

# EVENT GUIDE



21-27 SEPTEMBER 2020

**TRAILWALKER**  
*RELAY*



# WELCOME TO TRAILWALKER RELAY!

You are about to take on an incredible virtual adventure in support of Oxfam and The Gurkha Welfare Trust.

Exercise TRAILWALKER started out as a military training exercise in Hong Kong in 1981. Organised by the Queen's Gurkha Signals, and taking place along the famous Maclehose Trail, the exercise sought to test the endurance and teamwork of soldiers of the Queen's Gurkha Signals over a long and arduous course.

In 1986, Trailwalker was opened to civilian participation for the first time, and now, following the move of the Queen's Gurkha Signals to the UK, the 100km event takes place across the South Downs, with hundreds of civilians setting off alongside the Gurkhas.

Since conception, over 7000 UK teams have taken on the Trail, raising over £15.5million for Oxfam and The Gurkha Welfare Trust. Now, Trailwalker is an international phenomenon with teams taking on the 100km challenge in 9 countries around the world.

After such an incredible Trailwalker in 2019 and with the hope that Trailwalker 2020 could be even better, we were very sad to announce the cancellation of this year's event due to COVID-19.

Coronavirus has had a devastating effect across the globe and continues to be a threat in the countries that both Oxfam and The Gurkha Welfare Trust work in. Thank you for taking on Trailwalker Relay and supporting us to ensure we can continue to reach the people we work with and who need it most.

This guide is here to help you plan, train and complete your challenge.

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# RELAY RULES

## Choose your team

**Sign up with a maximum of 9 teammates (we recommend a team of 4)**

The challenge is to complete 100km as a team, so choose who is going to do what distance to reach a collective 100km!

Make sure you consider the current government guidelines on social distancing, can you sign up with members of your household so you are able to walk together or will you do it separately?

If you decide to go it alone, make sure you spread the distance out across the week to give you some time to rest in between walks!

## Choose your route

**Once you know what distance you're going to tackle, research which routes in your local area work for you.**

Things to consider are; how long will it take you? What do you need to bring with you? What sort of terrain is it, are there a lot of hills? Can you plan any stops along the way? Is the route restricted?

Make sure you have planned for an emergency situation and share your plans with a friend to keep in touch if you're doing any long walks.

## Go go go!

**Throughout the week commencing the 21st September, complete your section of the 100km as decided by your team.**

Remember to record your distances through a fitness tracking app such as Strava to be eligible for a medal at the end!

Keep motivating each other and celebrate everyone's individual achievements!

As with traditional Trailwalker, recognise your incremental achievements with our **Checkpoint Guide!** This will help you experience the magic of Trailwalker in your own home, including top tips from Trailwalker resident massage and physiotherapists *Athletes' Angels*, a rave Spotify playlist and the recipe for a delicious Gurkha curry to finish off the event!

## Become a Trailwalker Hero

**To get a medal, you need to complete 100km as a team and fundraise £350.**

Upload evidence of your distances (via your Strava app or by uploading screenshots) to your JustGiving page, making sure that the page also shows that you have fundraised £350 as a team.

Complete the Evidence Form, wait for the medals to arrive and then show them off to anyone who will listen!

# HOW YOUR FUNDRAISING HELPS

Oxfam GB and The Gurkha Welfare Trust have worked together since 2002 to bring you a Trailwalker experience every year, whilst raising over £15.5million for both charities.

This year, both charities have been working around the clock to help and protect the most vulnerable communities in response to coronavirus.

Over the years, as a Trailwalker community we have achieved so much. But right now, the charities are in need of vital funds to minimise the devastating consequences of the virus. Because of you, we're able to help those in need to live with dignity and stop the spread.

## Oxfam

Thanks to you, we're providing vital support like handwashing facilities, clean water, toilets and soap in the most vulnerable communities.

For example, in camps in Bangladesh there is a major risk of devastating spread of coronavirus in the cramped, sprawling sites. We're providing vital clean water and sanitation, as well as providing hygiene training and awareness.

Since March, we have reached over 4 million people across 62 countries and we won't stop. Every step you take in training and on the event week is helping people hold onto hope. Your ongoing generosity is at the heart of everything we do.



