



Designed for first-time pilgrims

No prior hiking experience required

Your 12-Week Camino Training Plan

Build endurance, prevent injury, and arrive ready to enjoy it.

3-5

training days per week

12

weeks of gradual build

1

key long walk each week

Three clear phases

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

10

11

12

Build habit

Build endurance

Simulate Camino

Consistency beats intensity. This plan is about building repeatable walking capacity, not trying to prove how hard you can train in a single week.

How to use this plan

Keep it practical: walk regularly, build gradually, and treat the weekly long walk as your key session.

The practical setup

- ☐ 3-5 training days per week
- ☐ Gradual build-up in distance and pack weight
- ☐ One long walk each week as the anchor session
- ☐ Optional gym work to reduce injury risk

Golden rule
Consistency beats intensity

Quick safety notes

- Mild soreness is normal.
 - Sharp pain means stop.
 - Blisters early are a useful learning opportunity.
 - Rest days are part of training, not a break from it.
- What you're training for**
- Walking 20-30km per day
 - Repeating that for multiple days
 - Carrying weight
 - Handling elevation and fatigue without falling apart

12-week structure at a glance

Phase map



Weeks 1-4

Build the habit

Get used to walking regularly and breaking in your shoes.

Sample week

M	T	W	T	F	S	S
SW		SW		MW		LW

LW = long walk · MW = medium · SW = short · ST = strength

Load

low

Weeks 5-8

Build endurance

Increase distance, start carrying weight, and add hills where possible.

Sample week

M	T	W	T	F	S	S
SW		SW	ST	MW		LW

LW = long walk · MW = medium · SW = short · ST = strength

Load

building

Weeks 9-12

Simulate the Camino

Replicate real conditions with longer walks, full pack weight, and back-to-back effort.

Sample week

M	T	W	T	F	S	S
MW		ST	MW		B2B	LW

LW = long walk · MW = medium · SW = short · ST = strength

Load

full Camino

Weeks 1-4: build the habit

The early goal is simple: walk often enough that walking becomes normal rather than special.

Build the habit

Weeks 1-4

Goal: get used to walking regularly

Long walk is the anchor

Build gradually

Weekly structure

- 2 x short walks (3-5km)
- 1 x medium walk (5-8km)
- 1 x long walk (8-12km)
- Optional: 1 light strength session

Focus

- Comfortable pace, not fitness testing
- Start breaking in shoes
- No heavy backpack yet
- Learn what recovery feels like after a longer walk

Sample week

M	T	W	T	F	S	S
SW		SW		MW		LW
LW = long walk · MW = medium · SW = short · ST = strength						

Build markers

Distance

☒ ☐ ☐ ☐
regular walking

Pack

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Checkpoint

☐ Shoes started

☐ Long walk done

☐ No rush to add load

Week-by-week cues

- Weeks 1-2: walk frequently enough that your body expects it.
- Weeks 3-4: let the long walk grow gently toward 10-12km.
- If you feel fresh, stay consistent rather than jumping ahead too quickly.

What success looks like

By the end of week 4, you should feel like walking several times per week is manageable and that an 8-12km session no longer feels like a big event.

Do not chase exhaustion here. You are creating repeatability, not proving toughness.

Weeks 5-8: build endurance

This is where the plan starts to look and feel more Camino-specific: more distance, some hills, and meaningful pack weight.

Build endurance

Weeks 5-8

Goal: increase distance and introduce weight

Long walk is the anchor

Build gradually

Weekly structure

- 2 x short walks (5-8km)
- 1 x medium walk (8-12km)
- 1 x long walk (12-18km)
- 1 x strength session

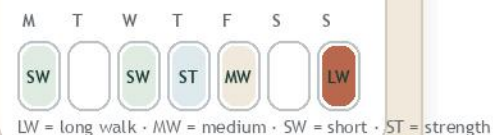
Focus

- Keep the easy walks genuinely easy
- Start carrying a backpack
- Add small hills if possible

Add

- Pack progression: start around 3-5kg and build toward 6-8kg
- Add one elevation-focused session per week from week 5 onward

