

THRESHOLD/
TRAIL SERIES

TRAINING PLAN

80K WALKING PLAN

BY CLAIRE MAXTED



RACE TO
THE KING

RACE TO
THE STONES



Welcome aboard!

Whether you're an experienced ultra-walker or a complete first-time, I hope you find this plan useful when preparing to take on a Threshold Trail Series event this summer.

About this Plan

This plan is for first timers and the joyful ultra walk/hiker/jogger aiming to complete a 80k event. Use this plan to get fit enough to complete and enjoy a 80k ultra challenge at a nice, steady pace. The more walking you can do as part of your everyday life the easier you'll find this preparation. Can walking be part of your commute, time with the kids, would the dog enjoy a longer romp or can you run errands on foot or by bike?

This sixteen-week plan is broken down into four-week blocks, which are designed to help you build your strength, fitness, and endurance gradually towards race day. Every fourth week you will have an easier week where the intensity and time on your feet drops right down; this recovery time is very important in recharging your batteries to build up stronger in the following weeks.

At the end of the plan, you'll find a list of Strength Fun exercises that will help you build core muscles to succeed on race day.

When do I start training?

- If you are taking part in Race to the King, your first week of training begins on Monday 2nd of March.
- If you are taking part in Race to the Stones, your first week of training begins on Monday 23rd of March.



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Meet the trainer



I'm Claire Maxted, from the Wild Ginger Trail & Ultra Running YouTube channel. I started life as a keen walker with a phobia of running from the bleep test and house cross-country at school.

Keen to do a triathlon one day, I encouraged myself to start jogging, very slowly, for a few minutes each time until I could run 20 mins nonstop, then 5k, 10k, half marathons and beyond.

I co-founded Trail Running magazine after working on Trail, the hiking magazine, and am now a qualified personal trainer with many ultra jogs/walks under my belt. My book, The Ultimate Trail Running Handbook, has all the training and nutrition advice, skills, gear and motivation you need to become a fit and confident trail runner.



The Ultimate Trail Handbook >>



My YouTube Channel



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BLOCK 1

LAYING THE FOUNDATIONS

It's important to build gradually towards your 80km walk – don't be tempted to immediately head out the door and spend 5 hours in the hills! Start conservatively and you'll find your strength and fitness will follow.



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Training Schedule

WEEK	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
1	Rest	30 min: Regular Walk – last 1 min brisk walk	30 min: Strength Fun 30 min: Regular Walk	30 min: Hilly Walk	Rest or Active Recovery	30-60 min: Regular Walk or mix it up	2 Hour: Long Walk
2	Rest	40 min: Regular Walk – last 2 min brisk walk	30 min: Strength Fun 30 min: Regular Walk	30 min: Hilly Walk	Rest or Active Recovery	30-60 min: Regular Walk or mix it up	2 Hour: Long Walk
3	Rest	50 min: Regular Walk – last 3 min brisk walk	30 min: Strength Fun 30 min: Regular Walk	30 min: Hilly Walk	Rest or Active Recovery	30-60 min: Regular Walk or mix it up	3 Hour: Hilly Walk – brisk walk up the hills
4	Rest	30 min: Regular Walk – last 1 min brisk walk	30 min: Strength Fun 30 min: Regular Walk	30 min: Hilly Walk	Rest or Active Recovery	30-60 min: Regular Walk or mix it up	2 Hour: Long Walk

INTENSITY: LOW

INTENSITY: MODERATE

REFER TO TRAINING SESSIONS KEY ON PAGE 12

BLOCK 2

BUILDING OUT YOUR BASE

With foundations laid you can now start to get some serious mileage under your feet. Don't get too caught up on getting everything right. Staying consistent is more important than any single training walk.



