

IRONHIKE

Amicalola Falls State Park — Dawsonville, GA

12-Week Intermediate Training Plan

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Targets: Denali (48-hour), Everest (72-hour)

12-Week Intermediate Training Plan

Target Events: Denali (48-hour), Everest (72-hour)

Weekly Cadence: 5 active days, 1 strength day, 1 rest day (lightens up periodically for recovery)

Core Strategy: IronHike is an elevation-based endurance series — your event is measured in feet of climbing, not just miles, so this plan is built around vertical gain first. Stair and hill tempo work plus back-to-back long days build the vertical speed and multi-set endurance to sustain 48–72 hours of climbing. Every session can be hiked, run, or a mix of both — use whichever lets you sustain the prescribed time or distance, but prioritize the climbing.

Training Away From the Venue

You don't need to be at Amicalola Falls to run this plan. Find a stair system near you — stadium or high school bleachers, a parking garage stairwell, a tall office building's fire stairs, or a long outdoor staircase all work. Each "set" in this plan targets about 604 ft of climbing (roughly 604 steps); find a local stair set of a similar size and repeat it the number of times listed to hit the day's total. If your local stairs are shorter, add more sets to match the total elevation gain.

WEEK 1

Day	Activity / Workout Details
Monday	Rest & active recovery.
Tuesday	50 min stair- or hill-focused fartlek (speed-play intervals — hike or run) — 10 min warm-up, alternating 3 min hard climb / 3 min easy recovery, 10 min cool-down.
Wednesday	50 min steady, sustainable-pace hike or run + 25 min bodyweight circuit (squats, walking lunges, step-ups on a curb or stair, calf raises, push-ups, plank hold).
Thursday	40 min recovery hike or jog.
Friday	40 min easy walk or jog.
Saturday	Long Day 1: 4 sets on local stairs (aim for about 604 ft / 604 steps per set — similar to the Amicalola staircase), totaling roughly 6 mi equivalent / 2,416 ft. Heavy vertical focus — hike, run, or a mix of both.
Sunday	Long Day 2: 2 sets on the same local stairs on tired legs (roughly 3 mi equivalent / 1,208 ft), simulating the second half of a multi-hour push — hike, run, or a mix of both.

WEEK 2

Day	Activity / Workout Details
Monday	Rest & active recovery.
Tuesday	55 min stair- or hill-focused fartlek (speed-play intervals — hike or run) — 10 min warm-up, alternating 3 min hard climb / 3 min easy recovery, 10 min cool-down.
Wednesday	55 min steady, sustainable-pace hike or run + 30 min bodyweight circuit (squats, walking lunges, step-ups on a curb or stair, calf raises, push-ups, plank hold).
Thursday	45 min recovery hike or jog.
Friday	45 min easy walk or jog.
Saturday	Long Day 1: 5 sets on local stairs (aim for about 604 ft / 604 steps per set — similar to the Amicalola staircase), totaling roughly 7.5 mi equivalent / 3,020 ft. Heavy vertical focus — hike, run, or a mix of both.
Sunday	Long Day 2: 3 sets on the same local stairs on tired legs (roughly 4.5 mi equivalent / 1,812 ft), simulating the second half of a multi-hour push — hike, run, or a mix of both.

WEEK 3

Day	Activity / Workout Details
Monday	Rest & active recovery.
Tuesday	60 min stair- or hill-focused fartlek (speed-play intervals — hike or run) — 10 min warm-up, alternating 3 min hard climb / 3 min easy recovery, 10 min cool-down.
Wednesday	60 min steady, sustainable-pace hike or run + 30 min bodyweight circuit (squats, walking lunges, step-ups on a curb or stair, calf raises, push-ups, plank hold).
Thursday	50 min recovery hike or jog.
Friday	50 min easy walk or jog.
Saturday	Long Day 1: 6 sets on local stairs (aim for about 604 ft / 604 steps per set — similar to the Amicalola staircase), totaling roughly 9 mi equivalent / 3,624 ft. Heavy vertical focus — hike, run, or a mix of both.
Sunday	Long Day 2: 3 sets on the same local stairs on tired legs (roughly 4.5 mi equivalent / 1,812 ft), simulating the second half of a multi-hour push — hike, run, or a mix of both.

WEEK 4

Day	Activity / Workout Details
Monday	Rest & active recovery.
Tuesday	35 min easy hike or jog, conversational effort — skip the hard climbing surges this week.
Wednesday	35 min easy hike or jog + 20 min light bodyweight circuit (squats, lunges, calf raises).
Thursday	30 min easy recovery walk or jog.
Friday	30 min easy walk or jog.
Saturday	Long Day 1: 3 sets on local stairs (aim for about 604 ft / 604 steps per set — similar to the Amicalola staircase), totaling roughly 4.5 mi equivalent / 1,812 ft. Heavy vertical focus — hike, run, or a mix of both.
Sunday	Long Day 2: 2 sets on the same local stairs on tired legs (roughly 3 mi equivalent / 1,208 ft), simulating the second half of a multi-hour push — hike, run, or a mix of both.

