

CAMINO CORNERSTONES

GETTING THERE - MOBILITY PLAN

A practical three-stage approach for long-distance walkers.

PRE-WALK: Get Ready (Standing Only)

5-7 minutes | Standing mobility to wake up the body and prepare for walking

1 Arm Swings



2 Standing Cat-Cow / Pelvic Tilts



3 Standing Hip Rotations



4 Moon Squats



5 Calf Raises + Toe Raises



MID-WALK: Reset (Seated to Standing)

7-10 minutes | Release tension, restore easy movement, and get back on the way

1 Seated Figure Four



2 Seated Side Stretch



3 Seated Hamstring Stretch



4 Wide Dog (Hands Supported)



5 Supported Blaster (Optional)



POST-WALK: Recover & Restore (Floor-Based)

25-35 minutes | Deep stretching for flexibility, recovery and long-term durability

1 Half Frog



2 Blaster



3 Pigeon



Variation I
Leg to Center

Variation II
Leg Out to Side

Variation III
Leg Across Body

4 Flamenco (Choose One Variation)

5 Pancake



Finish

Knees to Chest (20-30 sec)



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Savasana (2-5 min)



How to Use This Guide

Long-distance walking asks the body to perform the same basic movement pattern thousands of times over many hours. The body's needs are different before the first step, during a mid-walk break, and after the walking day is complete. These three routines are intentionally different in position, intensity, and purpose.

Stage	Environment	Position	Objective	Stretch style	Total duration
Pre-Walk GET READY	Hotel, albergue, campsite, trailhead, or outside before departure	Standing only	Mobilize joints and activate walking-specific muscles without fatigue.	Dynamic mobility and activation.	About 5 min, plus 5–10 min easy walking
Mid-Walk RESET	Café, bench, picnic table, rest area, or trailside stop	Seated, then standing with chair support	Work out stiffness and restore comfortable movement.	Gentle mobility and short sustained stretches.	About 6–8 min core; 8–10 min with optional stretch
Post-Walk RECOVER & RESTORE	Anywhere with flat ground or floor space	Primarily floor-based	Address loaded tissues, develop flexibility, and transition into recovery.	Deep sustained stretching with brief resets.	About 25–35 min

THE THREE-STAGE APPROACH

Pre-Walk: Mobilize → Activate → Walk

Mid-Walk: Rest → Work out the kinks → Stand → Resume walking

Post-Walk: Recover → Deep stretch → Reset → Downregulate

The goal is not to stretch as deeply as possible at every opportunity. Morning movement prepares the body to perform. Mid-walk movement restores comfortable range without leaving the body overly relaxed or fatigued. Post-walk stretching provides the time and setting for deeper flexibility work.

TRANSITION AND RESET GUIDELINE

Between exercises or deeper poses, allow approximately 20–30 seconds for an easy transition or reset. Change positions gradually, move the joints gently, and allow the body to settle before beginning the next pose.

General guidance: Stretching should create controlled, tolerable tension rather than sharp pain. Stop if a movement produces pain, numbness, tingling, or worsening joint discomfort.

Pre-Walk: Get Ready

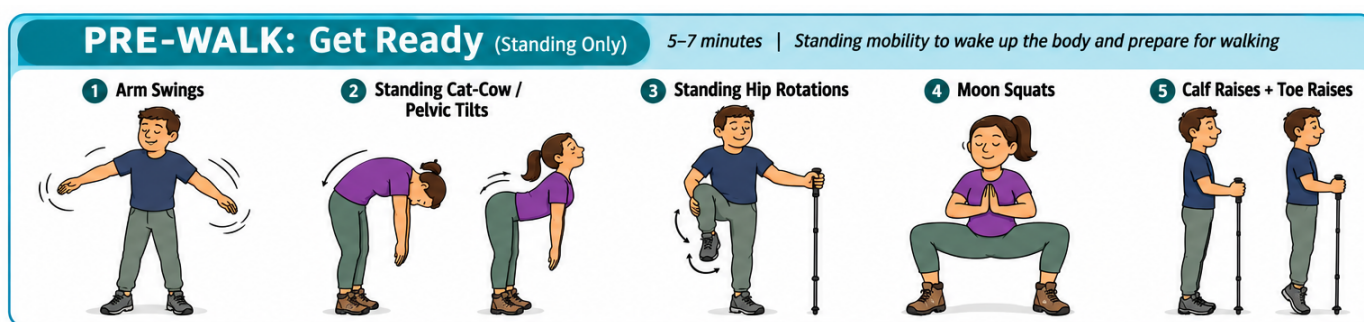
Standing Morning Warm-Up for a Long Walking Day

TOTAL DURATION

Approximately 5 minutes of standing mobility and activation, followed by 5–10 minutes of deliberately easy walking. Allow approximately 20–30 seconds as needed to transition between exercises.

