

12-Week Salkantay Trek Training Plan

Designed by personal trainers who've
completed the 5 day Salkantay Trek



by Fit Two Travel

We're Tarah and Tip, certified personal trainers and active travelers who just completed the 5-day Salkantay Trek to Machu Picchu ourselves!

As trainers, we've helped hundreds of people train for races, adventures, and hiking trips, and we created this guide to help you enjoy the trek - not just survive it.

Whether you're new to hiking or already active, this 12-week program will build the strength, endurance, and confidence you'll need for one of the most incredible adventures in Peru.

You don't need to be an avid hiker to complete the Salkantay Trek.

But you do need enough strength and endurance to comfortably hike 6-10 hours per day, often at altitude and carrying a daypack.

This program combines walking, hiking, strength training, and mobility to help you arrive feeling confident for the trek.



Consult your physician before beginning this program. Stop if you experience chest pain, dizziness, or severe pain. This program is educational and not medical advice.

What you'll need:

Gear:

- Hiking boots (broken in)
- Hiking socks
- Backpack
- Trekking poles (optional but recommended)

Training equipment:

- Weights
- Treadmill (optional)
- Hill or stairs
- Weighted vest

Optional Training & Recovery Gear:

- Foam roller
- Massage gun
- Electrolytes
- Water bottle
- AirPods



Need Gear?

We've put together a complete list of the exact hiking gear we used on the Salkantay Trek—including our boots, trekking poles, backpack, clothing, hydration gear, and other trail essentials.



[View Our Recommended Salkantay Trek Gear](#)

How to Use This Guide

This plan is designed to help you feel strong, confident, and prepared for the Salkantay Trek. Don't worry about being perfect - consistency is what matters most.

✓ **Prioritize consistency over perfection.**

Missing one workout won't make or break your training.



Your long hike is the most important workout each week.

If you're short on time, prioritize your long hike and two strength workouts.



Train at a conversational pace.

Most walks and hikes should feel comfortable—you shouldn't be gasping for air.



Rearrange the schedule if needed.

Move workouts around to fit your life while keeping at least one recovery day each week.



Practice with your actual gear.

Break in your boots, test your backpack, and use your trekking poles before your trip.



Recovery is training.

Sleep, hydration, stretching, and mobility work will help you arrive in Peru feeling your best.

Coach's Note

We designed this plan based on our experience completing the 5-day Salkantay Trek and years of coaching clients. Stay consistent, trust the process, and remember- the goal isn't to finish every workout perfectly. The goal is to arrive in Peru confident and ready to enjoy one of the most incredible hikes in the world.

Here's an overview of what the next 12 weeks will look like:

Phase	Weeks	Focus	Long Hike Goal
Phase 1: Build Your Base	1–4	Build consistency, strength, and aerobic fitness	60 min → 2 hours
Phase 2: Build Trek Fitness	5–8	Increase endurance, hills, backpack weight	2.5 → 4 hours
Phase 3: Peak for Peru	9–11	Simulate trek demands	4.5 → 6 hours
Phase 4: Taper & Travel	12	Recover while maintaining fitness	60–90 min easy hike

There is a lot of flexibility in this plan. You can move the days around however they work for your schedule. If you miss a workout or a walk, you can just plan to do it the next day.

If you're short on time, prioritize your long hike each week and your two strength workouts.

Phase 1 Build Your Base (Weeks 1-4)

Goal: Create a consistent routine and prepare your joints, muscles, and cardiovascular system.

During this phase:

- 💪 Strength: 2 sessions
- 🚶 Walks: 2 sessions
- 👟 Long hike: 1-2 hours
- 🧘 Recovery: 2 sessions



We've included our strength training workouts on the next pages if you want to follow those as well! If you don't know what the exercises are, you can search for them on YouTube or look up a demonstration online.

