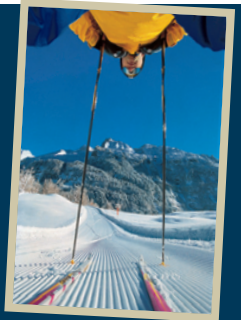


Get ready for cross-country

Exodus leader Eric Woolley has put together a guide to some simple exercises you can do in preparation for your trip, which are particularly good prior to cross-country skiing. While you do not need to be super fit for cross-country, a few simple moves for 10 minutes a night can go a long way towards reducing aching muscles during the first few days of your trip. The key is to build up your strength, stamina and balancing skills and improve your flexibility.



1) Flexibility / Balance



Extended knee bends
Place one foot in front of the other and gently bend both knees, keeping your back straight. Swap legs and repeat.



Lateral knee bends
Put your hands on your hips, step one leg out to the side, turn foot 90° and gently bend knee over foot. Swap legs and repeat.



Arm & leg backswing
Stand firmly on left leg and swing right arm and leg backwards and then return it to straight position several times. Swap legs and repeat.



Balance on one leg
Stand firmly on one leg with arms stretched out horizontally, parallel with shoulders. Place heel of other foot against your knee and hold for 30 seconds. Lower foot and repeat exercise using other leg.

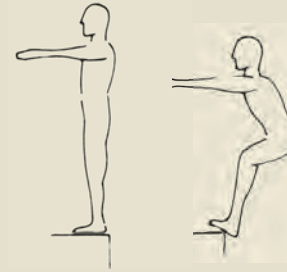


2) Stamina

Stamina is perhaps the most important asset for a cross-country skier to have and is easily maintained by having a regular routine of exercise. Or, for the ultimate in preparation, why not try roller skiing, which effectively simulates the motion of cross-country but takes place on tarmac. Go to www.rollerski.co.uk for details.

3) Strength

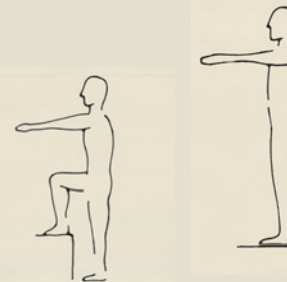
Legs



Heel drops
Stand on the edge of the bottom stair with your hands free. Gently lift and drop your heels. You will feel a pull down the back of your lower leg.

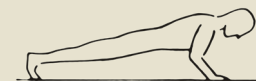


March on the spot
Practice marching on the spot, making sure you use alternate arms and legs.



Step ups
Stand in front of the bottom stair. Step up and down, straightening legs each time both feet are flat on the stair. Keep back straight. Alternate which leg leads.

Arms



Press ups
Lie face down on floor, press toes into ground and lift body up on arms. Hands should point forwards with elbows in the air. Lower and repeat. For an easier version, leave legs on the ground with toes flat and just raise and lower upper body.



Wall press ups
Stand facing the wall with palms flat against it and elbows slightly bent. Arms should be shoulder width apart. Keeping feet together, lean into wall and use arms to push yourself away again.

Stomach



Sit ups
Lie on floor with feet flat, knees bent and slightly apart. Lie arms flat, parallel with your body. Gently raise and lower upper body a few inches, keeping arms and lower back on the floor.