



Colorado Outfitters Training Advice

Congratulations on deciding to hunt with Colorado Outfitters! Whether this is your first trip to the Rockies or your tenth, you need to be ready for whatever adventure lies ahead of you. As you look over your gear list, don't forget your most important piece of equipment- your body.

While the crew at Colorado Outfitters will take great care of you while you are with them, you owe it to yourself, your hunting partners, the guides and the stock to be ready to hunt hard when you get to Colorado. ***What does hunting hard mean? It means you are prepared to be up before dark and ready to stay late if that's what it takes. It means you are ready to hike up and around the next ridge to get the wind right for your stalk. It means that you can and will be able to get over the mountain on the last day to chase down your quarry without an ounce of quit in you.***

A high level of physical fitness will ensure that you have the best hunt you possibly can and you will enjoy your hunt more. It will serve you in good stead when things are tough, as they will be from time to time. Hunting big country on foot and by horseback is one of the most rewarding ways to pursue an animal, but it isn't easy. It honestly wouldn't be as much fun if it was. Being well trained will also increase your mental toughness, allowing you to get the most out of the entire experience.

To get fit and perform well on a hunt in the Rocky Mountain West, you need to go beyond the typical 30 minute per day routine on the treadmill. You do not need

to be a marathon runner. The typical gym routine or high intensity interval training program (Cross fit or 'boot camps') alone will not cut it. Unless you are currently a hunting guide or professional mountaineer, you need to train to get ready to hunt. What you did last year or two decades ago in high school doesn't count. Thankfully, everyone can improve their level of fitness to a degree that will enhance a hunting adventure. Assess your current level of fitness and overall health; strive to make improvements week by week until your trip. Be honest with yourself. Talk to your physician about your trip; make sure it is safe for you to train and be sure to include a discussion on altitude. The earlier you start training before your hunt, the more fit you will become. Lose a little weight. You need to develop an improved level of performance that will allow you to move in rough terrain for several days in a row.

What should you do? ***As early as possible, no later than June, you need to start training. Work up to four to six days per week that should progress to hunting specific training until you depart for Colorado Outfitters.*** This will include shorter more intense sessions of strength and aerobic conditioning, as well as longer efforts. Early on, be very general with your fitness. Start with long walks and bike rides (60-90+ minutes) as well as more classic weight lifting activities (Squats, lunges, dead lifts, pushups, etc). When you are about 12 weeks from your trip, you need to take that general fitness and start to turn it into hunting specific fitness. Your walks will need to turn into hikes in your hunting boots with a weighted pack (even if you are not going on a backpack hunt). Get into the hills for an hour or two to breathe hard and sweat, or find a lot of stairs to climb if you don't have hills nearby. Strength training should include a lot of step ups, lunges, weight carries, core work and push/pull exercises. Set a goal to increase your leg strength and overall endurance.

Get ready for a great adventure. Stay disciplined and committed to your training so that you can hunt hard until the last day of your trip. When you shoot that buck or bull, you'll know you earned it!