

FIGHT FOR AIR **CLIMB**

experience the climb of your life

† AMERICAN LUNG ASSOCIATION.

The following is a “guide” for the American Lung Association Stairclimb climbers who need assistance in their training. Stair climbing is a grueling, strenuous sport and such a sport should not be embarked upon without first consulting your physician. The training program has been developed by a Mary Donahue, a physical therapist, athletic trainer and personal trainer, who has climbed in several American Lung Association Stairclimb events and worked with climbers of all levels to compete in American Lung Association Stairclimbs.

Before you take one step, or stair:

Due to the intensity of this event it is important you have a clear understanding of your present fitness level. Before jumping into a training program there are two issues which should be honestly addressed. First, determine your current fitness level. The training process is different for everyone. Before you lift one weight or take your first practice Stairclimb, honestly evaluate your present health and fitness. If you recently started exercising (within the past year) consider yourself a beginner. If you have been training for longer, but are not a competitive athlete you are at an intermediate level. Those who consider themselves a competitive athlete and have multiple years of serious training are at the advanced level.

This training program is designed for all levels of stair climbers, but, as with any exercise regimen, you should consult your physician prior to beginning this or any other training program.

Next ask yourself the following questions. If any of the following apply to you, or if you are unsure, a doctor’s approval is necessary before you begin. If you are:

- Pregnant.
- Older than 65.
- Sedentary.
- Overweight.
- Have diabetes.
- Have high blood pressure.
- Have a heart condition.
- Have any injury or health condition that may affect your ability to safely complete the stair climb.

Making it to the Top:

The training program has a cardiovascular and a strength-training component. The chart below will provide the training schedule and activity length or repetition amount. The training schedule is meant to be a general guide. It is best to follow it as much as possible and allow yourself to rest and not train more than three days in a row. It can be adjusted to how much time you have and how your body responds. Recovery time is essential. If you’re feeling muscle soreness or fatigued take an extra day or two off. If you feel you have injured yourself during training seek medical attention. Work towards gaining the ability to climb, walk and jog X number of minutes consecutively. It will be worth it in the once you reach the top! Make sure you train in a safe and well lit area to train weather that is an indoor or outdoor track or path or a treadmill at home or in a gym.

How to use the training schedule by level:

- If you are a beginning/any level climber: Follow the program as written
- If you are an intermediate climber: You can increase speed of climbing/jogging to work towards a faster climb time.

- If you are an advanced climber: You can increase speed, time, flights/miles, etc, to increase endurance and work towards a faster climb.
- If you are competing in a climb that has more or less flights of stairs than the program lists, you can adjust the climb schedule accordingly. Or you can adjust your speed or time to train for a faster climb time.

Note there are a few training days that are marked with stairs. **Find some and climb them!** Don't be discouraged if you only have a few flights to work with. Just make multiple trips up and down to help build strength and endurance. The same is true with the other components.

Interval Stair training: When the schedule lists stair training, but it is not possible to practice in a place with the same number of flights as the building in the climb event. One way to train is to do interval training. Try going up 3 flights of stairs, then down 2 flights. Repeat this until you reach the top floor. Return to the bottom by going down 3 flights of stairs and going up one flight. Repeat until you are on the bottom floor. You will do several flights and keep your heart rate up. You should count the total of flights you climb up for your total count for that day.

Training Schedule:

Week	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5	Day 6	Day 7
1	Walk X 10 minutes	Strength exercises 1 set of 10 reps	Off	Climb 10 flights of stairs*	Strength exercises 1 set of 10 reps	Off	Walk X 10 minutes
2	Walk 15 minutes	Strength exercises 1 set of 15 reps	Off	Climb 20 flights of stairs*	Strength exercises 1 set of 15 reps	Off	Walk X 4 minutes Jog X 1 minute Repeat 2 times
3	Walk 25 minutes	Strength exercises 2 sets of 10 reps	Off	Climb 30 flights of stairs*	Strength exercises 2 sets of 10 reps	Off	Walk X 3 minutes Jog X 2 minutes Repeat 3 times
4	Walk 30 minutes	Strength exercises 2 sets of 15 reps	Off	Climb 40 flights of stairs*	Strength exercises 2 sets of 15 reps	Off	Walk X 2 minutes Jog X 3 minutes Repeat 3 times
5	Climb stairs X 15 minutes	Strength exercises 3 sets of 12 reps	Off	Climb 50 flights of stairs*	Strength exercises 3 sets of 12 reps	Off	Walk X 1 minutes Jog X 4 minute Repeat 3 times
6	Climb stairs X 20 minutes	Strength exercises 3 sets of 15 reps	Off	Climb 60 flights of stairs*	Strength exercises 3 sets of 15 reps	Off	Walk X 1 minutes Jog 4 minute Repeat 4 times
7	Climb stairs X 25 minutes	Strength exercises 3 sets of 15 reps	Off	Climb 45 flights of stairs*	Strength exercises 3 sets of 15 reps	Off	Jog X 20 minutes
8	Climb stairs X 30 minutes	Strength exercises 3 sets of 15 reps	Off	Jog 25 minutes	Strength exercises 3 sets of 15 reps	Off	EVENT

*Stair training can be consecutive flights of stairs or interval stair training if your training location does not have the same number of flights as your climb building. See the note regarding stair training above to details on interval training.

