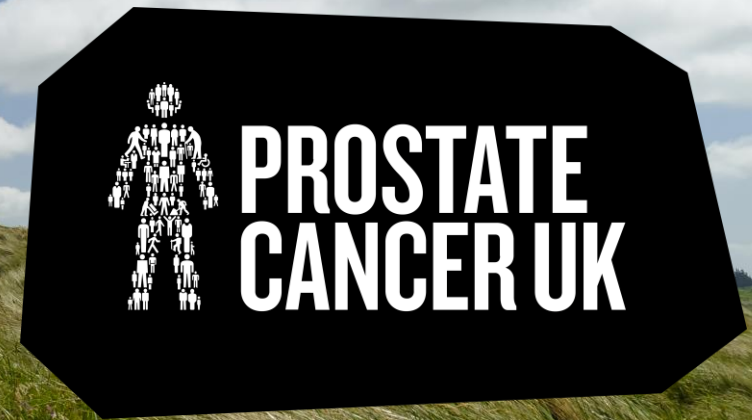




WALKING GUIDE



running  
withus

### **HAVE PATIENCE**

Allow the time you need to improve slowly. Your body takes 3-4 weeks to absorb and adapt to the training you are undergoing – be organised and give yourself the time you need.

### **TRAIN TO TIME NOT MILES**

It is hard to measure miles & kilometres. You can also find yourself clocking up miles rather than training sensibly. Give every walk a purpose! Train to time and follow the plan. Some sessions are easy to allow you to recover or build endurance. Some are harder building a stronger heart and more strength.



### **HAVE A ROUTINE**

Your body likes to work hard. Give it a routine and it will adapt and start to become fitter. Get used to training regularly and being organised with sleep, food, fitting in the training, stretching and exercises. Plan each day and fit in your training.

### **HAVE A PLAN**

Choose one of our training plans and try to follow the schedule, use the plan as a guide for what to aim for each week.

### **SET SMALL AND ACHIEVABLE TARGETS**

Your training plan may contain many weeks of training. Set some targets that are realistic within this journey up to the final walk. These targets will motivate you and help you check your progress. Maybe it could be your fastest time around your local walking route or to tackle that steep hill without stopping!

## **TOP TIPS FOR GETTING STARTED**

---



## **LISTEN TO YOUR BODY**

Your body is an amazing piece of kit. It tells you how it feels and what it needs. Listen to it and watch the signs. If you are sore you might be about to get injured, so rest, stretch more, have a massage or cross train instead of walking. If you are tired, you might need more rest and sleep. Eat well as the body wants to recover and replace its energy. So follow the training plan but always listen to your body.

## **DON'T JUST WALK**

Try to use other forms of exercise to keep you strong and compliment your walking sessions. You need to be strong so consider including circuit training, swimming or cycling in the weekly plan. Have a look at the exercises we have shown which can be completed using your own body weight at home or in the park.

## **TREAT REST AND NUTRITION SERIOUSLY**

Most of us concern ourselves with daily and weekly training but don't focus as much on sleep and nutrition. The body needs to recover from any training completed to become fitter and stronger. Aim for up to 8-9 hours sleep a night and eat quality carbohydrates, correct levels of protein and plenty of fruit & vegetables. Snack regularly to keep your blood sugar levels balanced and energy levels high. Treat rest and nutrition seriously while training well and you will improve.

## **SURROUND YOURSELF WITH POSITIVITY**

Training regularly can be tough, most of us find it easier if we train together with friends and family. You can share your journey and help to keep each other motivated. Surround yourself with people who believe in you and who are interested in your journey and training. Positive people make you feel good and help you to train well.

# TOP TIPS FOR GETTING STARTED

---

## KEEPING IT ALL IN BALANCE

Starting a walking plan can feel overwhelming, with so much advice about distance, pace, nutrition, and recovery. But it doesn't need to be. The key is to keep your training triangle in balance.

While many walkers focus only on covering more kilometres, real progress happens when the other two sides...nutrition, rest & recovery — get equal attention. As your walking distance increases, make sure you're fuelling your body for endurance, staying well hydrated, and giving yourself time to rest and rebuild. Listen to your body, respect signs of fatigue, and remember, in walking, just like in running, consistency and recovery are what help you reach your goal strong and smiling.

### TRAINING

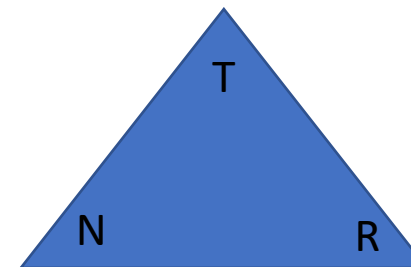
Your walking and strength sessions are designed to build endurance and confidence step by step. Through progressive overload, you'll gradually challenge your muscles, heart, and mind, allowing your body to adapt and become more efficient over longer distances. Each phase of the plan blends intensity, duration, and terrain to steadily grow your stamina and prepare you for walking event with strength and ease

### REST

Rest is where your real progress happens. During rest days, cutback weeks, and quality sleep, your body repairs, rebuilds, and gets stronger. Prioritising recovery helps prevent fatigue, keeps you consistent, and ensures you reach your 20 km goal feeling fresh and ready. In the next section, you'll find our top recovery strategies and practical tips to help you get the most from your training.