WEEK 5

Day	Activity / Workout Details
Monday	Rest & active recovery.
Tuesday	50 min stair- or hill-focused fartlek (speed-play intervals — hike or run) — 10 min warm-up, alternating 3 min hard climb / 3 min easy recovery, 10 min cool-down.
Wednesday	50 min steady, sustainable-pace hike or run + 25 min bodyweight circuit (squats, walking lunges, step-ups on a curb or stair, calf raises, push-ups, plank hold).
Thursday	40 min recovery hike or jog.
Friday	40 min easy walk or jog.
Saturday	Long Day 1: 5 sets on local stairs (aim for about 604 ft / 604 steps per set — similar to the Amicalola staircase), totaling roughly 7.5 mi equivalent / 3,020 ft. Heavy vertical focus — hike, run, or a mix of both.
Sunday	Long Day 2: 3 sets on the same local stairs on tired legs (roughly 4.5 mi equivalent / 1,812 ft), simulating the second half of a multi-hour push — hike, run, or a mix of both.

WEEK 6

Day	Activity / Workout Details
Monday	Rest & active recovery.
Tuesday	55 min stair- or hill-focused fartlek (speed-play intervals — hike or run) — 10 min warm-up, alternating 3 min hard climb / 3 min easy recovery, 10 min cool-down.
Wednesday	55 min steady, sustainable-pace hike or run + 30 min bodyweight circuit (squats, walking lunges, step-ups on a curb or stair, calf raises, push-ups, plank hold).
Thursday	45 min recovery hike or jog.
Friday	45 min easy walk or jog.
Saturday	Long Day 1: 6 sets on local stairs (aim for about 604 ft / 604 steps per set — similar to the Amicalola staircase), totaling roughly 9 mi equivalent / 3,624 ft. Heavy vertical focus — hike, run, or a mix of both.
Sunday	Long Day 2: 3 sets on the same local stairs on tired legs (roughly 4.5 mi equivalent / 1,812 ft), simulating the second half of a multi-hour push — hike, run, or a mix of both.

WEEK 7

Day	Activity / Workout Details
Monday	Rest & active recovery.
Tuesday	60 min stair- or hill-focused fartlek (speed-play intervals — hike or run) — 10 min warm-up, alternating 3 min hard climb / 3 min easy recovery, 10 min cool-down.
Wednesday	60 min steady, sustainable-pace hike or run + 30 min bodyweight circuit (squats, walking lunges, step-ups on a curb or stair, calf raises, push-ups, plank hold).
Thursday	50 min recovery hike or jog.
Friday	50 min easy walk or jog.
Saturday	Long Day 1: 7 sets on local stairs (aim for about 604 ft / 604 steps per set — similar to the Amicalola staircase), totaling roughly 10.5 mi equivalent / 4,228 ft. Heavy vertical focus — hike, run, or a mix of both.
Sunday	Long Day 2: 4 sets on the same local stairs on tired legs (roughly 6 mi equivalent / 2,416 ft), simulating the second half of a multi-hour push — hike, run, or a mix of both.

WEEK 8

Day	Activity / Workout Details
Monday	Rest & active recovery.
Tuesday	35 min easy hike or jog, conversational effort — skip the hard climbing surges this week.
Wednesday	35 min easy hike or jog + 20 min light bodyweight circuit (squats, lunges, calf raises).

Day	Activity / Workout Details
Thursday	30 min easy recovery walk or jog.
Friday	30 min easy walk or jog.
Saturday	Long Day 1: 3 sets on local stairs (aim for about 604 ft / 604 steps per set — similar to the Amicalola staircase), totaling roughly 4.5 mi equivalent / 1,812 ft. Heavy vertical focus — hike, run, or a mix of both.
Sunday	Long Day 2: 2 sets on the same local stairs on tired legs (roughly 3 mi equivalent / 1,208 ft), simulating the second half of a multi-hour push — hike, run, or a mix of both.

WEEK 9

Day	Activity / Workout Details
Monday	Rest & active recovery.
Tuesday	50 min stair- or hill-focused fartlek (speed-play intervals — hike or run) — 10 min warm-up, alternating 3 min hard climb / 3 min easy recovery, 10 min cool-down.
Wednesday	50 min steady, sustainable-pace hike or run + 25 min bodyweight circuit (squats, walking lunges, step-ups on a curb or stair, calf raises, push-ups, plank hold).
Thursday	40 min recovery hike or jog.
Friday	40 min easy walk or jog.
Saturday	Long Day 1: 6 sets on local stairs (aim for about 604 ft / 604 steps per set — similar to the Amicalola staircase), totaling roughly 9 mi equivalent / 3,624 ft. Heavy vertical focus — hike, run, or a mix of both.
Sunday	Long Day 2: 3 sets on the same local stairs on tired legs (roughly 4.5 mi equivalent / 1,812 ft), simulating the second half of a multi-hour push — hike, run, or a mix of both.

