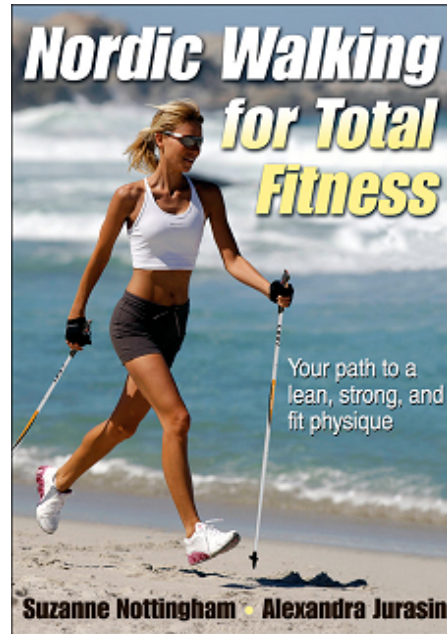


Nordic walking offers complete full body training for people on the go



Nordic walking offers widespread benefits *for people of all ages and abilities* and has become one of the hottest trends in fitness today. But, according to Suzanne Nottingham, author of *Nordic Walking for Total Fitness* fitness buffs and serious athletes can also use Nordic walking for complete full body training that can be done anywhere. “*Nordic walking is your gym to go*—almost any place, any time and it’s free,” Nottingham says. “Walking with poles puts great potential to improve your health and fitness level right in the palm of your hands.”

Boosts seven key sport and performance areas:

- Cardiovascular fitness
- Muscular endurance
- Balance
- Agility
- Coordination
- Visual skills
- Strength and power

Nordic Walking for Total Fitness

By Suzanne Nottingham & Alexandra Jurasin

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In *Nordic Walking for Total Fitness*, Nottingham discusses how walking with poles offers a portable workout that improves seven key performance areas.

- 1. Cardiovascular: aerobic and anaerobic.** “Aerobic and anaerobic conditioning are at the core of a workout and the essence of Nordic walking fitness,” Nottingham explains. “Nordic walking is an endurance activity, and a distance exercise, and many of the same muscle groups are used in running and cross country skiing.” Anaerobic conditioning takes aerobic training to the next level. The more intense the cardiac output, the less readily available oxygen there is to metabolize fat to use to sustain energetic movement. Therefore, other quick energy stores are tapped into to provide immediate useable glycogen for muscle function. “During this type of advanced cardio training, muscles are not capable of sustaining the intense demands for long,” Nottingham adds. “For this reason, interval training progressively enhances cardio.”
- 2. Muscular endurance.** Muscle endurance involves the ability to sustain movement or activity and enhance the body’s ability to repeat effort for a prolonged amount of time. “Nordic walkers acquire a more athletic gait that combines simultaneous physical reactions with a faster pace and speed,” Nottingham says. Muscular endurance allows the body to ‘settle into’ a comfortable, yet productive or competitive pace if desired.
- 3. Balance.** Nordic walking poles offer a more dynamic balance challenge because you are working physically to move forward, challenging balance of the upper body and recovering small bits of imbalance through the feet, ankles, legs and pelvis. Poles provide the opportunity to challenge the upper and lower body simultaneously. “Better balance happens as a natural benefit of using poles,” Nottingham says. “Training for balance, and becoming aware of the body’s balance centers, provides superior Nordic walking motor efficiency and athletic ability.”
- 4. Agility.** Agility adds an element of quickness and maneuverability. Sudden starting, stopping, pivoting, dodging, jumping—fast footwork—are skills that require muscle control and agility. “There are a variety of agility drills that Nordic walkers can include in their workout,” says Nottingham. “Some involve a creative use of poles and others utilize the natural outdoor environment.”
- 5. Coordination.** Coordination involves a complimentary relationship of movements--a smooth flow from one slight movement to the next to accomplish an efficient stride. The walker must move the upper and lower body independently and in opposition. Coordination is the most obvious athletic component and benefit to a person to enhance their gait. “After enough practice,” says Nottingham, “Nordic walking skills become efficient when movements are so subtle, so well memorized that the brain is able to

communicate instructions for movement with ease, developing physical and mental sequential reactions without wasted energy.”