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Training Schedule

WEEK	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
5	Rest	45 min: Regular Walk – last 2 min brisk walk	30 min: Strength Fun 30 min: Regular Walk	40 min: Hilly Walk – brisk walk up the hills	Rest or Active Recovery	30-60 min: Regular Walk or mix it up	4 Hour: Hilly Walk – brisk walk up the hills
6	Rest	60 min: Regular Walk – last 3 min brisk walk	30 min: Strength Fun 30 min: Regular Walk	50 min: Hilly Walk – brisk walk up the hills	Rest or Active Recovery	30-60 min: Regular Walk or mix it up	4 Hour: Hilly Walk – brisk walk up the hills
7	Rest	60 min: Regular Walk – last 4 min brisk walk	30 min: Strength Fun 30 min: Regular Walk	60 min: Hilly Walk – brisk walk up the hills	Rest or Active Recovery	30-60 min: Regular Walk or mix it up	4 Hour: Hilly Walk – brisk walk up the hills
8	Rest	30 min: Regular Walk – last 1 min brisk walk	30 min: Strength Fun 30 min: Regular Walk	30 min: Hilly Walk	Rest or Active Recovery	30-60 min: Regular Walk or mix it up	2 Hour: Long Walk

INTENSITY: LOW

INTENSITY: MODERATE

REFER TO TRAINING SESSIONS KEY ON PAGE 12

BLOCK 3

DEVELOPING YOUR FITNESS

This four-week block is where you will really start to sharpen up your fitness in preparation for your 80km walk. Expect to feel a bit of fatigue, and make sure you are eating well and getting as much sleep as you can.



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Training Schedule

WEEK	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
9	Rest	45 min: Regular Walk – last 5 min brisk walk	30 min: Strength Fun 30 min: Regular Walk	40 min: Hilly Walk – brisk walk up the hills	Rest or Active Recovery	30-60 min: Regular Walk or mix it up	4 Hour: Hilly Walk – brisk walk up the hills
10	Rest	60 min: Regular Walk – last 7 min brisk walk	30 min: Strength Fun 30 min: Regular Walk	50 min: Hilly Walk – brisk walk up the hills	Rest or Active Recovery	30-60 min: Regular Walk or mix it up	4 Hour: Hilly Walk – brisk walk up the hills
11	Rest	60 min: Regular Walk – last 10 min brisk walk	30 min: Strength Fun 30 min: Regular Walk	60 min: Hilly Walk – brisk walk up the hills	Rest or Active Recovery	30-60 min: Regular Walk or mix it up	6 Hour: Hilly Walk – brisk walk up the hills
12	Rest	30 min: Regular Walk – last 1 min brisk walk	30 min: Strength Fun 30 min: Regular Walk	30 min: Hilly Walk	Rest or Active Recovery	30-60 min: Regular Walk or mix it up	2 Hour: Long Walk

INTENSITY: LOW

INTENSITY: MODERATE

REFER TO TRAINING SESSIONS KEY ON PAGE 12

BLOCK 4

PEAKING AND TAPERING

This final block starts with your last big week, culminating in an 7-hour walk. You'll then begin a three week 'taper', gradually reducing your mileage to help your body recover ahead of your 80km walk. Good luck!



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Training Schedule

WEEK	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
13	Rest	45 min: Regular Walk – last 7 min brisk walk	30 min: Strength Fun 30 min: Regular Walk	40 min: Hilly Walk – brisk walk up the hills	Rest or Active Recovery	30-60 min: Regular Walk or mix it up	7 Hour: Hilly Walk – brisk walk up the hills
14	Rest	60 min: Regular Walk – last 10 min brisk walk	30 min: Strength Fun 30 min: Regular Walk	50 min: Hilly Walk – brisk walk up the hills	Rest or Active Recovery	30-60 min: Regular Walk or mix it up	4 Hour: Hilly Walk – brisk walk up the hills
15	Rest	60 min: Regular Walk – last 15 min brisk walk	30 min: Regular Walk	30 min: Hilly Walk	Rest	30-60 min: Regular Walk or mix it up	2 Hour: Long Walk
16	Rest	30 min: Regular Walk – last 1 min brisk walk	Rest	30 min: Regular Walk	Rest	EVENT WEEKEND!	