Phase 1 Strength Workouts

WORKOUT A

Circuit style (do all the exercises in a row and then rest after completing 1 set of each)

- High box step ups - 8 reps/each leg
- Box step ups both feet -8 reps
- Step up and overs (like 8-10 inches high) with a weight or use a weighted vest - 60 sec
- Bike - 2 minutes

Rest 60-90 seconds and repeat 3 more times

WORKOUT B

- Goblet squat x12
- Lat pulldown x12
- One arm squat and press x12

Rest 60 seconds and repeat 2 more times

- Single leg squat to box x10
- One arm chest press x10
- Side step ups x10

Rest 60 seconds and repeat 2 more times



Coach's Tip

Choose a weight that feels challenging while allowing you to complete every rep with good form.

Phase 2: Build Trek Fitness (Weeks 5–8)

Goal: Transition from general fitness to hiking fitness. This is where training becomes more specific, like adding weight to your backpack when hiking.

During this Phase:



Strength: 2 sessions



Walks: 2 sessions



Long hike w/ weight: 2.5-4 hours



Recovery: 2 sessions

Backpack Progression

Use this as a guideline - you don't need to hit these weights exactly. The goal is to gradually get comfortable hiking with the pack you'll use in Peru.

Week	Backpack Weight
4	5 lb
5	5 lb
6	10 lb
7	10 lb
8	10–12 lb
9	12–15 lb
10	15 lb
11	Your actual trek daypack
12	Easy/no added weight

**Only carry water, layers, snacks, and other soft items while training. Don't use loose weights that can shift around inside your pack.*

Phase 2 Strength Workouts

WORKOUT C:

Circuit style (do all the exercises in a row and then rest after completing 1 set of each):

- Weighted vest step up and down - 60 seconds
- Incline treadmill walk - 60 seconds
- Bulgarian split squat - 12 reps/each
- Incline treadmill walk - 60 seconds
- One leg Romanian Deadlift - 12 reps/each

Rest 60-90 seconds and repeat 3 more times

WORKOUT D:

- Leg press x15
- Seated row x15
- Sumo squat x15

Rest 60 seconds and repeat 2 more times

- Walking lunges x10/each
- Incline dumbbell press x10
- Leg curl x10

Rest 60 seconds and repeat 2 more times



Coach's Tip

These movements mimic climbing and descending on the trail. Take your time and focus on balance.

Phase 3: Peak for Peru (Weeks 9–11)

Goal: Make it as real-life as possible- get out and hike a lot

Train with:

- Your hiking boots
- Your backpack
- Trekking poles
- The snacks you'll bring
- The hydration system you'll use

During this Phase:



Strength: 2 sessions



Walks: 3 sessions



Long hike w/ weight: 4-6 hours



Recovery: 1 session

If you live somewhere flat, here are ways to improve elevation training:

- Repeat the same hill multiple times
- Use stadium stairs or a stair machine
- Increase backpack weight slightly
- Extend hike duration instead of chasing elevation
- Use treadmill on an incline
- Check to see if there are any altitude rooms near you

Phase 3 Strength Workouts

WORKOUT E:

Circuit style (do all the exercises in a row and then rest after completing 1 set of each):

- Step ups alternating legs - 10 reps/each
- Cardio of your choice 5 minutes
- Deficit reverse lunge - 10 reps/each
- Cardio of your choice 5 minutes
- Single leg ball curl - 10 reps
- Treadmill incline walk 5 minutes

Rest 60 seconds and repeat 2 more times

WORKOUT F:

- Romanian Deadlift - 12 reps
- Bent over rows - 12 reps

Rest 60 seconds and repeat 2 more times

- Heel tap step downs - 12 reps/each
- Seated overhead press - 12 reps

Rest 60 seconds and repeat 2 more times

- Goblet Squats - 12 reps
- Chest press - 12 reps

Rest 60 seconds and repeat 2 more times

Coach's Tip

These workouts are about building endurance, not racing through the exercises.

Phase 4: Taper & Travel (Week 12)

Goal: The purpose of this week is to arrive in Peru feeling fresh —not fatigued.

This week reduce your training volume by about 40–50%.