Sample week



Build markers

Distance



Pack



Checkpoint

- ☐ Pack added
- ☐ Hills introduced
- ☐ Strength now regular

Progression charts

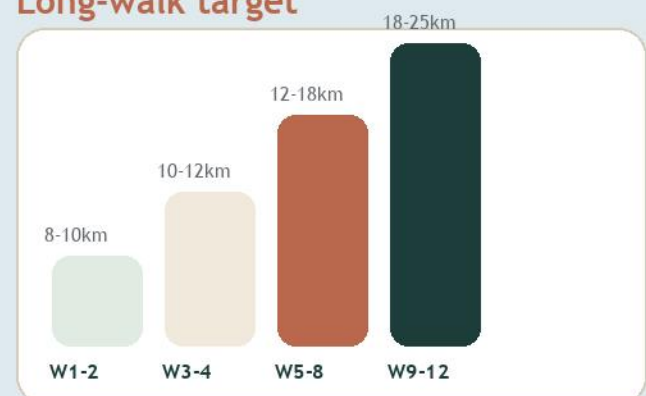
Pack weight

Week-by-week load



Do not jump straight to full weight.

Long-walk target



Weeks 9-12: simulate the Camino

This is the phase that prepares people properly. You are now training for repeated walking days, not just single good sessions.

Simulate the Camino

Weeks 9-12

Goal: replicate real conditions

Long walk is the anchor

Build gradually

Weekly structure

- 2 x medium walks (8-12km)
- 1 x long walk (18-25km)
- 1 x back-to-back day (for example 15km + 15km)
- 1 x strength session

Focus

- Use full pack weight around 6-10kg
- Find elevation where you can
- Practice walking on consecutive days

Add

- This phase is what teaches your body how repeated mileage actually feels
- Recover well between sessions rather than trying to max out every weekend

Sample week



Build markers

Distance



18-25km long walks

Pack



Checkpoint

☐ Back-to-back tested

☐ Full pack worn

☐ Recovery strategy working

Final 2 weeks advice

- Do not overtrain late in the plan.
- Reduce volume slightly.
- Keep walking, but stay fresh.
- Prioritise recovery, sleep, and feeling springy rather than tired.

What if I'm already fit?

- Increase distances faster if recovery stays good.
- Add more elevation.
- Add back-to-back long days earlier.
- Still respect pack progression and shoe break-in.

Shoes, elevation, and foot prep

These details look small until they are the thing that derails a good training block.

Shoe break-in plan

- Start wearing your Camino shoes on short walks.
- Gradually increase distance over several weeks.
- Never bring brand new shoes to Spain.
- If they hurt now, they'll destroy your feet later.

Blister and foot prep

- Walk in the socks you'll actually use.
- Learn where hotspots form.
- Treat them early.
- This is what most people mess up.

Elevation training

You do not need mountains to train for hills, but you do need some exposure to climbing and descending.

Options

- Local hills, downs, or coastal paths
- Stair repeats
- Incline treadmill

Simple method

Add one elevation-focused session per week from week 5 onward. It does not need to be dramatic. It just needs to be regular.

Training mistakes to avoid

1. Buying shoes late and hoping they will somehow work on the Camino.

2. Adding pack weight too aggressively.

3. Skipping hill practice entirely, then getting surprised by descents.

4. Ignoring hotspots until they are full blisters.

Strength, mobility, and injury prevention

Keep this simple and doable. You do not need a perfect athlete routine to benefit from basic strength and mobility work.

Strength and injury prevention

Optional but useful 2-3x per week. These help your legs and trunk tolerate repeated walking and backpack load.

Lower body

- Squats
- Lunges
- Step-ups
- Calf raises
- Glute bridges

Core

- Planks
- Dead bugs

Simple rep rule

2-3 sets • 8-15 reps

Mobility and stretching

Think of this as injury prevention, not flexibility training. Five to ten minutes is enough.

- Calves
- Hamstrings
- Hip flexors
- Lower back

Keep the routine short

A short routine you actually repeat beats a perfect one you stop doing after week two.

When to stop versus push

Usually okay to keep going

Mild soreness, normal fatigue, and predictable training heaviness the day after a longer session.

Pause and reassess

Pain that changes your stride, keeps escalating, or makes you compensate elsewhere.

Stop

Sharp pain, swelling, or anything that makes normal walking feel unstable or unsafe.