Warm Up, Stretches, Exercises Cool Down:

Warm Up

First do a light warm up to gradually bring increase your heart rate and bring blood to your muscles. You Can do the warm-up in place or moving. Spend 5 to 10 minutes warming up. Examples are walking briskly, jogging in place, marching, butt kicks and high knees.



Walking
Marching
Jogging

High Knees (Left)
High Knees (Right)

Dynamic Stretches

Active or dynamic stretches are an excellent way to prepare your muscles for the workout. These should be performed slowly and easy. Do 10 to 15 repetitions.

Examples are forward and backward hip swings, side to side hip swings, hip flexor stretches, and calf stretches.

Hip Swings (Front and Side)



Hip Swings:
Swing leg forward and backward. Repeat with opposite leg.



Hip Swings: Side ways
Swing leg side to side. Repeat with opposite leg.

Front Hip Stretches



Front Hip stretches
With one foot on a step, lean forward until a stretch is felt in front of hip, then lean back.

Calf Stretches



Calf stretch
Start with flat foot, then roll up on toes to feel a stretch in calf. Repeat with opposite foot.

Strengthening Exercises

Gain strength in muscles that is needed to do the stair climb. Strengthening exercises will be helpful to prepare your body for the rigors of training for and doing the stair event. Exhale during the most difficult part of the exercise. Make sure your movements are slow and controlled.

Examples are wall sits, calf raises, step ups, squats, forward lunges, backward lunges, bicep curls, triceps extensions, and planks.

Wall Sits



Wall sits: Lean back against wall with feet 18 inches away from wall. Slowly slide down and hold position. Hips should not be lowered below knees. With stability ball behind back (Advanced)

Calf Raises



Calf raises: 2-Legs, stand and raise up on toes. When able do this on one leg (Advanced).

Step Ups



Step ups: Stand in front of a 6 to 8 inch step. Place one foot on step. Step up on the step and then raise your other leg toward chest. Repeat with your other leg.

Squats



Squats: Stand with legs hip width apart. Lower hips as if you are sitting in a chair. Try to keep knees over feet, not in front of them.

Forward and Backward Lunges



Forward lunges: Stand with feet together, step forward with one leg. Bend both knees until back knee approaches the floor. Return to original position. Repeat with your other leg.



Backward lunges: Stand with feet together, step backward with one leg. Bend both knees until back knee approaches the floor. Return to original position. Repeat with your other leg.

Bicep Curls



Bicep curls: Stand with legs hip width apart. Hold weights in each hand. Slowly bend elbow and bring hand toward shoulders. Can do both arm together or opposite each other. Repeat with other arm.

Triceps Kick Backs



Triceps kick backs: Lean on table with weight in one hand. Bend elbow and bring hand toward shoulder. Straighten out elbow and bring weight back by hip. Repeat with other arm.

Plank



Plank Core Strengthening: Hold 10 seconds

Static Stretches

Your workout should end with static stretches to increase length of your muscles and help with muscle soreness. The stretches should be gentle and never painful. Hold the stretch for 20 – 30 seconds and repeated 3 – 5 times.

Examples are calf, hamstring (back of thigh), hip flexor (front of hip), quad (front of thigh), and glut (buttock).

Calf



Knee Straight Knee Bent

Calf: stand with feet approximately 18 inches from wall with hands on wall. Step forward with one foot. The back foot should be slightly turned inward. Lean forward while you keep back heel on the floor. Repeat with your other leg.



Stair Calf Stretch

Hamstring and Quad



Hamstring (front of thigh): Sit on floor with one leg out straight and other leg bent inward. Slightly lean forward until you feel a stretch in back of thigh. Repeat with your other leg.



Quad (back of thigh): Lay on tummy, bend one legs and reach back with hand. Gently pull foot toward buttock. Repeat with other leg. Use a strap of rope if you have trouble reaching leg.

Hip Flexor and Glut



Hip Flexor: Kneel on one knee with other leg bent in front. Shift weight forward until a stretch is felt in front on hip. Repeat with your other leg.



Glut/Buttocks Stretch: Lay on your back with knees bent and feet on floor. Cross one leg over your other knee. Bring both knees toward chest. Repeat with your other leg.