

Stay active this season with **THE HOLIDAY FIT2HIKE CHALLENGE!**

First, the boring legal stuff:

- **Disclaimer**

The information presented here is for informational purposes only. It is not medical advice and is not intended to replace the advice or attention of healthcare professionals. Always consult your physician before beginning or making any changes in your exercise program, for diagnosis and treatment of illness and injuries, and for advice regarding medications.

All forms of exercise pose some inherent risks. The author advises all readers to take full responsibility for their safety and know their limits and seek expert guidance for performing all of the exercises described. If you experience lightheadedness, dizziness, or shortness of breath while exercising, stop the movement and consult a physician immediately.

If your physician recommends that you don't use any of the exercises described, please follow your doctor's orders. The Reluctant Enthusiast will not assume any liability or be held responsible for any form of injury, personal loss or illness caused by the utilization of this information.

Now that that's out of the way, here are a few things to keep in mind before starting the Holiday Fit2Hike Challenge:

Warm-up & Cooldown

- Warm-ups are essential to improving performance & avoiding injury. Need options? I demonstrated a [shortened version of my warm-up here](#).
- Always follow your workout with a **cooldown & stretch**. If you don't already have a routine, try 3 to 5 minutes of walking & 3 to 5 minutes of full-body stretches.

Workout tips

- The workouts were designed with hiking strength & conditioning in mind, but they are appropriate for anyone who wants to stay active.
- Challenging yourself is important, but always maintain proper form & never sacrifice form for difficulty.
- Not sure what weight or exercise variation to use? When in doubt, always start low & slow. When a movement feels less challenging towards the upper limit of the rep range, then consider adding resistance. Alternatively, you can increase your reps if you're not quite ready or able to add weight (i.e. doing 15 or 20 bodyweight squats instead of 10).

Need an extra challenge but don't have any equipment?

- If you're fit enough, you can increase the difficulty of the exercises by increasing reps or adding a pulse to the exercise.
- Depending upon the movement, you can use common household items such as chairs, doors, milk, laundry or water jugs, paint cans, or a canvas shopping bag or backpack with books or other items added for weight.

- More examples: try [a sheet draped over your door](#) (making sure that it's securely fastened), [two chairs & a broom](#), or [one of these variations](#) with a towel, tables, or doors in your home, or even sturdy trees in your yard.

Multi-tasking tips

Have a million things to do & need to pull double duty? If you plan to workout at home or in your own yard, consider doing one (or all!) of the following to help you accomplish more during your routine:

- Throw a load of laundry into the washer before you start – it should be ready for the dryer by the time you finish your workout.
- Plan to roast some squash, veggies, chicken or potatoes while you work out, which should take 20 to 30 minutes. If they need less time, use one of your rest periods to take them out of the oven & set them out to cool.
- Use your rest periods to put away 2 to 3 dishes per period (also applies to clothing or items around the house or yard that need picking up).
- Prepping some homemade rolls for the holiday? Plan your workout around the rise time, which often takes 30 to 60 minutes.
- Still want to enjoy the holiday specials? Put one on during your workout & use it as a timer—when it's over, you're done!