## The Gurkha Welfare Trust

With your support, we continue to provide vital support to Gurkha veterans, their families and communities in Nepal.

The risk of our Gurkha veterans and widows contracting coronavirus is high and should the worst happen, the consequences could be devastating given the poorly-equipped healthcare facilities and lack of medical infrastructure in-country.

During lockdown, our teams have been visiting vulnerable veteran and widow homes to check on their welfare, distribute medication and give out financial aid, as well as bringing clean water to people's doorsteps.



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Your fundraising is first sent to Oxfam so it can be processed. Then it's added together and split between Oxfam and The Gurkha Welfare Trust.

# KIT LIST AND ADVICE

Usually at Trailwalker you'd have a Compulsory Kit List to make sure you have everything you need to conquer the course! For Trailwalker Relay, depending on how long your walks are and where you're planning to walk, you may not need it all or may need some extra bits.

Here's our recommended kit list for the whole week to help you be prepared for all weather conditions;

Sturdy water bottle or bladder (full)	Survival bag
Head torch with spare batteries and bulb	High-visibility vest
Sun hat	Rucksack
Whistle	Sun cream
Ordnance Survey map	Warm hat and pair of gloves
Compass	Warm fleece
Notebook and pen for recording details in an emergency	Spare socks or other clothing
Mobile phone	Waterproof jacket and trousers
First aid kit	Your downloadable race bib *

\*Available on the website

Remember to check the weather before heading out and think carefully before leaving any weather-dependent items behind.

## Support Crew and Your Kit

Normally at Trailwalker you'd have a Support Crew meeting you every step of the way to give you changes of clothes, extra kit etc. and you might not have such a luxury with Trailwalker Relay!

So make sure you're dressed appropriately and are able to carry everything you need for your walk before heading out the door.



**RECOMMENDED  
RETAIL PARTNER**

Cotswold Outdoor is proud to be the official retailer for the Trailwalker Relay. Participants can enjoy a 15% discount\* on clothing and equipment as well as free in-store boot and rucksack fitting services to help the kilometres pass by as comfortably and as pleasantly as possible. **CODE: AF-TRAIL-20**

\*Full T&Cs apply. Offer expires 30/09/20

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\*Full T&Cs apply. Not to be used in conjunction with any other offer or discount. Selected lines are exempt. Only 10% discount is available on bikes. Only valid on production of valid identification in-store or use of discount code online. Offer expires 30.09.20

# TRAINING

We cannot stress enough that you must train for the Trailwalker Relay. Whether you're a seasoned walker or a first-timer, the advice you will receive from all past Trailwalker participants is to "train, train, train!"

## Kit Advice

**Test out your kit** before using it on your first walk – does your rucksack have comfortable straps, do you know how to use your walking poles in a way that suits you best?

## What to Wear

Make sure you are prepared for **sudden changes in weather** with waterproofs to sunhats and extra pairs of socks.

**Layering** lets you adapt your clothing to the conditions and the idea is based on three layers:

### Base layer

The base layer is critical and should transport moisture away from the skin, dispersing it to the air or outer layers. If moisture is left next to the skin it can create discomfort and will feel cold

### Mid layer

The mid layer works like the base layer, continuing to wick away moisture. It also provides insulation to retain your body's warmth. Trailwalkers have found that a fleece is a good mid layer; it's light weight and dries quickly.

### Outer layer

The outer layer should be a waterproof and breathable rain jacket. You will need a hood to keep your head warm and dry, and make sure you have space to wear a hat underneath.

## Training Plan

Once you've signed up, put together a training plan to make sure you're in a good place to start the challenge on the 21st September. Things to consider:

- Ensure easy walks and cardio workouts (such as a run or bike ride) are part of your weekly route to help build your general fitness.
- Make sure you include adequate rest time to allow your body to recover and prevent injury.
- Training on hills is more effective than flat walks.
- One or two weeks before the event, taper your training by decreasing your longer walks but stay active to keep fresh for the big week.



# NUTRITION

## In Training

During training, you'll learn what foods you like and don't like, and what keeps you going. It's important that you're aware of this so that you can plan for the event week. But remember that when you're tired, you may want something completely different – so plan for variety.