INTENSITY: LOW

INTENSITY: MODERATE

REFER TO TRAINING SESSIONS KEY ON PAGE 12

Key to training schedule

INTENSITY	INTENSITY: LOW INTENSITY: MODERATE
REST	It's great to know that resting is an essential part of training so that your muscles can repair and strengthen. You can still do easy walking on these days if you have errands etc. but make sure it's really easy.
ACTIVE RECOVERY	Gentle muscular movement like easy walking and cycling (like for errands, to work, at lunch, with the kids etc), gardening, house chores, stretching and yoga (you could do the last two in front of the TV).
REGULAR WALK	A walk at your regular, everyday walking pace where you can hold a conversation with relative ease.
BRISK WALK	These are short bursts of brisk walking at a more vigorous pace than your regular walking pace. They should make you feel a bit out of breath in a good way, raising your heart rate so you can't hold a conversation with ease but can squeeze a few words out at a time.
HILLY WALK	Finding hills to walk up and down will prepare you for the ascent and descent on the challenge, strengthening your legs and heart and building endurance. Take these at the pace of your regular walk. If you don't live in a hilly area, try finding short hills and going up and down them 2-3 times before moving on. Even short sections of steps and ramps up bridges, subways and flyovers can build leg and lung strength brilliantly if you tackle them repeatedly.
LONG WALK	You'll be on your feet for hours during the challenge – long walks are where you will get used to this. They also give you a chance to test out kit, food and drink you plan on taking, so you can check for any rubbing, blisters or stomach issues. You can split these into two walks on the same day if that makes life easier.
MIX IT UP	Do a different form of exercise in these sessions to keep yourself feeling fresh. It could be swimming, cycling, belly dancing, rollerblading, or just bobbing about outside in the garden kicking a football about with the kids or dogs.
STRENGTH FUN	These strength sessions help prevent injury and develop your endurance. They're really fun to do, don't need any kit and don't take long at all – turn to the back pages for a comprehensive list of exercises!

