

This Fitness Plan was developed by Exercise Solutions, run by Zac van Heerden & based in Sandton, Johannesburg. Exercise solutions provides scientific assessment, support and training prescription for a wide variety of clients in the sport and recreation industry. They focus particularly on highperformance and professional athletes, recreational sportspeople and provide specialist support for extreme sports and adventure activities. Exercise Solutions cell: +27 83 417 2786 fax: +27 86 672 4175
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Fitness Preparation

Assessment:

The first step is to assess your current fitness state by doing a comprehensive assessment, preferably three months before your climb. Areas to look at:

- 1 Blood pressure
- 2 Aerobic pressure
- 3 Body weight / body fat percentage (The more fat you have, the heavier you will carry)

Aerobic & Strength Fitness Important guideline for success: Climbers must at least be able to walk for 6+ hours (3 hours fast walking) per day without having any feeling of muscle stiffness the following day.

1 **Training Program for Aerobics** – Monday/Wednesday/Friday, do an aerobic activity i.e. brisk walking/jogging/cycling and stair climbing for 40min. Every weekend do a 3hour hike

2 **Training Program for Strength** – Tuesday/Thursday, do leg strength i.e. Incline leg press (3 x15), Walking lunges with D/B in hand (3 x15), Rear lunges (3 x 15) and Standing calve raises (3 x 15).

A. Leg Press (inner thighs) – Sit on a Leg Press machine and position your feet with your heels about 46 inches apart, toes facing out. Take a deep breath and then lower the platform slowly, keeping your knees in line with your feet. When you've recovered the platform as far as comfortable, push out in a controlled manner to return to the starting position, exhaling as you do so. As you return to the start, do not lock out your knees. This technique will provide continuous tension on the thigh muscles to make them work harder. If this exercise bothers your knees, try reducing the range of motion so you do not come down too far.

B. Lunge Walk (thighs, hamstrings, and buttocks) – These should be done till fatigued without additional resistance. You'll need a large space, such as the perimeter of a gym or aerobics room. Using long, controlled steps, lunge forward in a walking motion. Keep your torso erect and drop your hips as low as comfortable. It's good to perform near a wall to assist with your balance.

C. Reverse Lunge (thighs, buttock, and extra emphasis on hamstrings) – This is one of the most neglected of the lunge series: but because of its additional emphasis on the hamstring, it is one of the most important. Begin with your feet nearly shoulderwidth apart, torso erect. Take a slow, controlled step backward with one leg, lowering your hips so that your forward thigh becomes parallel to the floor. Your knee should be positioned directly over your ankle and foot. Your front foot should point straight ahead, and you're trailing knee extended to stretch your hip flexor muscles. The exertion phase of the exercise occurs when you push off your rear foot and step back to return to the starting position in one fluid motion.

D. Standing Calf Raise (calves) – Position yourself on a standing calve machine by placing your feet so that your heels can extend below the toes; this will enable you to get a full stretch on the muscles. With your legs straight, lower your heels as far as comfortable and then raise your heels as high as possible to achieve maximum contraction. Pause momentarily in this position. Toe position can be varied to change the emphasis. Because this exercise has the potential to make your calves especially sore, for your first several workouts you should use lighter weights. As you become accustomed to the movement, you may want to perform extra repetitions until you feel the "burn".

Upper Body Fitness

- 1 Pushups
- 2 Crunches
- 3 Reverse grip pull down

Push Ups (arms, chest) – Beginners can perform these balanced on their knees and hands: advanced trainers, should balance on their toes and hands. Advanced trainers may even want to elevate their toes to increase the difficulty. In the proper position with hands placed shoulderwidth apart, push your upper body up to arms' length then return in a controlled movement. Throughout the exercise, keeps your back straight: do not drop or raise your hips. If this exercise bothers your wrists or shoulders, you can experiment with special push up handles available in many gyms and in major sporting goods stores.

Reverse Grip/Pull Down (lats, biceps) – This type of pull down requires you to use a much closer grip to emphasize your lower lats and biceps. Sit on a lat pull down machine so that your torso is positioned directly underneath. Sitting too far away from the machine will cause you to position your head forward while performing the exercise, a posture that can strain you neck and upper back muscles. Begin by pulling the bar to your chest, leaning slightly back until the bar touches the middle of your chest. Pause in this fully contracted position and then slowly return to the start. Again, this should be a natural movement

Flexibility

Increased flexibility will lessen the morning after stiffness. Your hardest day will follow after 4 days of walking. The shoulder girdle area may get stiff from carrying a backpack.

Stretches to do on a daily basis:

- 1 Hamstrings
- 2 Quads
- 3 Calves
- 4 Shoulder Girdle

Focus on weak areas

Any weak joints will be painfully identified by Kilimanjaro (i.e. knees, back). The descent in particular will put strain on the knees. Make sure you get a specific strength program to eliminate problems in these areas

Nutrition

Follow a high carbohydrate, modern protein/fat diet. Sufficient fluid intake should be maintained. Take multivitamin supplement daily. Your guides will serve mostly carbohydrates. Take soup and energy bars (especially for last night final ascent). Lots of water, force yourself to drink.

Mental Approach

Very important! Build up knowledge about the mountain by reading all available literature. Be fully prepared.

The Climb

Rest

Sleep can be a great problem on the mountain. Sleeping tablets, a good mattress and warm sleeping clothes must be looked at.

Feet

Take care of feet, one pair of socks per day and dry socks at night.

Pacing

Walk slowly; put slowest climber in the lead.

Medication

It is advised that you take either Diamox or the generic Acetazolamide, also we suggest taking Decadron for your last night on the mountain (Available at SAA Netcare Travel Clinics). The following products we suggest taking along:

- 1 Broad base antibiotics
- 2 Headache tablets
- 3 Stomach disorder medication
- 4 Sunscreen
- 5 Water purifying tablets

Altitude

The greatest factor which you can't prepare yourself for. Walk slowly & take in **PLENTY** of fluids.

Mental Attitude

The last night will be your greatest test. Listen to your guide, walk slowly, "close your eyes" one step at a time and remember at sunrise you will have conquered the greatest peak in Africa.