During this Phase:



Strength: 1 session



Walks: 2 sessions



Long hike: 60-90 minutes



Recovery: 1 session

Include:

- Short walks
- One light strength workout
- Mobility work
- Plenty of sleep
- Hydration

Avoid:

- Long hikes
- Heavy lifting
- Trying new gear
- "Making up" missed workouts

PHASE 1 - BUILD YOUR BASE

Week 1: Build Your Routine

Build consistency and establish your hiking foundation

This Week at a Glance:



Strength: 2 sessions



Walks: 2 sessions



Long hike: 60 min



Recovery: 2 sessions

Day	Workout	Details	✓
Monday	Lower Body Strength	Workout A	☐
Tuesday	Walk	30–45 min	☐
Wednesday	Total Body Strength	Workout B	☐
Thursday	Walk	30–45 min	☐
Friday	Recovery	Stretch or yoga	☐
Saturday	Long Walk or Hike	60 minutes	☐
Sunday	Mobility	15–20 minutes	☐



This Week's Goal

Complete all workouts at an easy, conversational pace. Build consistency, not speed.



Trek Tip

Wear the hiking shoes you plan to use in Peru on your Saturday walk to break them in.



Milestone

☐ Complete a 60-minute walk without feeling exhausted.

PHASE 1 - BUILD YOUR BASE

Week 2: Find your stride

Increase your time on your feet while maintaining a comfortable pace

This Week at a Glance:

-  Strength: 2 sessions
-  Walks: 2 sessions
-  Long hike: 75-90 min
-  Recovery: 2 sessions

Day	Workout	Details	✓
Monday	Lower Body Strength	Workout A	☐
Tuesday	Walk	40-50 min	☐
Wednesday	Total Body Strength	Workout B	☐
Thursday	Walk	30-45 min	☐
Friday	Recovery	Stretch or yoga	☐
Saturday	Long Walk or Hike	75-90 minutes	☐
Sunday	Mobility	15-20 minutes	☐

This Week's Goal

Spend more time on your feet throughout the days.

Trek Tip

Start carrying a water bottle or hydration pack

Milestone

☐ Finish your long walk without needing breaks.

PHASE 1 - BUILD YOUR BASE

Week 3: Introduce Hills

Introduce hills and begin preparing your legs for climbing

This Week at a Glance:

 Strength: 2 sessions

 Walks: 2 sessions

 Long hike: 2 hours

 Recovery: 2 sessions

Day	Workout	Details	✓
Monday	Lower Body Strength	Workout A	☐
Tuesday	Hill Walk	45 min	☐
Wednesday	Total Body Strength	Workout B	☐
Thursday	Walk	45 min	☐
Friday	Recovery	Stretch or yoga	☐
Saturday	Long Walk or Hike	2 hours	☐
Sunday	Mobility	15–20 minutes	☐

This Week's Goal

Get comfortable climbing hills

Trek Tip

Find a local hill, stairs, or treadmill incline.

Milestone

☐ Complete a hike with elevation

PHASE 1 - BUILD YOUR BASE

Week 4: Build Confidence

Build confidence with longer hikes and your first backpacked practice

This Week at a Glance:

 Strength: 2 sessions

 Walks: 2 sessions

 Long hike: 2 hours

 Recovery: 2 sessions

Day	Workout	Details	✓
Monday	Lower Body Strength	Workout A	☐
Tuesday	Hill Walk	45 min	☐
Wednesday	Total Body Strength	Workout B	☐
Thursday	Walk	45 min	☐
Friday	Recovery	Stretch or yoga	☐
Saturday	Long Walk or Hike *	2 hours	☐
Sunday	Mobility	15-20 minutes	☐

**add 5lb backpack to hike for added difficulty

This Week's Goal

Feel like hiking is becoming normal.



Trek Tip

Test your hiking socks and clothing.