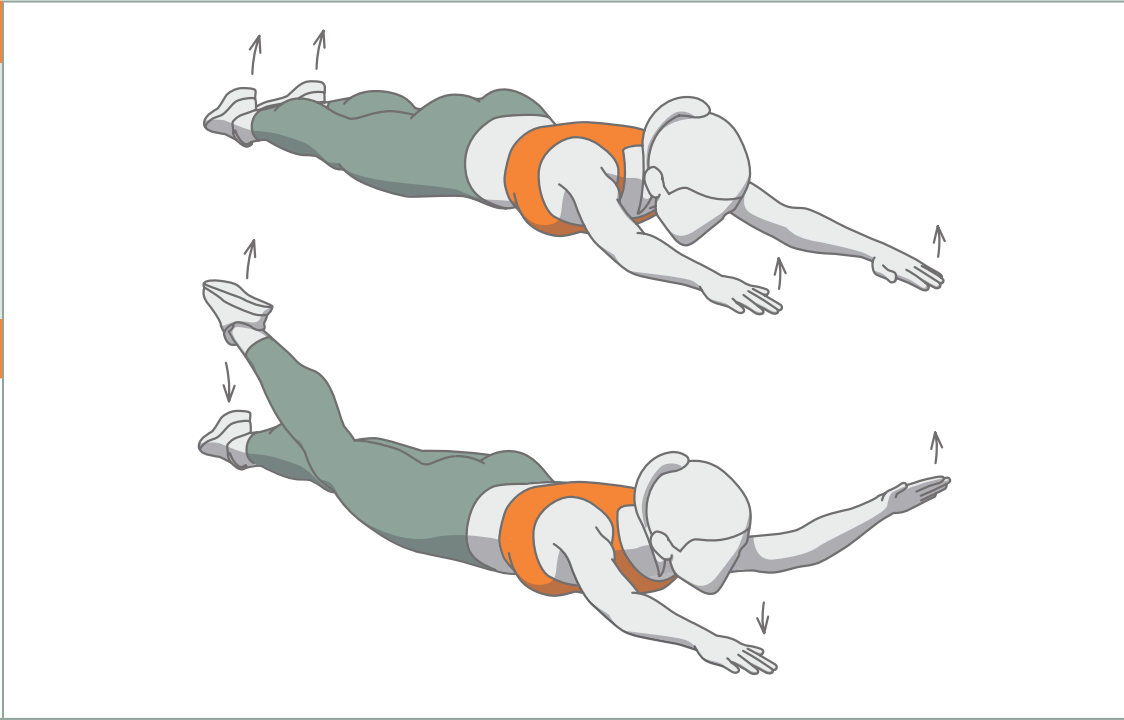
YOUR SECRET WEAPON

Strength fun

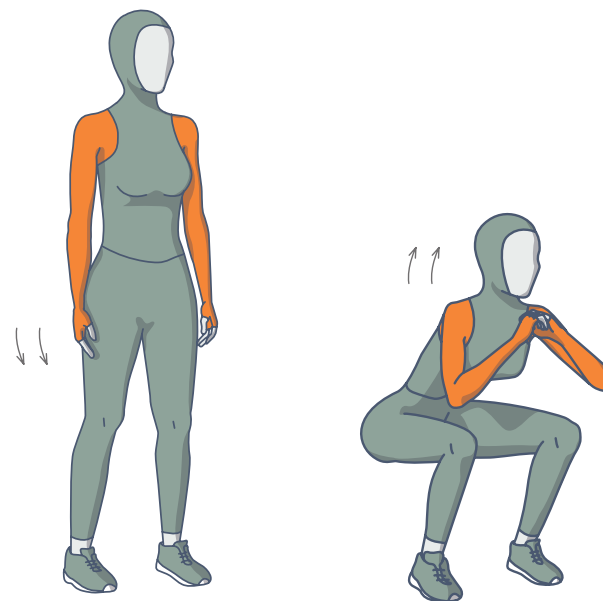
How many should I do?

Start with 5 reps (repeats) to make sure you are doing each move with good form. Gradually increase to a maximum of 8-10 reps of each move with good form to build strength, muscle tone (not bulk) and help prevent injury. If 8-10 reps feels way too easy then add some weight by using filled water bottles, tin cans, heavy books, a filled backpack or a dumbbell, resistance bands and hand weights. If you can do more than 8-10 reps easily you are not building strength but working on your endurance, which is what all the walking is doing.

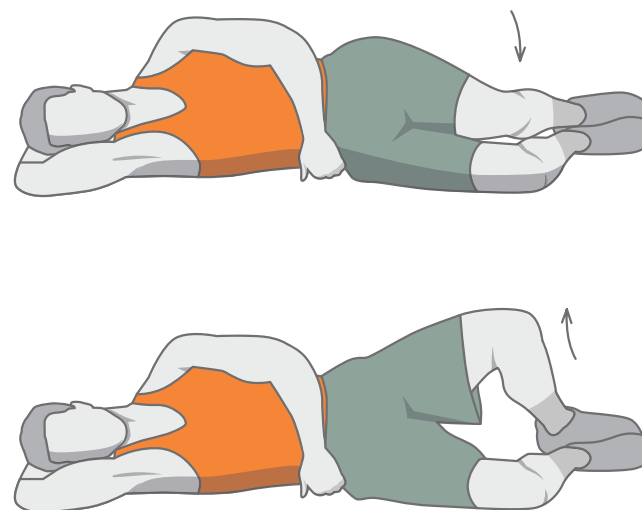
EXERCISE	MUSCLE GROUPS	WHY
SUPERMANS	Core muscles	Boosts your core strength for better running economy for longer
DESCRIPTION		
Get on your hands and knees, hands directly under shoulders, knees under hips. Keep your stomach pulled in to engage your core, and keep your back in a neutral, straight position. Steadily extend your right arm straight out in front of you at the same time as you extend the left leg out behind you, both limbs parallel to the ground. Engage your glutes, keep your hip and back level without arching, twisting or sagging, gaze directed downwards and hold for 3-5 seconds. Repeat slowly 5 times, then swap limbs. Hold a weight in your extended hand to make this harder.		



EXERCISE	MUSCLE GROUPS	WHY
SQUATS	Leg muscles	Strengthens all the muscles used in walking and climbing uphill
DESCRIPTION		
Stand with feet shoulder width apart. Bend both knees and stick the bum out, keeping the back straight, to lower into a squat. Squeeze the bum muscles as you push back up to standing. Hold hand weights, filled bags for life or wear a weighted pack for more resistance.		