### NUTRITION

Proper fuelling is the foundation of performance and recovery. A well-balanced intake of macronutrients and micronutrients supports sustained energy, efficient muscle repair, and a robust immune system. Dialling in your nutrition ensures you can train hard, recover fully, and perform at your peak across every mile



# THE TRAINING TRIANGLE

## Training Paces to Master

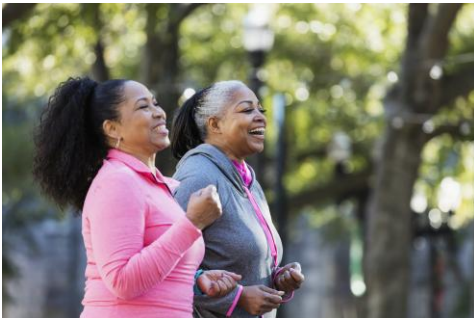
Your training should include a variety of walking paces. Aim to become comfortable with each of the following:

**Easy walk** – A relaxed, fully conversational pace where you feel in control. Effort level: **3/10**

**Steady walk** – A moderate pace that raises your heart rate slightly. You're still in control but working with more intention. Effort level: **5–6/10**

**Brisk walk** – A strong, purposeful stride with more power. Your heart rate increases and breathing deepens. Effort level: **6–7/10**

**Interval efforts** – Short bursts of high-intensity power walking. Keep a tall posture, drive your arms, and maintain focus. Effort level: **8–9/10**



Faster than an easy pace, steady walking is your next level of effort, and it forms the backbone of training for more experienced walkers. At this pace, you should still be able to hold a conversation, though it may feel a little strained. Be honest with yourself about the effort you're putting in.

In the beginning, the most important goal is simply to get moving. Focus on building consistency and frequency in your training. Most of your walks should be at an easy pace, if you can't comfortably talk while walking, you're going too fast, plain and simple.

As you progress, incorporating brisk walking will help you get fitter more quickly and efficiently. This effort level brings a sense of controlled discomfort, you can still speak, but only in short 5–6 word bursts between breaths.

Finally, include interval training: short, faster bursts of power walking, ideally over hilly terrain. These efforts will raise your heart rate and strengthen your cardiovascular system, helping you build endurance and speed.

## TRAINING – HOW SHOULD IT FEEL?

## GLUTES

Sit with one leg out straight. Cross the other leg over, keeping knee bent. To feel stretch in backside hug bent knee into chest. Keep back straight.



## HAMSTRING (BELLY)

Lay on back. Keep one leg on the ground. Raise other leg holding the back of the calf. Bring up to feel the stretch in the middle of the hamstring.



## QUADS

Grasp the top of the ankle with the same side hand and bring heel to backside. Hips should be pushed forward.



## HIP FLEXORS

Kneel on one with a 90-degree ankle at both knees. Push hips down and forwards until a stretch is felt at the front of the hip.



# KEY STRETCHES

## STRETCHING KEY TIPS

Stretch both legs and repeat 2-3 times if certain muscle groups seem particularly tight.

Hold stretch for 40-45 seconds each time and complete them after your runs.

Never stretch cold muscles.

A good stretching routine will help to restore the muscle balance and allow you to be more flexible

Consider investing in an 'MOT' with a sport physiotherapist or some sports massage which can help manage the build up in tightness that will occur in your training

A 'foam roller' can be used to supplement your stretching on a day-to-day basis to carry out self massage.

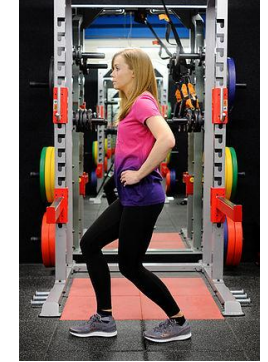
### CALF (GASTROCNEMIUS)

Stand with feet shoulder width apart. Take one foot forward and keep feet parallel. Maintain the arch in the forward foot by pressing down with the toes to stop foot rolling in. Straighten back leg and feel stretch in top area of the calf.



### CALF (SOLEUS)

Repeat position of the gastrocnemius stretch but this time bend back leg to take stretch into lower calf above Achilles.



## KEY STRETCHES



## FINGER CRUSHER

Get into a sit-up position. Find the natural arch in your back and place your hands under the arch. Engage your lower abs and pelvic floor. Hold this for 45-60 seconds per set.

The next level: Do small alternate leg lifts, while keeping even pressure on your hands or extending in to 'bicycle' movement in and out with your legs.