WEEK 10

Day	Activity / Workout Details
Monday	Rest & active recovery.
Tuesday	55 min stair- or hill-focused fartlek (speed-play intervals — hike or run) — 10 min warm-up, alternating 3 min hard climb / 3 min easy recovery, 10 min cool-down.
Wednesday	55 min steady, sustainable-pace hike or run + 30 min bodyweight circuit (squats, walking lunges, step-ups on a curb or stair, calf raises, push-ups, plank hold).
Thursday	45 min recovery hike or jog.
Friday	45 min easy walk or jog.
Saturday	Long Day 1: 7 sets on local stairs (aim for about 604 ft / 604 steps per set — similar to the Amicalola staircase), totaling roughly 10.5 mi equivalent / 4,228 ft. Heavy vertical focus — hike, run, or a mix of both.
Sunday	Long Day 2: 4 sets on the same local stairs on tired legs (roughly 6 mi equivalent / 2,416 ft), simulating the second half of a multi-hour push — hike, run, or a mix of both.

WEEK 11

Day	Activity / Workout Details
Monday	Rest & active recovery.
Tuesday	60 min stair- or hill-focused fartlek (speed-play intervals — hike or run) — 10 min warm-up, alternating 3 min hard climb / 3 min easy recovery, 10 min cool-down.
Wednesday	60 min steady, sustainable-pace hike or run + 30 min bodyweight circuit (squats, walking lunges, step-ups on a curb or stair, calf raises, push-ups, plank hold).
Thursday	50 min recovery hike or jog.
Friday	50 min easy walk or jog.
Saturday	Long Day 1: 8 sets on local stairs (aim for about 604 ft / 604 steps per set — similar to the Amicalola staircase), totaling roughly 12 mi equivalent / 4,832 ft. Heavy vertical focus — hike, run, or a mix of both.
Sunday	Long Day 2: 4 sets on the same local stairs on tired legs (roughly 6 mi equivalent / 2,416 ft), simulating the second half of a multi-hour push — hike, run, or a mix of both.

WEEK 12

Day	Activity / Workout Details
Monday	Rest & active recovery.
Tuesday	25 min easy jog or walk, legs only.
Wednesday	20 min easy walk or jog.
Thursday	Rest, or a 20 min shakeout walk.
Friday	20 min shakeout walk or jog. Review gear list and race-day plan.
Saturday	Shakeout: 1 easy set on local stairs (about 604 ft / 604 steps, or your usual training stairs), relaxed pace. Gear and movement check only — save your legs for race day.
Sunday	Rest. Hydrate, eat well, and finalize event-day logistics.

Joining the Plan Late?

This plan builds volume progressively over 12 weeks, with lighter recovery weeks built in periodically and an easy final week heading into race day. If your event is closer than 12 weeks away, don't try to cram earlier weeks in — join at the week below that matches your timeline.

Weeks until your event	Start at
12+ weeks out	Week 1 — begin the full plan
8–11 weeks out	Week 3 — skip the earliest low-volume weeks
5–7 weeks out	Week 6 — join mid-plan
3–4 weeks out	Week 9 — join the final push directly
1–2 weeks out	Week 12 only — do not attempt to compress earlier weeks into your final week

Note: Compressing multiple weeks of training into a shorter window increases injury risk rather than improving fitness. When in doubt, join later at a lower relative volume rather than skipping ahead into a week your body hasn't built toward.

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These training plans are provided by IronHike Endurance Productions, LLC ("IronHike") for general informational and educational purposes only. They do not constitute medical advice, a medical clearance, or a personalized coaching program, and they are not a substitute for professional medical guidance.

Consult Your Physician: Before beginning this or any exercise, training, or nutrition program, consult your physician or a qualified healthcare provider — particularly if you have any pre-existing medical condition, injury, cardiovascular concern, or any other health issue that could affect your ability to safely participate in strenuous physical activity, including sustained multi-hour or multi-day exertion, altitude or elevation exposure, extreme heat or cold, or sleep deprivation.

Assumption of Risk: Endurance training and participation in IronHike events carry inherent risks, including but not limited to physical injury, illness, dehydration, exhaustion, cardiac events, and death. By using these training plans, you voluntarily assume all such risks and acknowledge that you are solely responsible for determining whether you are medically fit to undertake them.

No Liability: IronHike Endurance Productions, LLC, its owners, officers, employees, coaches, Cadre, contractors, and affiliates make no representations or warranties, express or implied, regarding the suitability, accuracy, or safety of these plans for any individual, and shall not be held liable for any injury, loss, damage, or death arising from or related to your use of these training plans, to the fullest extent permitted by law.

Stop Immediately If: You experience chest pain, dizziness, shortness of breath, severe joint or muscle pain, disorientation, or any other concerning symptom during training. Seek medical attention right away.

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