

PLANNING A TRAINING WALK

There are many resources for planning safe walking routes. In addition to planning walks at local parks, community centers and trails, there are fantastic online mapping tools that can help. These include mapmywalk.com, gmap-pedometer.com and rungeoapp.com.

**Please keep in mind that you should always walk or drive a route before leading an official training walk to ensure the route is safe and there are no surprises.*

Many of our veteran training walk leaders have 3-4 core routes that they add distance to as the training mileage increases over the course of the season. If you're a first-time training walk leader, your 3-Day Coach may pair you up with a veteran walk leader in your area for your first walk or two. The veteran leaders are an incredible resource for sharing knowledge and tips. Going out to join another leader's walks from time to time is also a great way to expand your horizons and keep your own training fresh.

Distance

Many of the walkers you'll be training with will be new to distance walking and/or do not currently have a training regimen. You may be new to it yourself. Start out with easy walks (low mileage and on flat surfaces) and gradually increase distance and difficulty.

Use the suggested training program (located at The3Day.org/Training) to help plan your training walk schedule. The suggested training program was created by our medical team to ensure gradual and safe training. By following it, you can help ensure the success of yourself and your training partners, and also create consistency across all of the training walks in your area.

As the suggested training program mileage increases, it's a good idea to provide options for shorter distances. The following suggestions are great ways to involve those who are at various levels of their training, while still allowing everyone to take advantage of the camaraderie of the training walk community.

1. **Loops.** Plan a circular route of a relatively short distance. This allows walkers to decide for themselves how many times they want to walk the loop. This plan has the added benefit of looping back by the car for hydration refills!
2. **Go out and back.** Plan a route that goes out in one direction and returns on the same course. Walkers have the option of turning around at any point that's comfortable to them.
3. **Shortcuts.** Build shortcuts into a longer route and tell your walking group about them before you start, or detail them on your route map or directions.

As you plan your route, scout out available restroom and hydration stops. There is a direct correlation between the frequency of restrooms and walkers' willingness to continue hydrating. Frequent restroom stops reduce the risk that someone will suffer from dehydration on your training walk. Please make an effort to locate toilets and hydration stops - approximately three miles apart on your route. This will help walkers build good hydration habits, which will make their Susan G. Komen 3-Day® experience safe, successful and enjoyable. If utilizing public restrooms at gas stations, coffee shops or restaurants, you may want to introduce yourself and the Komen 3-Day beforehand. Let the establishment know that your group may be coming by to use its facilities.

Hills

In order to prepare for every type of walking condition we encourage you to incorporate hills into some of your walks. When including hills on your route, try to give walkers enough distance before the hill to warm up and include a note in your walk post letting everyone know what to expect.

Varying Terrain

It's important to train on all types of terrain. Walking strictly on crushed limestone paths will not properly

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prepare your body for walking on concrete sidewalk or asphalt. It's a good bet the 3-Day® event route will include just about every type of walking surface, and your training should as well. You may also experience heat, cold, or rain during the event, so you'll want to be prepared for anything.

Back-to-Back Walks

As it gets closer to the time of your 3-Day event, and following the guidelines set forth in the suggested training program, you'll want to schedule long back-to-back training walks. For example, walking 18 miles on Saturday and then walking 15 miles on Sunday. This will prepare you and your fellow walkers for the conditions of the 3-Day. Be sure to work up to back-to-back distances gradually, and do not do them too often.

Route Maps and Directions

In planning your route you will probably print out turn-by-turn directions or a map for yourself. We recommend that you also provide it to your walking group in order to keep the walk safe and organized. Please make sure the directions are easy to read and understand. Keep them legible and brief while still pointing out any hazards, toilets, hydration stops, etc. Be sure to include noticeable landmarks if there aren't readily visible street signs or distance markers. If you can't provide a route map, briefly talk about the route before you begin walking so the group has an idea of what lies ahead.

Having Trouble Planning a Walk?

Contact your 3-Day Coach or reach out to your fellow training walk leaders via the 3-Day Facebook groups. In the Facebook groups, you can post a question to your fellow participants and get some great ideas about how to plan a safe route and lead a fun training walk. They can also provide suggestions to inspire your attendees to achieve their fundraising goals and how to pack and prepare for the event. You are also encouraged to contact your coach for ideas and assistance.

The same websites (mapmywalk.com, runngoapp.com, gmap-pedometer.com) that can help you measure the distance of your walk can also help you find new routes. Don't be afraid to reach outside of the 3-Day community to other walking enthusiasts for ideas about new walking routes to try.

