

## 60 seconds with Ally van de Pol - Dragon Fitness and Coaching

### What do you take on a hike?

I bring plenty of water, more than I think is needed. If you plan to hike for over an hour and it's likely to be hot add some electrolyte - this will prevent cramping and give you a little sugar boost, I really like Tailwind.

Snacks are more of a personal choice but you need sugar to sustain you, my favourites are dried mango trail mix and nuts. Bananas are also great but I find they are too easily bruised in transit.

Other things everyone should take include a phone in case of emergencies, good trail shoes with great grip and a torch in case you get lost and it gets dark. Also remember to bring a buddy - especially if you haven't hiked a particular trail before. There are a number of trails I would happily run on my own but it can still be risky. You may get lost and two heads is always better than one.

### Things you shouldn't do on a hike?

Don't go out in the heat of the day. Even in autumn we can get scorching days.

Heatstroke, half way up a mountain can hit very quickly and can be life threatening. If you're hungover or feeling a bit sick then don't go hiking - I've done both of these and suffered the consequences. The former can be especially dangerous as you are already dehydrated. Also, don't litter and take your rubbish home and don't go where signs tell you not to.

### How can I develop better hiking abilities?

Hike frequently to develop your stamina and strength but also consider strength training to develop your legs and core stability. Losing balance is easily done on trails, which could result in falls or hanging off or down a steep slope. My favourite exercises include lunges, squats and the Palloff Press.

### Do you warm up before a hike?

I perform a bunch of mobility drills as a warm up - no static stretches before you start, you want to get the muscles warm and the nervous system firing. Think jumping jacks, mountain

climbers, walking lunges etc. Stretching afterwards is just as important - do these as soon as possible when you finish, focus on hamstrings, calves, quads and hips.



### How should I deal with soreness after a hike?

If your legs feel achy or sore after a hike, try alternating hot and cold blasts on your legs in the shower for 10 minutes. For best results, do this as soon as possible after hiking.

### Any tips for beginners?

A hike should be fun, enjoy it, say hello to people and if you're really not enjoying it, stop and look around you, there's bound to be a glorious view. Hiking can be hard work, but the up will turn into a down before you know it. Whatever your motivation is, hiking in Hong Kong is one of the best (and cheapest) ways to spend a day or an afternoon.