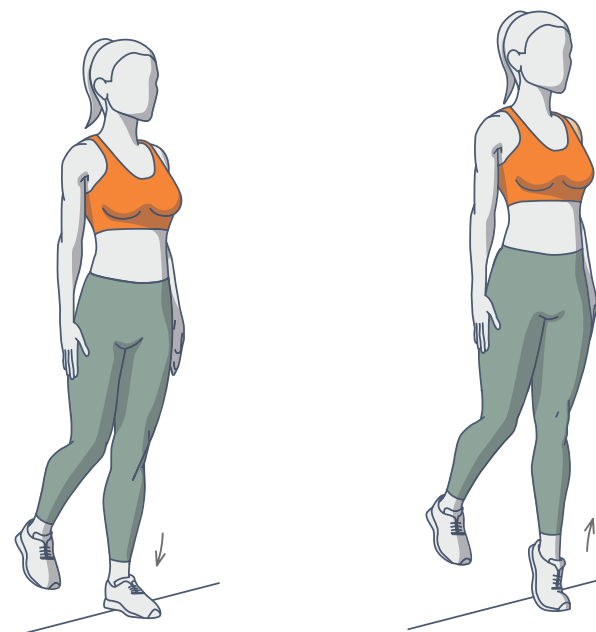
EXERCISE	MUSCLE GROUPS	WHY
GLUTE CLAMS	Gluteal muscles	Activates the gluteus medius which can switch off from sitting down for long periods of time
DESCRIPTION		
Lie on your side, legs stacked on top of one another, knees bent to form a right angle in front, heels in line with your bum. Slowly lift the top knee, keeping the feet together, in a slow and controlled movement, engaging the hips and upper buttock muscles. Repeat 5-10 times until you feel a burn in your glute (bum) muscles. If you can do more than these you are doing the move wrong and using the leg muscles to lift, so focus on engaging the glutes by putting your hand on your bum and feeling as the muscle activates. Switch sides. Make these harder if you have a resistance band by placing it just above the knees.		



EXERCISE	MUSCLE GROUPS	WHY
CALF RAISES	Calf muscles	Strengthens both the gastrocnemius and the (more overlooked) soleus muscles

DESCRIPTION

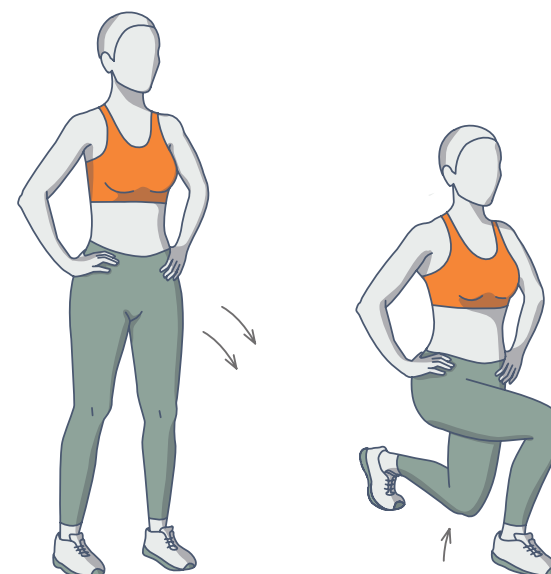
Stand with the ball of one foot on the edge of a stair or step. Keep the leg straight, then raise the foot up and down, lightly holding the bannister for balance. Repeat on the other leg. Then isolate the smaller but very important soleus muscle by bending the knee to perform the same move. To help you bend the knee more towards 90 degrees during this move you can use a towel around a bannister to balance. Make it harder by wearing a backpack with weight in.



