



Long Distance Hiking - Things to consider

So you are thinking about doing a long distance hike that will take you more than two weeks? Once you start hiking and camping for this length of time you have moved beyond what many hikers will ever do and while many of the considerations are the same as for shorter hikes there are some that you may not have thought about. The following is a list of things that I consider for doing hikes longer than two weeks, regardless of the distance travelled. This list is by no means exhaustive and some of the considerations may not even apply to you being designed to suit my requirements. There will also be other things that you may want to add that relate only to your own circumstances. Hopefully this will provide a starting point and help in the planning for your journey. Good luck!

	Consideration	What do I need to think about
<input type="checkbox"/>	Find your why	Having a reason for your journey; its impotent. It keeps you focused and also helps you decide which walk you should look at.
<input type="checkbox"/>	How much time do you have?	This will help you in choosing a walk. Are you going to do a thru hike or a section hike?
<input type="checkbox"/>	What your average walking speed with a full pack?	If you are considering doing a long trail you should know the distance that you can travel over varying terrains with a weighted pack.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Money	How much is this trip going to cost? You may need to save up. Allow for gear failures on the trail that require replacements. Allow for town stays food and accommodation expenses.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Weather conditions	Look for extreme weather conditions to avoid and pick your times that suit you.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Pick a trail	Once you know the reasons you want to do a long hike, the time you have available, and the speed you able to travel you can now consider your choices.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Time of the year?	Based on the trail you have now chosen what's the best time of the year to do it? Look at the weather for this?
<input type="checkbox"/>	Direction of Travel?	Many long distance hikes have the ability to be travelled in different directions. Look at your chosen trail and decide which direction you are going to travel. Sometimes changing the travel direction may change the travel time e.g. to avoid snow conditions.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Am I fit? What do I need to do?	Don't decide you need to get fit the week before starting a long trail. You should be considering what you need to do 6 months out and slowly building up fitness to its peak just prior to the start of your walk.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Solo or more?	Are you going to do your walk solo or should you travel with a partner? Some people love to travel solo others hate it. The



Long Distance Hiking - Things to consider

		<p>choice is your but consider how you cope with being alone for long periods. Also consider whether a hiking partner is going to get on your nerves. If you hike with someone pick a partner that has a similar style and speed as you do.</p>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Gear	<p>Start building you gear kit for the walk you are doing. Plan this well in advance to take advantage of the sales if you need to make purchase.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What sort of stove to you need/are allowed to use? Are you going to cook/rehydrate/or go stove-less? • Can you lighten your load with new purchases? • Do you have the right gear for the expected (worst case) conditions? • Am I going to filter the water and if so how? • What if any emergency device will I carry e.g. PLB?
<input type="checkbox"/>	Food	<p>This is a guide only but aim at between 700-900 grams of food/day and aim for 3000-4000 calories (less if you are female). Choose food that is nutritious, tastes good, and that you like. Don't choose food because its cheap or light. If you don't like it, you won't eat it. Eat small amounts regularly to ensure that you keep your energy up. I eat snacks hourly when I'm walking as well as main meals.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where can you eat off trail e.g. towns or service centres? • Food drops or purchase along the way?
<input type="checkbox"/>	Medical	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have a dental and medical check up • If you need to cater for any medical conditions look at availability of medical help along the trail just in case. • Location of doctor and dentists • Location of massage therapists • Know how to recognise common health issues and have first aid skills.
<input type="checkbox"/>	On the trail	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I want to night hike. When is the moon fairly full? • Where will I stay if I decide to stop in town? • Where are the local outdoor stores e.g. for gas supplies? • Dangers to look for e.g. ticks, spiders, snakes • How well is the trail marked? • What should you do in case of fires or other environmental emergencies? • Don't forget the toilet paper • Take rest days if you need them. Where?