Milestone

☐ Complete a 2-hour hike comfortably

PHASE 2 - BUILD TREK FITNESS

Week 5: Add strength and pack weight

Increase hiking strength by adding pack weight and elevation

This Week at a Glance:



Strength: 2 sessions



Walks: 2 sessions



Long hike + weight: +2.5 hours



Recovery: 2 sessions

Day	Workout	Details	✓
Monday	Lower Body Strength	Workout C	☐
Tuesday	Hill Walk	45 min	☐
Wednesday	Total Body Strength	Workout D	☐
Thursday	Walk	45 min	☐
Friday	Recovery	Stretch or yoga	☐
Saturday	Long Walk or Hike *	2.5 hours	☐
Sunday	Mobility	15–20 minutes	☐

*add 5lb backpack to hike for added difficulty



This Week's Goal

Get used to carrying extra weight.



Trek Tip

Adjust your backpack fit now—not in Peru.



Milestone

☐ Complete your hike carrying weight.

PHASE 2 - BUILD TREK FITNESS

Week 6: Climb Stronger

Improve climbing endurance and recover well between workouts

This Week at a Glance:



Strength: 2 sessions



Walks: 2 sessions



Long hike + weight: 3 hours



Recovery: 2 sessions

Day	Workout	Details	✓
Monday	Lower Body Strength	Workout C	☐
Tuesday	Hill Walk	45 min	☐
Wednesday	Total Body Strength	Workout D	☐
Thursday	Walk	45 min	☐
Friday	Recovery	Stretch or yoga	☐
Saturday	Long Walk or Hike *	3 hours	☐
Sunday	Mobility	15–20 minutes	☐

*add 10lb backpack to hike for added difficulty



This Week's Goal

Build climbing endurance



Trek Tip

Practice fueling every 60–90 minutes



Milestone

☐ Focus on recovery

PHASE 2 - BUILD TREK FITNESS

Week 7: Train like a Trekker

Prepare your body for consecutive days of hiking

This Week at a Glance:

 Strength: 2 sessions

 Walks: 3 sessions

 Long hike + weight: 3 hours

 Recovery: 1 session

Day	Workout	Details	✓
Monday	Lower Body Strength	Workout C	☐
Tuesday	Hill Walk	45 min	☐
Wednesday	Total Body Strength	Workout D	☐
Thursday	Walk	45 min	☐
Friday	Recovery	Stretch or yoga	☐
Saturday	Long Walk or Hike *	3 hours	☐
Sunday	Walk	45 minutes	☐

*add 10lb backpack to hike for added difficulty



This Week's Goal

Have a back-to-back hike/walk day



Trek Tip

Practice trekking poles



Milestone

☐ Wake up Sunday and keep moving

PHASE 2 - BUILD TREK FITNESS

Week 8: Trek Simulation Begins

Complete your first full trek simulation with your hiking gear

This Week at a Glance:



Strength: 2 sessions



Walks: 3 sessions



Long hike + weight: 3 hours



Recovery: 1 session

Day	Workout	Details	✓
Monday	Lower Body Strength	Workout C	☐
Tuesday	Hill Walk	45 min	☐
Wednesday	Total Body Strength	Workout D	☐
Thursday	Walk	45 min	☐
Friday	Recovery	Stretch or yoga	☐
Saturday	Long Walk or Hike *	3 hours	☐
Sunday	Walk	60 minutes	☐

*add 10lb backpack to hike for added difficulty

This Week's Goal

Complete a trek simulation by hiking with the gear, clothing, & hydration you'll be using.

Trek Tip

Don't save new gear. Wear your hiking boots, backpack, layers, and use your trekking poles

Milestone

☐ Complete a 4-hour hike with your backpack and finish feeling confident in your gear

PHASE 3 - PEAK FOR PERU

Week 9: Go the Distance

Increase endurance with longer hikes and more time on your feet

This Week at a Glance:



Strength: 2 sessions



Walks: 3 sessions



Long hike + weight: 4 hours



Recovery: 1 session

Day	Workout	Details	✓
Monday	Lower Body Strength	Workout E	☐
Tuesday	Hill Walk	45 min	☐
Wednesday	Total Body Strength	Workout F	☐
Thursday	Walk	45 min	☐
Friday	Recovery	Stretch or yoga	☐
Saturday	Long Walk or Hike *	4 hours	☐
Sunday	Walk	60 minutes	☐

**pack your backpack with what you plan on putting in your daypack



This Week's Goal

Work on building endurance



Trek Tip

Practice drinking small amounts of water frequently



Milestone

☐ Finish feeling like you could hike another hour if needed.