EXERCISE	MUSCLE GROUPS	WHY
WALKING LUNGES	Leg muscles	Strengthens all your walking muscles and improves balance

DESCRIPTION

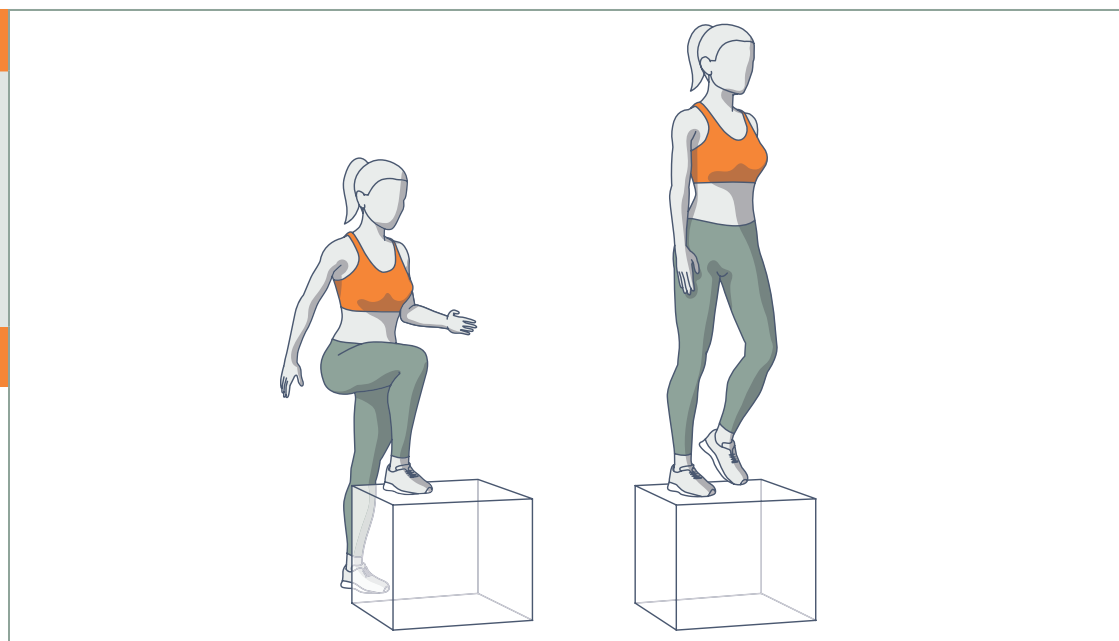
Stand with feet hip width apart. Step one leg forwards and to move into a lunge position with each knee bent through 90 degrees, lower knee just above the ground. Power upwards and step the back foot forwards to repeat the lunge on the alternate leg. Hold hand weights, filled bags for life or wear a weighted pack for more resistance.



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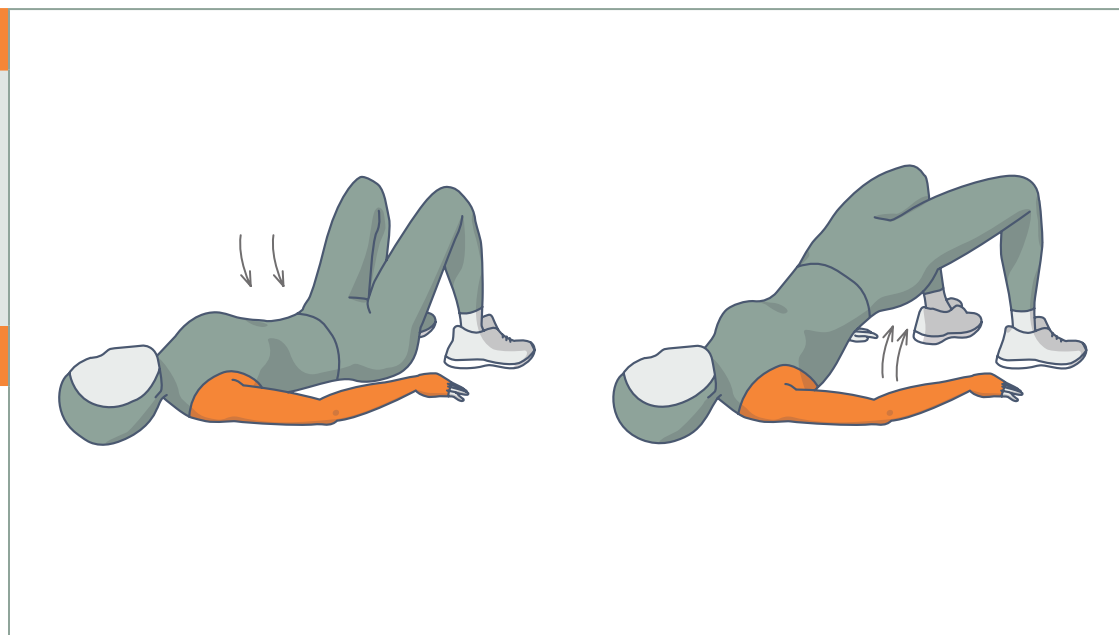
EXERCISE	MUSCLE GROUPS	WHY
STEP UPS	Leg muscles	Strengthens your climbing muscles for the up-hills