Purpose

Prepare the joints and movement patterns used throughout the walking day without fatiguing them. This is a dynamic mobility routine, not a deep-stretching session. All exercises are standing so the routine can be done almost anywhere before departure.



1. ARM SWINGS

Position

Standing

Duration

45–60 seconds

Primary focus

Shoulders and arms

Secondary focus

Chest and upper back

How to do it: Stand comfortably upright with soft knees. Swing the arms forward and backward in an easy rhythm. Gradually make the movement larger. Progress into alternating or cross-body swings if comfortable.

Why it is here: Arm Swings provide a low-demand way to begin moving, mobilize the shoulders and upper back, and prepare the upper body for natural arm swing or trekking-pole use.

Transition / reset: Take 20–30 seconds to settle into the next position, using easy shoulder or torso movement if desired.

2. STANDING CAT-COW / PELVIC TILTS

Position	Standing
Duration	8–10 slow cycles
Primary focus	Spine and pelvis
Secondary focus	Abdominals, shoulders, and hips

How to do it: Stand with knees slightly bent and hands lightly on the thighs. Exhale and gently round the back while tucking the pelvis. Inhale, tip the pelvis in the opposite direction, lift the chest, and gently extend the spine. Move smoothly without forcing either end range.

Why it is here: Walking requires coordinated movement between the pelvis and spine. This helps reduce morning stiffness and begins moving both before hours of repetitive gait.

Transition / reset: Stand tall and move comfortably for 20–30 seconds before beginning the hip rotations.

3. STANDING HIP ROTATIONS

Position	Standing, with support if needed
Duration	5–8 slow rotations per side
Primary focus	Hip internal and external rotation
Secondary focus	Glutes and deep hip rotators

How to do it: Stand beside a wall, chair, railing, or trekking pole. Shift weight onto one leg and lift the other foot an inch or two, keeping the knee slightly bent. Rotate the entire thigh inward so the knee and toes turn inward together, then outward so they turn outward together. The movement comes from the hip; the foot simply follows the thigh. Repeat on the other side.

Why it is here: Walking moves the hips primarily forward and backward. Standing Hip Rotations explore internal and external rotation before asking the hips to repeat essentially the same gait cycle thousands of times.

Transition / reset: Plant both feet and walk or shift weight gently from side to side for 20–30 seconds.

4. MOON SQUATS

Position	Standing
Duration	8–12 slow repetitions
Primary focus	Hips, knees, and ankles
Secondary focus	Glutes and lower back

How to do it: Stand in a comfortable squat stance. Bend through the hips, knees, and ankles and descend only as deeply as feels appropriate. Return smoothly to standing. Let depth increase naturally as the joints warm.

Why it is here: Moon Squats progress the routine from isolated mobility into coordinated, weight-bearing movement and prepare the major lower-body joints to work together.

Transition / reset: Stand and shake out the legs or take a few easy steps for 20–30 seconds.

5. CALF RAISES + TOE RAISES

Position	Standing, with support if desired
Duration	10–15 calf raises followed by 10–15 toe raises
Primary focus	Calves and anterior lower leg
Secondary focus	Ankles, Achilles complex, and feet

How to do it: For calf raises, slowly rise onto the balls of the feet and lower with control. For toe raises, keep the heels grounded and lift the forefoot and toes toward the shins. Use support for balance if needed.

Why it is here: Calf raises prepare the muscles responsible for propulsion. Toe raises activate the anterior lower leg, including the tibialis anterior, which helps control the foot during gait and works particularly hard on descents.

Transition into Easy Walking

Primary focus	Whole-body gait preparation
Secondary focus	Gradual cardiovascular and tissue warm-up

How to do it: Start easier than your normal all-day pace. Keep the stride comfortable and allow pace and stride length to increase naturally as the body warms.

Why it is here: Walking itself is the most specific warm-up for walking and transitions the mobility work into the movement pattern used for the rest of the day.

MORNING RULE

Dynamic mobility first. Avoid aggressive, long passive stretching immediately before a long walking day. Begin feeling mobile and prepared, not deeply stretched or fatigued.