Weekly tracker

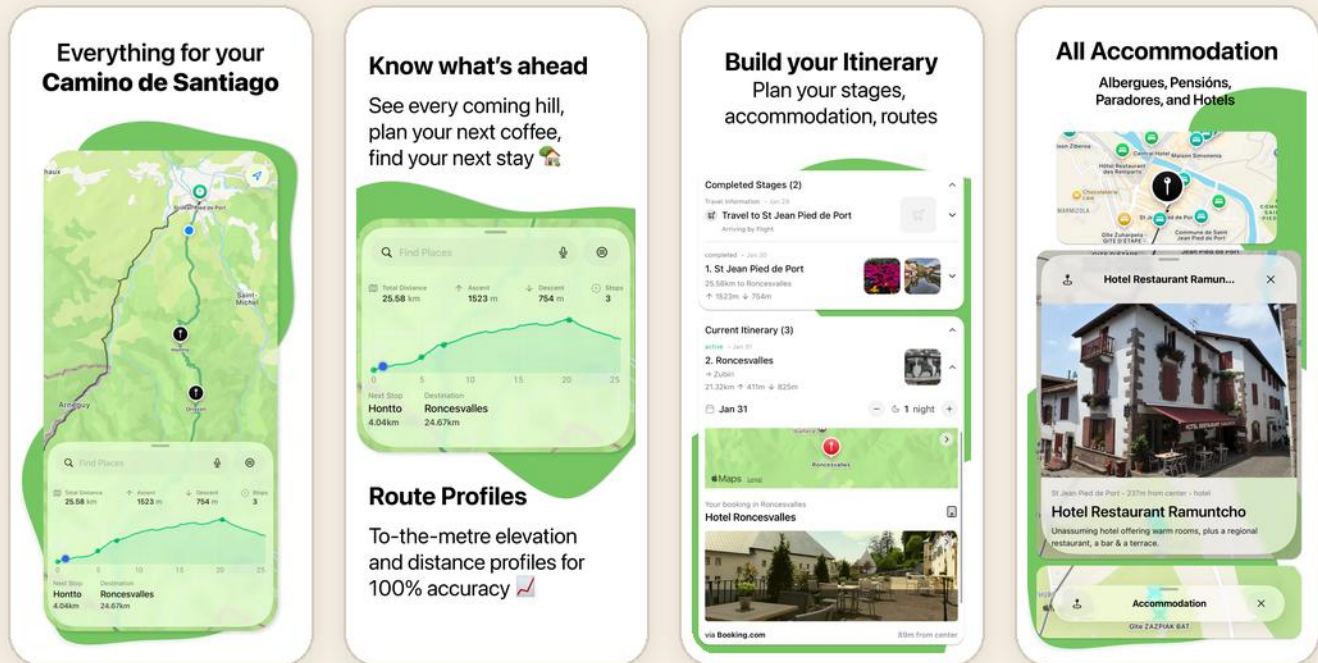
People love ticking boxes because it turns training into visible progress. Print this page or use it as a weekly check-in.

Week	Short Walks	Long Walk	Strength	Notes
1	☐	☐	☐	
2	☐	☐	☐	
3	☐	☐	☐	
4	☐	☐	☐	
5	☐	☐	☐	
6	☐	☐	☐	
7	☐	☐	☐	
8	☐	☐	☐	
9	☐	☐	☐	
10	☐	☐	☐	
11	☐	☐	☐	
12	☐	☐	☐	

Track the four things that matter most: whether you walked regularly, whether the long walk happened, whether strength work stayed in the week, and anything your body is trying to tell you.

Plan your Camino in Camino Maps

Plan your stages and find places to stay along your route, then keep your training and planning connected.



What the app helps with

- Choose your trail and compare route styles
- See accommodation with photos, reviews, and booking links
- Build stages and understand what each day asks of you
- Keep route profiles and localities in one place
- Use the packing list beside your real trip plan
- Move from training and preparation into actual Camino execution

Camino Maps app

Start on the web: <https://caminomaps.org>

iPhone: <https://apps.apple.com/gb/app/camino-maps/id6449408666?uo=4>

Android: <https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=org.caminoapp>