DESCRIPTION		
Step up on to a chair, bench or the second stair. Raise the other knee of the other leg, then set it down again. Repeat on the same leg before moving to the other. Hold your weights or wear your weighted pack to make this harder.		

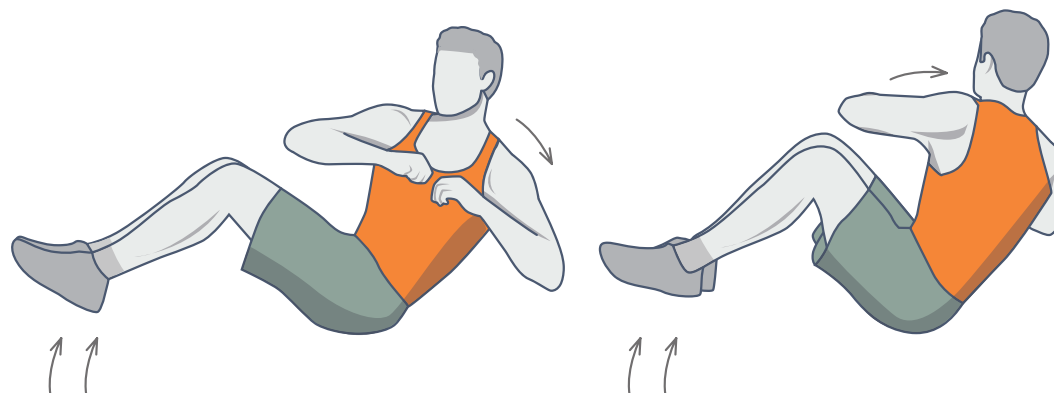


EXERCISE	MUSCLE GROUPS	WHY
GLUTE BRIDGES	Bum, back of legs, and core muscles	Strengthens and activates your walking muscles and improves balance

DESCRIPTION		
Lie down with knees bent. Push your hips up into the air until the thighs are straight in line with your body, then lower back down 8 times. Make it harder by holding a weight over your hips and/or placing your feet up on a chair or sofa.		



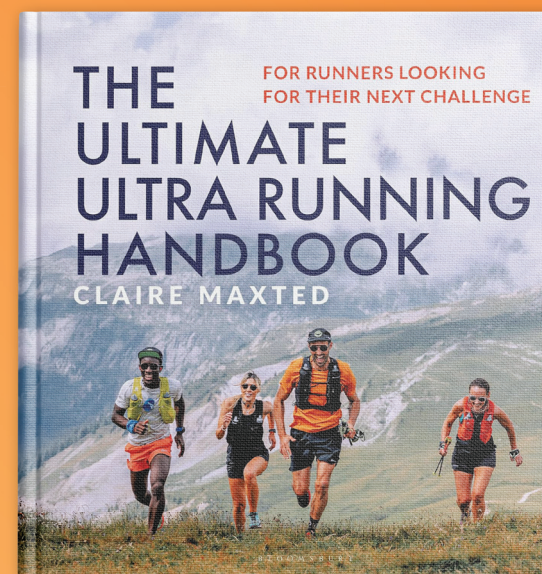
EXERCISE	MUSCLE GROUPS	WHY
RUSSIAN TWISTS	Core muscles	All the other moves are forwards and backwards so builds core strength for stability on uneven terrain
DESCRIPTION Sit down with legs out in front, bend the knees and lift the feet just off the floor. Clasp the hands together and twist from side to side to tap the fingertips down on the ground each time. Hold a weight to make this harder.		



“Read Claire’s book and see that ultra running really is a sport for everyone.”

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