



Fitness

October 2014

Hike Your Booty Off: Gear Factor

Featuring: Sirrus 24

Circulation: 1,520,501

Readership: 4,561,503



action plan

HIKE
YOUR BOOTY OFF

Taking your walk on the wild side will help you burn nearly twice as many calories per hour as pavement—and give your mind a little TLC. A study in *Environmental Science & Technology* shows exercising in nature can boost your mood and your energy level.

Altitude Adjustment

Bummer: Unlike ski slopes, hiking trails don't have a standard difficulty rating system. So before you tackle a new route, check the elevation on a topographic map; download one free from the U.S. Geological Survey at usgs.gov. "Climbing between 200 and 500 feet per mile is ideal for a beginner-to-moderate trail," says Julia Trippel, an REI Outdoor School instructor. (That's about a 4 to 9 percent incline.) "If you know you'll hit 5,000 feet above sea level, go slowly and drink lots of water to avoid getting altitude sickness." Rest and hydrate at the first sign of wooziness; chill at a lower altitude if you need to acclimate.

Hit the Trails!

Find nearby hikes—complete with difficulty approximations, photos and reviews from other hikers—at alltrails.com. Brush up—and buddy up—at REI stores; locations around the country lead guided day hikes and seminars. (Go to rei.com and click the "Learn" tab; choose the "Travel with REI" tab if you're looking for an epic hiking escape.)

Q & A

What exercises should I do to prep for a hiking trip?

Let the thighs have it. Besides logging longer walks—bonus if you take your backpack—strengthening your legs is key, says outdoor pro Julia Trippel. "Exercises that target your quads help protect your knees when going uphill or downhill on uneven terrain," Trippel says. Take the stairs, hit the stairclimber at the gym or try one of her favorite quad killers, wall sits: Standing with your back flat against a wall, feet hip-width apart a couple of feet in front of you, lower as you bend knees 90 degrees. Hold for one minute, rest, then repeat three times.

Tech Support

The **Motion-X GPS navigation app** (\$2, motions.com) allows you to preload maps complete with a digital compass to lead the way. Out past sunset? Download the **SkyView app** (\$2, terminaleleven.com), point your iPhone or iPad to the sky and the out-of-this-world app will show constellations, planets and space stations.

Gear Factor

Day hikes can be grab-and-go simple. Get your checklist of 10 essentials at fitnessmagazine.com/hiking and "plan to tote two to four ounces of food for each hour you aim to be out," says Jordan Campbell, a Marmot ambassador athlete—toss in an additional liter of water if that's longer than four hours. To pick the right-size pack for your preferred trek, use Campbell's rule of thumb:

- ▲ For a quickie jaunt of under three hours, keep it light with a 15- to 22-liter pack. (Eddie Bauer Women's Cassidy 16-liter Backpack, \$80, eddiebauer.com)
- ▲ For a full afternoon hike, opt for 22 to 25 liters of space, plus front and side pockets to help even out the weight. (Osprey Sirrus 24-liter pack, \$120, rei.com)
- ▲ For an all-day hike, take a roomier 25- to 32-liter pack with a waist strap, which can distribute some of the load to your hips. (Marmot Kompressor Verve 26-liter pack, \$109, marmot.com)

▲ For a full afternoon hike, opt for 22 to 25 liters of space, plus front and side pockets to help even out the weight. (Osprey Sirrus 24-liter pack, \$120, rei.com)