6. **Visual skills.** Balance and balance recovery are dependent upon visual cues. Stability created by the poles require Nordic walkers to focus vision ahead instead of down at the ground. “Gazing ahead in a soft focus, taking in the entire landscape, is much healthier for your spine,” Nottingham explains. “When a person looks down toward the ground, the weight of their head plays havoc on the spine over time.” Visual skills assist postural integrity while Nordic walking by helping balance the head weight more appropriately and not pull the body into poor posture or strain the back.
7. **Strength and power.** Strength and power training develops control and responsive, enduring muscles. The result of a sound power-conditioning program is an explosive-reactive quality of muscular involvement. Sprints, leaps, bounds and skips are examples of Nordic walking specific drills. Power is strength plus speed combined; therefore drills reflect this explosive nature of exercises. “If the goal is to train to Nordic walk a marathon, power training affords less susceptibility to injury and excessive fatigue associated with long-term performance,” Nottingham says.

Nordic Walking for Total Fitness offers a range of programs for cardio health, full-body conditioning, and sport-specific cross-training. With 115 full-color photos, Nottingham offers a guide to Nordic walking, including equipment, techniques, and supplemental conditioning for maximum fitness and enjoyment.

For more information on *Nordic Walking for Total Fitness* or any other fitness resources, visit www.nordicwalknow.com, www.HumanKinetics.com or call 800-747-4457.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Suzanne Nottingham is known worldwide as one of the top sport and fitness instructors with more than 25 years of experience in marketing, programming, and education. She has been a Nordic walking instructor since 2001 and is past director of North American Nordic walking education for Leki USA. Her work has been pivotal in launching Nordic walking in North America.

In 2006 she created and launched the Nordic Walk Now Instructor Training Program and the Walk To Live Workshop to educate the public about safety, skills and equipment. To date, she and her team of 21 education leaders have trained more than 450 instructors and community advocates in North America. Her Web site at www.nordicwalknow.com is a portal for instructors and the public.

Since 1990, Nottingham has been a spokesperson and continuing education provider for the American Council on Exercise (ACE), and she was on the California Governor's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports. In 2000, she received the fitness industry's highest honor as IDEA's Fitness Instructor of the Year. In her spare time, Suzanne volunteers as an educator for Disabled Sports East Sierra for winter and summer sports, the Wounded Warrior Program, and No Barriers, the United States' premier event for disabled athletic-minded people. But she claims her real job is as a ski instructor at Mammoth Mountain Ski Resort in California, where she has lived since 1980.

Nottingham is also the author of *Fitness In-Line Skating* (Human Kinetics, 1997) and is known as one of the pioneers in the launch and success of in-line skating in the United States.

Alexandra Jurasin has been in the health, fitness, and wellness field for over 13 years and is a national lead instructor trainer for Nordic Walk Now, teaching instructors and classes at conferences throughout the United States. Jurasin has designed and managed fitness and wellness programs for more than 50 corporations and police and fire departments throughout California, and she has been a guest speaker at national and international conferences. She has served on the faculty in the health science and kinesiology departments at California State University at Fullerton and Santa Ana College in Southern California and was recently the general manager of the Google G-Fit Fitness Centers. Currently Jurasin is the account executive for Amgen's national fitness and wellness programs for Plus One Health Management, and she is a contributing author to the American College of Sports Medicine text for personal training.

Jurasin received a bachelor's degree in exercise physiology from the University of San Francisco and a master's degree in kinesiology from California State University at Fullerton. She holds multiple health and fitness certifications, including recognition as an ACE Academy instructor.

Alexandra loves the outdoors. In addition to Nordic walking, she enjoys cycling, hiking, camping, and any new life adventure.