## During the Event Week

- Depending on what distance you're going to cover, **eat one or two hours before you walk.**
- During the walk, **bring and eat a variety of foods**, and a mix of fast- and slow-release energies.
- **Pack snacks in easy-to-reach places** like pockets and the sides of your rucksack. This means you won't need to stop in order to grab a quick bite.
- Consider how **weather conditions** may affect your choices (will you want that salad in the cold rain, or a hearty chicken sandwich?)
- If you're walking with others within the government guidelines, **keep an eye on your team members** – is everyone eating and drinking? If not, offer them food or a drink.
- It's also important to **take on salts** so keep this in mind when you pack your snacks.
- **Drink** an extra 500ml fluid two or three hours before you walk and during the walk, drink approximately 400ml of water or isotonic drink per hour or, when the weather is hot, 600ml per hour.

## Here are some of our favourite Trailwalker foods:

- Peanut butter and jam sandwich (immediate sugar from the jam, slower release from the nuts)
  - Banana bagel (the ultimate slow-release fruit)
- Flapjack (you can mix in nuts, dried fruits or even a cheeky bit of chocolate!)



# BLISTERS & CHAFING

## Blister fixers

Blisters are the number one reason participants don't finish Trailwalker. There are many different opinions on how you can treat or prevent blisters, and a variety of ways to help prepare and strengthen your feet.

The Trailwalker team have pulled together some of the best ways but ultimately, everyone's feet are different. It's best to try a few different methods and choose what works best for you.

**Wear-in your shoes** so you are comfortable

**Have more than one pair** to avoid the build up of pressure points.

**Carry a blister care kit** to address any issues mid-walk

**Put on 'liner socks'** followed by a thicker pair of good walking socks to prevent your boots rubbing against your skin and causing blisters.



## Chafing

After blisters, chafing is the most common discomfort that Trailwalkers experience. Chafing can often occur on the inner thigh, groin area, armpits and nipples as a result of friction caused by body parts rubbing together or clothing rubbing the skin. Don't shy away from this: tackle it head-on using our top tips below:

**Keep hydrated** to help you perspire freely as when you stop sweating the remnants dry into salt crystals which creates friction

**Wear skin-tight shorts** to prevent chafing of the lower body

**Goo up** and apply Vaseline to any chafing areas

**Wick away** and wear a snug-fitting base layer of synthetic clothing to wick moisture from your body

### TRAILWALKER RELAY IS A HUGE CHALLENGE

So if you have any medical conditions or concerns, we recommend that you consult your GP prior to undertaking any training scheme.



# SUPPORT



Normally at Trailwalker, you'd have a Support Crew to keep you going across the 100km course. You may not need it for Trailwalker Relay, but that doesn't mean that your friends and family don't need to support you!

Within the government guidelines for social distancing, think about how you can break up any long walks to meet up with your support crew along the way.

Motivate your friends and family to feel part of your adventure and include them in your planning sessions and some of your training walks if you can do so safely. In turn, they can motivate you too!

## Here are some of our top tips on how to support to someone you know who is going to take on Trailwalker Relay:

- Help out with your team's fundraising efforts and share their online fundraising page with your network of friends and family
- Remind them why they are taking part and how much good the money they are raising will do
- Make sure the fridge is fully stocked with your team's favourite snacks to keep them going through the week
  - Make a banner to hold up to cheer them on
  - Provide buckets of water for tired feet (dare we suggest offering a foot massage?)
    - Gather messages of support and photos from team members' loved ones
- Plan a celebration for the end of the event and serve Champagne to celebrate the team's triumph!

# THE TRAILWALKER TEAM WILL BE HERE TO SUPPORT YOU THROUGH YOUR CHALLENGE TO HELP YOU BECOME A TRAILWALKER HERO.

Join our Facebook group, Trailwalker UK,  
where participants share advice, tips  
and experiences.

Follow us on Twitter and Instagram  
@TrailwalkerUK to stay up to date on the  
latest news and information

Share your stories with us  
by using the hashtag  
#TrailwalkerRelay

For FAQs about Trailwalker  
Relay head to:  
[oxfamapps.org/trailwalker/  
faq.php](https://oxfamapps.org/trailwalker/faq.php)

or get in touch at  
0300 200 1244 or  
[events@oxfam.org.uk](mailto:events@oxfam.org.uk)