Mid-Walk: Reset

Chair-Based and Supported Mobility for a Long Walking Day

TOTAL DURATION

Approximately 6–8 minutes for the core sequence and approximately 8–10 minutes if the optional Supported Blaster is included. The first two stretches can be incorporated into time already spent eating, drinking, or resting.

Purpose

Work out the kinks that accumulate during several hours of walking without turning the break into a deep-stretching session. Begin with two casual seated stretches while still relaxing. The remaining movements become part of the transition from sitting back to walking.



1. SEATED FIGURE FOUR

Position

Seated in a chair or on a bench

Duration

Minimum 2 minutes per side

Primary focus

Glutes and piriformis

Secondary focus

External hip rotators and posterior hip

How to do it: Sit toward the front of a stable chair or bench. Place one ankle across the opposite thigh, keeping the foot gently flexed. Sit tall. If more sensation is desired, hinge slightly forward from the hips while keeping the spine long. Repeat on the other side.

Why it is here: This can be done casually while eating, drinking, or resting. After several hours of repetitive gait, it provides a comfortable way to open the posterior hip and deep rotators without getting onto the ground.

Transition / reset: Uncross the legs and sit naturally for 20–30 seconds before changing to the side stretch.

2. SEATED SIDE STRETCH

Position

Seated

Duration

30 - 60 seconds per side

Primary focus

Lateral torso and obliques

Secondary focus

Lats, shoulders, and lateral hip

How to do it: Sit tall with both feet grounded. Hold the chair or bench lightly with one hand. Reach the opposite arm overhead and gently bend away from that side. Create length from the hip through the ribs and fingertips rather than collapsing sideways. Repeat on the other side.

Why it is here: Like Figure Four, this can be done casually while you are still resting. It introduces lateral movement after hours of predominantly forward movement and opens the side body, shoulders, and lats, which can become stiff while walking or carrying a pack.

Transition / reset: Sit normally for 20–30 seconds, then move toward the front of the chair as you begin preparing to get underway.

3. SEATED HAMSTRING STRETCH

Position

Seated at the front edge of a chair or bench

Duration

1 to 2 minutes per side

Primary focus

Hamstrings

Secondary focus

Calves and posterior hip

How to do it: Extend one leg with the heel on the ground and the knee comfortably straight. Keep the other foot planted. Sit tall and hinge slightly forward from the hips until a light stretch is felt along the back of the extended leg. Repeat on the other side.

Why it is here: This begins the transition from resting to moving again. The goal is simply to work out stiffness in the posterior leg before standing, not to produce a deep hamstring stretch.

Transition / reset: Bring both feet underneath you and sit upright for 20–30 seconds. Stand gradually.

4. WIDE DOG

Position

Standing, hands supported on a stable chair, bench, railing, wall, or similar surface

Duration

1 to 2 minutes

Primary focus

Spine and hamstrings

Secondary focus

Shoulders, lats, and calves

How to do it: Face a stable support and place both hands on it. Walk the feet backward and send the hips away from the hands until the torso lengthens toward horizontal. Soften the knees as needed. Focus on making the spine long and creating space through the back rather than maximizing the hamstring stretch.

Why it is here: Wide Dog is part of getting back underway. It provides a brief sense of spinal decompression after hours upright, opens the shoulders, and gently lengthens the posterior chain without requiring you to get onto the ground.

Transition / reset: Stand upright slowly and walk or shift weight gently for 20–30 seconds.

OPTIONAL 5 SUPPORTED BLASTER / HIP FLEXOR STRETCH

Position	Standing, using a stable chair or bench
Duration	1 to 2 minutes per side
Primary focus	Hip flexors and anterior hip
Secondary focus	Quadriceps and groin

How to do it: Place one foot securely on a stable chair or bench and extend the opposite leg behind you. Keep the torso upright and gradually move the hips forward and slightly downward toward the elevated front leg. Seek a light opening through the front of the rear hip rather than aggressively arching the lower back. Repeat on the other side.

Why it is here: This is an optional final transition for walkers who feel restricted through the front of the hips, particularly after climbing. The short hold is intentional. Mid-walk is about working out the kinks, not deep flexibility training.

Transition / reset: Stand comfortably for 20–30 seconds before putting on your pack and resuming the walk.

Return to Walking

Primary focus	Gradual return to gait
Secondary focus	Re-establishing comfortable rhythm

How to do it: Put the pack back on and begin at an easy pace. Give the body a couple of minutes to find its walking rhythm before returning to normal pace.

Why it is here: You have been sitting and briefly stretching and possibly eating and drinking. A gradual restart transitions the body back into loaded repetitive movement.

