



HOW FIT DO I HAVE TO BE?

Outward Bound is about ordinary people doing extraordinary things. Physical challenge is one of the many tools we will use to help you explore your personal potential. You do not have to be an athlete in order to benefit from our courses, as they are designed for the reasonably fit, active individual. However, our courses are physically demanding; the nature of the course demands different physical aspects. You do not have to be ready to run a marathon, but you do have to be prepared to be active for the better part of a day. People of all shapes, sizes and fitness levels have enjoyed our courses. A certain amount of physical preparation will ensure you get the most from your Outward Bound experience. As with all our courses, the more physically fit you are when you arrive, the more comfortable you will be.

CANOEING: You will be carrying everything with you in packs in the canoes. The packs, understandably, will be heavy. You will also be carrying and portaging canoes and other equipment. Endurance, flexibility and core strength are required

KAYAKING: Your upper body will act as the engine to propel your kayak across inlets and open water crossings. This will demand endurance, flexibility, and core strength.

BACKPACKING/HIKING: You will be carrying everything you need on your back in a well fitting backpack. This pack, understandably, will be heavy and you will be hiking for the better part of most days on trails ranging from moderate to challenging. Hiking requires endurance and flexibility. Core strength, leg strength, and cardiovascular fitness are particularly important

PLEASE SEE YOUR PHYSICIAN PRIOR TO STARTING ANY PHYSICAL EXERCISE PROGRAM, OR CHANGING YOUR DIET.

You and your doctor can develop an exercise program that is the most beneficial for you.

This is especially important if you have been relatively sedentary, or if you have any ongoing medical conditions.

FITNESS MEANS ENDURANCE, STRENGTH AND FLEXIBILITY. Therefore your training program should include:

- ✓ Daily stretching exercises to develop flexibility and to reduce the chance of injury
- ✓ Speed walking, running, cycling or swimming to develop your cardiovascular capacity and lower body strength. Increasing distance, not speed will develop endurance
- ✓ Sit-ups/crunches, push-ups or weight training to increase upper body strength

BEFORE YOUR COURSE YOU SHOULD WORK TOWARDS COMPLETING AT LEAST ONE OF THE FOLLOWING GOALS:

- ✓ Walking 3 km on hilly terrain in 45 minutes or less
- ✓ Running 3 km in 35 minutes or less
- ✓ Walking 3 km on hilly terrain in 45 minutes or less with a backpack weighing approximately 10-15 kg

START YOUR PROGRAM SLOWLY. Be careful not to over-train in the early stages. Be patient and don't expect dramatic results right away. Gradually increase the amount of exercise you do, beginning as soon as you have registered for your program. You might also review your dietary habits. Eating regular, balanced meals and reducing your intake of junk food and alcohol will help you get in shape.

WHEN DO I START EXERCISING?



NOW is the time to start. **Please see your physician prior to starting any physical exercise program of changing your diet**, particularly if you are a smoker, or have any medical problems and have not been active on a regular basis. Please note that use of tobacco products while on course is prohibited.

HOW OFTEN SHOULD I EXERCISE?

The ideal situation would be a minimum of 3 cardiovascular sessions per week and a one-hour hike with a backpack weighing approximately 10-15 kg. The weekly cardio sessions could be hiking, running, brisk hill walking, swimming, cycling, aerobics, cross-country skiing, snow-shoeing or anything else which elevates your heart rate and gets you sweating! If you are unfamiliar with an activity you may want to start at 5-10 minutes and increase up to 30-45 minutes per session gradually over 1-2 months. If you choose hiking, running, aerobics or hill walking, be sure that you have appropriate footwear and that it is in good condition.

Some simple strengthening exercises, particularly sit-ups, which will help you get ready for carrying a pack will definitely help. Flexibility is also important and you should stretch before and after your workout.

Remember, have fun, listen to your body, and enjoy getting ready for your Outward Bound Canada experience! Your local YM/YWCA and / or community fitness centres can offer you helpful advice on a personal basis. Remember too that your rest days are as important as your training days.

Please do not plan on dieting or losing weight during the program. You will need all the energy that our trail menus supply!