PHASE 3 - PEAK FOR PERU

Week 10: Dress Rehearsal

Fine tune your gear, pacing, nutrition, and hydration

This Week at a Glance:



Strength: 2 sessions



Walks: 3 sessions



Long hike + weight: 4 hours



Recovery: 1 session

Day	Workout	Details	✓
Monday	Lower Body Strength	Workout E	☐
Tuesday	Hill Walk	45 min	☐
Wednesday	Total Body Strength	Workout F	☐
Thursday	Walk	45 min	☐
Friday	Recovery	Stretch or yoga	☐
Saturday	Long Walk or Hike *	5 hours	☐
Sunday	Walk	1 hour	☐

**pack your backpack with what you plan on putting in your daypack



This Week's Goal

Complete your longest, most realistic trek simulation



Trek Tip

Aim to eat a small snack every 60–90 minutes and sip water consistently throughout your hike.



Milestone

□ Complete a 5-hour hike using all of your planned gear, nutrition, and hydration strategy

PHASE 3 - PEAK FOR PERU

Week 11: Peak Week!

Build confidence by completing your longest hike before tapering

This Week at a Glance:



Strength: 2 sessions



Walks: 3 sessions



Long hike + weight: 5-6 hours



Recovery: 1 session

Day	Workout	Details	✓
Monday	Lower Body Strength	Workout E	☐
Tuesday	Hill Walk	45 min	☐
Wednesday	Total Body Strength	Workout F	☐
Thursday	Walk	45 min	☐
Friday	Recovery	Stretch or yoga	☐
Saturday	Long Walk or Hike *	5-6 hours	☐
Sunday	Walk	1 hour	☐

**pack your backpack with what you plan on putting in your daypack



This Week's Goal

Prove to yourself you're ready.



Trek Tip

Trust your training—don't chase one more huge workout after this.



Milestone

☐ Complete your longest hike feeling prepared for Peru

PHASE 4: Taper and Travel

Week 12: Arrive Ready

Reduce training volume so you arrive in Peru rested and ready to conquer the Salkantay Trek

This Week at a Glance:

-  Strength: 1 session
-  Walks: 2 sessions
-  Long hike: 60-90 min
-  Recovery: 1 session

Day	Workout	Details	✓
Monday	Lower Body Strength	Workout E (50% intensity)	☐
Tuesday	Easy walk	30-45 minutes	☐
Wednesday	Mobility	20 minutes	☐
Thursday	Easy walk	30 minutes	☐
Friday	Recovery	Stretch and hydrate	☐
Saturday	Easy Hike/Long Walk	60-90 minutes	☐
Sunday	Rest	Pack and prepare	☐



This Week's Goal

Reduce training volume so you arrive rested and recovered



Trek Tip

Double-check your packing list and hydrate well before your flight



Milestone

☐ You're ready for the Salkantay Trek!

Congrats! You're Ready for Peru!

Over the past 12 weeks you've built the strength, endurance, and confidence to take on the Salkantay Trek. Trust your training, enjoy every step, and don't forget to look up and soak in the incredible scenery along the way.



Questions?

We'd love to hear from you! You can message us on instagram [@fittwotravel](https://www.instagram.com/fittwotravel) or send us an email info@fittwotravel.com

-Tip and Tarah

Ready for Peru?

If this training plan helped you, check out these free resources:

- ✓ [Salkantay Trek Packing List](#)
- ✓ [What It's Really Like on the 5-Day Trek](#)
- ✓ [Which Company We Used for the Trek](#)
- ✓ [YouTube Series](#)