GRAND CANYON

Rim to Rim & Rim to River – Training Plan

Training Plan

The best way to prepare for the Grand Canyon is to hike. Start training at least three to four months prior to your departure.

Early, proper training will help your body gradually build strength, avoid potential injury, and reduce aches and pains on the trail. In addition to hiking, include other aerobic exercise and weight training in your overall training plan.

Hiking the Grand Canyon is about endurance and stamina. The trail is 25 miles long. You will hike this in one day, over approximately 12-16 hours. A strong body is essential for this duration. You will be encouraged to take a small break every hour.

Legs

Strong, conditioned legs make it easier to walk uphill and downhill for sustained periods of time and protects the knees.

Core

Core strength helps stabilize the entire body and supports hips, back, and all muscles in the midsection. This is your center of gravity, where all body movements begin.

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Back & Shoulders

Upper-body strength prevents fatigue when carrying a weighted backpack.

Aerobic Fitness

Allows the body to function efficiently under exertion.

Positive Mental Attitude

Can work wonders when you're fatigued and out of your comfort zone.

If you've never hiked before, visit a reputable outdoor/hiking/running store. They can help you choose the right hiking shoe/boot to fit your foot. We suggest getting low- to mid-rise hiking shoes/boots. Early training will allow you time to find the best-fitting boot.

Lace up your hiking shoe/boots and start hiking! If you can't hike regularly, do another form of aerobic training. Start at a slow pace and gradually increase as your fitness improves. Aim for 3-4 hikes each week, if possible.

Hiking/Aerobic Training Suggestions

1. Hike a minimum of 60 minutes per session. Gradually increase the time you spend on your feet and the distance you cover.

2. Set your goal to be able to hike for at least four to six hours.

3. Hike with moderate elevation changes (1,000ft/305m).

4. As you get stronger, add a backpack, but the weight does not need to exceed 10 lbs.

5. On some training days, shorten the time interval/distance and increase the pace for a maximum of 30-45 minutes, as hard as you can go; almost to the point of exhaustion!

In the Phoenix area, Camelback and Piestewa Peak are great places for training hikes of this length. Time yourself on your favorite trail and try to improve with every workout. You will see improvement!

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Indoor and Outdoor Aerobic Training

— Stairmaster (or a similar machine that resembles stepping up). Start with 15 minutes, with a goal of 1-2 hours. Set it to 30 steps per minute.
— Treadmill: Increase the incline for uphill walking
— Exercise bike: Select a hill program
— Jacob's Ladder
— Hill running
— Road Running
— Cycling
— Nordic Skiing
— Swimming
— Speed Walking

Set your goal to increase distance and pace. As you get stronger, wear your boots and backpack when appropriate.

Resistance Training: Think strong back, core, legs, and buttocks! (Minimum of 2 times per week)

— Deadlift
— Forward and backward walking lunges
— Squats
— Box step-ups and step-downs
— Standing calf raises
— Push-ups/Pull-ups
— Sit-ups and planks
— Standing military press
— Core work with a medicine ball
— Farmer's carry

Flexibility – Increased flexibility will reduce stiffness from a long day of hiking. Daily stretching should be included in your training program.

— Hamstrings
— Quads
— Calves
— Shoulders
— Hip flexors
— IT band

Focus on weak areas – hiking will find your weakest area! The descent, in particular, will put strain on your knees, back, and hips. Include a specific strength program to eliminate problems in these areas.

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Early Training Benefits

— Lets you try different types of boots and socks and ensure a comfortable fit that won't cause blisters.

— Gives you time to get familiar with your gear. Each climber should know how the gear works and ensure that it fits properly.

— Allows time to take a few days off training so the body can recover. Build up to 5 days of training with 2 days of rest.

Trekking Poles

Highly recommended for your Grand Canyon hike. Use them during your training hikes.

Consult your physician before beginning any exercise program. A personal trainer can help identify or create specific exercises best suited to your ability level.

Go online to research weight training specific to hiking. This will help you understand the suggested exercises listed above.

Before hiking, make sure your backpack and waist belt fit your body properly. Refer to the K2 packing list for a complete list of gear for your hike.

The exercises listed above are a guide to help you prepare for your hike. It is up to you to select a program that best suits your ability, lifestyle, and where you live. Feel free to contact Kevin Cherilla at **Kevin@k2adventures.org** with questions relating to your training.

If you reach your training goals, you're ready for the real thing.

We look forward to traveling with you!

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