

Improve Your Walk!

The reality is that most people are not even aware of how they are walking, or that their nightly stroll through the neighbourhood can be more than just an excuse to get out of the house.

Try these helpful tips to improve your next walk!

- **Heel to toe.** This tip seems simple, but this can drastically improve ankle stability. Step onto your heel then roll onto the ball of your feet as you push your heel off the ground.
- **Posture is key.** Take a quick check of yourself: Head up and looking forward, keep your back straight, tighten your core, and hips should shift slightly, but do not fully rotate to the side.
- **Swing those arms.** Bend at roughly 90 degrees and pump from your shoulder as naturally as possible. On the swing backward, pretend as if you are reaching in your back pocket. On the way forward, your wrist should be at the center of your chest. This can burn up to 10% more calories per walk!
- **Walk faster, not longer.** Lengthening your stride can actually break form and put you at risk of a foot or ankle injury. It also causes our muscles to overcompensate. Instead of taking longer strides, just walk faster!
- **Pick up the pace!** The average stride length is 2.5 miles per hour. For a 150-pound person, walking at 3.5 miles per hour on flat terrain burns about 300 calories per hour. Aim for 30-60 minutes of brisk walking per day at this pace!
- **Choose varied terrain.** Walking on grass or gravel burns more calories than on flat pavement and walking on sand can increase caloric expenditure by almost 50%, compared a flat surface! How about adding in a few rolling hills?
- **High Intensity Interval Walking.** That's right. The same as other forms of cardio, just walking. Try speed walking for 30 to 45 seconds, then slow down to a regular pace for two minutes. Do that for 20 to 30 minutes, as opposed to sticking to the same pace.
- **Carry weights.** Hand weights or a weighted vest can be a good way to challenge the resistance you battle with on your walk. These should be light and not turn your walk into a strength training routine.



FAST FACT!

10,000 steps as a daily goal originated out of Japan, not as a medical recommendation, but as a slogan for a pedometer company! It has since been found to have significant health benefits and is being used as a guideline to help people that are living a sedentary lifestyle. 10,000 steps equate to about 8 kilometres of walking per day! How many steps have you done today?



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