MID-WALK RULE

This is not the day's deep-stretching session. The seated stretches can be relaxed and unhurried, but the getting-underway stretches should remain brief. Resume walking feeling less stiff, not deeply stretched, loose, or fatigued.

Post-Walk: Recover & Restore

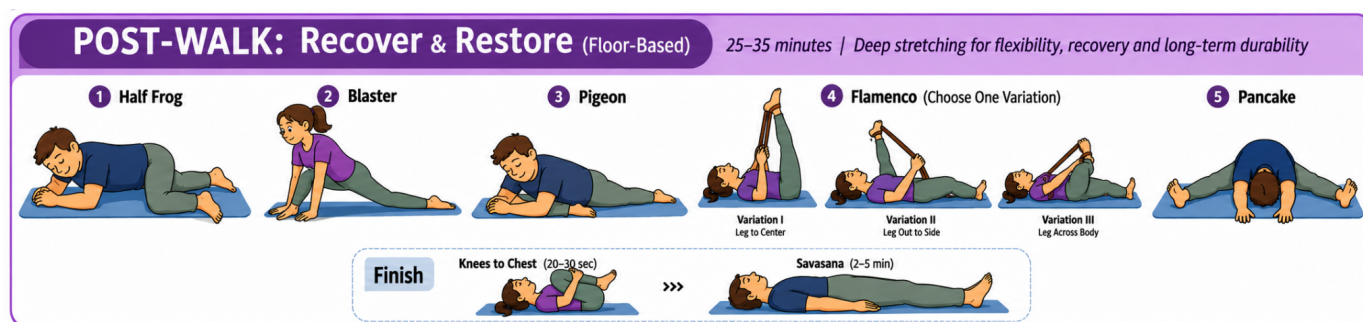
Floor-Based Deep Stretching After a Long Walking Day

TOTAL DURATION

Approximately 25–35 minutes depending on pose selection, transitions, and whether optional Pancake is included. Hold each unilateral deep stretch for approximately 2 minutes per side and each centered stretch for approximately 2 minutes.

Purpose

The walking day is complete. The objective now changes from preparing for performance to recovery and flexibility development. With floor space available and no need to immediately resume walking, sustained holds can address the major tissues loaded during the day.



1. HALF FROG

Position	Prone, lying on the stomach
Duration	2 minutes per side
Primary focus	Quadriceps
Secondary focus	Hip flexors and front of thigh

How to do it: Lie on the stomach. Bend one knee and bring the heel toward the same-side hip. Use the hand or a strap according to your normal Half Frog setup. Keep the pelvis as neutral and grounded as practical. Repeat on the other side.

Why it is here: The quadriceps work continuously during walking and are especially taxed by climbing and the eccentric demands of descending. Half Frog gives the front of the thigh focused attention once the walking day is finished.

Transition / reset: Release the leg and rest comfortably for 20–30 seconds before changing sides or moving into the next pose.

2. BLASTER

Position	Floor-based
Duration	2 minutes per side
Primary focus	Hip flexors and groin
Secondary focus	Quadriceps and lower back

How to do it: Set up in your established Blaster position. Gradually settle until a sustained stretch is felt through the front of the hip. Keep the pelvis controlled and avoid substituting excessive lower-back extension for hip extension. Use padding or props as needed.

Why it is here: Prolonged walking can leave the anterior hip feeling restricted. With the walking day finished, Blaster can now be used as a deeper hip-flexor stretch rather than the brief supported variation used during a walking break.

Transition / reset: Come out slowly and use 20–30 seconds of comfortable movement or neutral positioning before the next side or pose.

3. PIGEON

Position	Floor-based
Duration	2 minutes per side
Primary focus	Glutes and piriformis
Secondary focus	Deep hip rotators, hip capsule, and lower back

How to do it: Set the front leg in a comfortable Pigeon position with the opposite leg extending behind. Keep the hips supported and as level as practical. Use a folded blanket, cushion, or block if needed. Remain upright or gradually fold forward as appropriate. Repeat on the other side.

Why it is here: Pigeon complements the anterior-hip work of Blaster by addressing posterior and deep hip structures that can become tight during repetitive gait.

Reset: Windshield Wipers

Position	Supine, lying on the back
Duration	20–30 seconds
Primary focus	Gentle hip rotation
Secondary focus	Lower back and glutes

How to do it: Lie on the back with knees bent and feet on the floor. Allow both knees to move gently from side to side through a comfortable range.

Why it is here: Windshield Wipers provide an easy movement reset after the deeper hip work. The objective is simply to let the hips and lower back move freely before beginning the next sustained stretch.