## PLANK

Lift your body up with your weight on your elbows and toes. Keep a line from the neck down through the legs to your ankles, engage all your core muscles. Keep your chest over your elbows. Hold for 30-60 secs.

The next level: Add in small alternate leg lifts. If this is too hard to begin with, you can avoid lower back pain by doing this with your knees on the ground.



# STRENGTH & CONDITIONING



## SINGLE LEG SQUAT

Stand on one leg, engage your glute on your standing leg, keep your hips facing forward and aligned with your knee and toe. Send your hips backwards whilst bending at the knee. You don't want your knee to roll inwards, so go down as far as you can without that happening before moving back to a tall standing position. Repeat 8-15 times before changing legs.

The next level: You can use a Swiss ball or use a 'wobble board' under your foot.



## BRIDGE

From a sit up position raise your hips up, so your body forms a straight line from shoulder to hips to knees. Hold this position for 45-60 seconds by squeezing your glutes and your lower abdominal muscles.

The next level: From a 'bridge' position straighten one leg at a time aiming to not let your hips 'sag' as you do so.



## SIDE PLANK

Make a right angle with your supporting arm, your feet together and your stomach strong. Rise up, making sure you squeeze your glutes and push your pelvis through. Hold it for 30-60 seconds.

The next level: Lift your free arm into the air, keep your side strong, and don't let your middle sag.



# STRENGTH & CONDITIONING

## WHAT IT'S ALL ABOUT

Cross-training (XT) is an important part of preparing for a walking event. It helps you build endurance, strength, and resilience while reducing stress on your joints and connective tissues.

The strength workouts included in this plan are a key form of cross-training, aimed at improving muscular endurance, balance, and stability — all essential for maintaining good posture and power throughout your walk.

The other side of XT focuses on low-impact cardiovascular exercise, which supports your aerobic fitness without the repetitive strain of walking every day.



**Cycling** — builds aerobic capacity and leg strength without the impact of walking.

**Swimming** — enhances breathing efficiency and full-body endurance.

**Aqua jogging** — a great way to simulate walking mechanics while allowing full recovery from impact.

**Rowing or elliptical training** — strengthens your posterior chain and keeps your aerobic system firing.

Your heart and lungs don't distinguish between a long walk and a steady bike ride, they simply respond to the effort you put in. By adding smart XT sessions into your week, you can increase aerobic volume, maintain consistency during recovery phases, and improve overall fitness without overloading your body with more walking miles.

Cross-training isn't a substitute for walking, it's your secret weapon for longevity and performance in walking training!

# CROSS TRAINING

**Nutrition** is a vital pillar of the training triangle. Without solid nutritional foundations, you'll struggle to maintain the energy needed for quality training or provide your body with the nutrients required to recover and adapt. It's a vast and ever-evolving field, but here we'll focus on the key fundamentals to help you stay strong, recover well, and keep running long!

### **NEVER HUNGRY, NEVER OVERFULL**

Aim to stay consistently fuelled by breaking larger meals into 5–6 smaller ones throughout the day. Include mid-morning and mid-afternoon snacks to help maintain steady blood sugar levels, support energy balance, and keep your performance strong

### **HYDRATION**

Aim to drink around 2–3 litres of fluid each day, sipping regularly rather than gulping large amounts at once. Water is ideal, but adding electrolyte tablets can help replace essential salts lost through sweat. Try to avoid caffeine with main meals, as it can interfere with nutrient absorption, and limit it late in the day to protect your sleep quality. As training intensity increases, be mindful of alcohol intake, it can significantly hinder your recovery and hydration balance

### **PROTEIN RICH, CARBOHYDRATE SMART**

Carbohydrates are your primary fuel for training but focus on quality and timing. Prioritise nutrient-dense, slow-release sources like oats, sweet potatoes, quinoa, and whole grains to maintain steady energy and support glycogen stores. Around key workouts and long walks, include faster-digesting carbs such as fruit, rice, or simple energy sources to aid performance and recovery. Protein is essential for repairing and rebuilding muscle tissue after training. Aim to include a protein source in every meal, options like lean meats, fish, eggs, dairy, tofu, lentils, and nuts help speed recovery and promote long-term adaptation to training load

## **NUTRITION & RECOVERY**

## OWN YOUR SLEEP

Sleep isn't optional, it's how your body adapts, grows, and gets stronger. Running on 4–6 hours won't cut it: you'll miss deep sleep, stunt growth hormone release, and crank up stress hormones. Build a bedtime routine, ditch screens in the last hour, and skip late caffeine or alcohol. Your recovery (and results!) depend on it



## BUST THE MYTHS

Don't fall for scare stories or fad advice. No athlete should ditch entire food groups unless a qualified professional says so. Ignore unqualified bloggers, if you want to level up your nutrition, go straight to a certified dietitian or nutritionist



# NUTRITION & RECOVERY



CONTACT US!

@RUNNINGWITHUS

INFO@RUNNINGWITHUS.COM



PROSTATE  
CANCER UK



running  
withus