4. FLAMENCO I, II & III (CHOOSE ONE VARIATION)

Position	Supine, lying on the back, using a strap or towel to hold your foot/leg
Duration	2 minutes per side
Primary focus	Hamstrings, with emphasis changing by variation
Secondary focus	Adductors, lateral hip/leg structures, and related tissues depending on the variation selected

How to do it: Lie on your back with one leg extended straight along the floor. Loop a strap around the foot of the working leg and use the strap to support the leg rather than pulling aggressively. Keep the pelvis grounded and the working knee as straight as is comfortable. Choose one Flamenco variation per session:

- Flamenco I — Leg to Center: Bring the working leg straight up toward the ceiling while the opposite leg remains extended on the floor.
- Flamenco II — Leg Out to Side: From the upright position, allow the working leg to open out to the side while keeping the opposite leg long and grounded.
- Flamenco III — Leg Across Body: Bring the working leg across the body toward the opposite side while keeping the opposite leg extended and the movement controlled.

Hold the selected variation for 2 minutes per side. On consecutive walking days, rotate the variations so the emphasis changes from day to day: Day 1 — Flamenco I, Day 2 — Flamenco II, Day 3 — Flamenco III, then repeat.

Why it is here: Flamenco is well suited to the post-walk routine because it allows sustained hamstring work while lying comfortably on the floor, with the strap providing support. The three variations change the angle of the working leg, thereby shifting the emphasis across the hamstrings, inner thighs, and lateral hip/leg structures. Rotating the variations from day to day provides broader mobility work without unnecessarily lengthening a single recovery session.

Transition / reset: Release the strap slowly, return both legs to a comfortable neutral position, and rest the legs for 20–30 seconds before changing sides or moving on to the next pose.

5 PANCAKE (Optional)

Position	Seated on the floor, centered
Duration	2 - 3 minutes
Primary focus	Adductors and hamstrings
Secondary focus	Hips and lower back

How to do it: Sit with the legs comfortably apart. Establish a tall spine and gradually hinge forward from the hips toward the center. Use cushions, blocks, or other support as needed. Allow the position to develop gradually rather than forcing the torso toward the floor.

Why it is here: Pancake adds a centered stretch for the inner thighs and posterior chain, bringing movement outside the predominantly forward-and-back pattern of walking. It is optional because the core routine already contains substantial hip and hamstring work.

Transition / reset: Return upright gradually and take 20–30 seconds to reposition comfortably onto the back.

6. KNEES TO CHEST

Position	Supine, lying on the back
Duration	20–30 seconds
Primary focus	Lower back and glutes
Secondary focus	Hips

How to do it: Lie on the back and gently draw both knees toward the chest. Hold behind the thighs or around the shins. Relax the shoulders and neck. Add gentle side-to-side rocking if desired.

Why it is here: This is a reset rather than another deep stretch. It allows the lower back and hips to settle after the sustained poses and creates a natural transition into final relaxation.

7. SAVASANA

Position	Supine, lying on the back
Duration	2 – 5 minutes
Primary focus	Whole-body relaxation and nervous-system downregulation
Secondary focus	Integration and recovery

How to do it: Lie comfortably on the back with the legs relaxed and arms resting away from the body. Use support under the knees or head if helpful. Allow the breath to become natural and release unnecessary muscular effort.

Why it is here: The post-walk routine is about recovery as well as flexibility. Savasana creates a deliberate transition from physical work into rest and marks the end of the session.

POST-WALK RULE

This is the appropriate time for deeper flexibility work, but deeper does not mean forced. Aim for 2 minutes per side on unilateral stretches. Choose positions that can be sustained while breathing comfortably.

Quick Reference

Use this page as a visual reminder of the three-stage sequence. Refer to the detailed routine pages for timing, alignment, and coaching cues.

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2 Standing Cat-Cow / Pelvic Tilts



3 Standing Hip Rotations



4 Moon Squats



5 Calf Raises + Toe Raises



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7–10 minutes | Release tension, restore easy movement, and get back on the way

1 Seated Figure Four



2 Seated Side Stretch



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4 Wide Dog (Hands Supported)



5 Supported Blaster (Optional)



POST-WALK: Recover & Restore (Floor-Based)

25–35 minutes | Deep stretching for flexibility, recovery and long-term durability

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2 Blaster



3 Pigeon



4 Flamenco (Choose One Variation)



5 Pancake



Finish

Knees to Chest (20–30 sec)



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Savasana (2–5 min)

