

STEP BY STEP: A Workplace Walking Resource

PAVING THE WAY

RESOURCE



WalkBC
www.walkbc.ca



This Walking Resource Guide is a resource of the British Columbia Recreation and Parks Association (BCRPA). Several of the resource materials contained in this resource were adapted from existing BCRPA resources.

Walk BC is a joint initiative between the Heart and Stroke Foundation of BC & Yukon and the BC Recreation and Parks Association. Funding is provided by the BC Healthy Living Alliance, with support from ActNow BC.

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PAVING THE WAY



Business Case

Workplaces are very important settings in which to promote healthy living and the integration of physical activity into daily living. Workplaces are viable and positive venues to reach British Columbians and healthy workplace environments may result in direct health benefits for workers, economic gains for the organization, and reduced costs to our healthcare system.

Benefits to Workplaces and Employees

Building healthy workplace environments makes sound business sense. Numerous research studies have shown that healthy workplaces have powerful effects on the health of workers. Healthy workplaces benefit organizations and individuals alike and result in:

- Improved productivity
- Fewer insurance and worker compensation claims
- Reduced absenteeism
- Decreased accidents
- Reduced staff turnover
- Lower-costs related to retirement, training and orientation
- Improved staff attitudes towards the organization and higher staff morale
- A more receptive climate for, and ability to cope with workplace changes
- Enhanced business reputation and customer loyalty¹.

Remaining Competitive

To remain competitive, employers must respond to issues affecting employee morale and job satisfaction – issues such as levels of stress and the need to maintain an appropriate work/life balance in today's high-paced work environment. The Public Health Agency of Canada's Business Case for Active Living at Work² offers the most up-to-date and comprehensive data that support the importance of promoting physical activity in workplace settings. Here is what is happening across the country:

- 39% of companies with more than 100 employees have some form of fitness program
- 73% of companies with more than 100 employees offer sport and recreation opportunities
- 13% of small companies with less than 50 employees have fitness programs
- 42% of small companies offer sport and recreation opportunities
- Flex-time is provided in 22% of companies to encourage employees to find time to be active during their workday
- 16% of workplaces have installed bicycle racks to encourage active commuting

Advantages to Workplace Benefit Programs

Most organizations in the province can anticipate increased pressure on benefits programs if their workforces do not remain healthy. The Public Health Agency of Canada reports that physically active employees take 27% fewer days of sick leave, which means that creating or increasing access to physical activity opportunities would lower benefit costs. There is significant evidence that these small investments can pay substantial dividends:

- BC Hydro estimates that it reduced its sick leave costs annually by \$1.2 million as a result of physical activity walking initiatives.
- Vancouver International Airport reports that their wellness program has been a contributing factor to reductions in absenteeism rates among bargaining unit employees (hours lost through short and long term disability fell by 42% between 1999 and 2001, from 20,864 to 12,047³).

¹ University of Toronto, The Health Communication Unit (2004). An introduction to Comprehensive Workplace Health Promotion.

² www.phac-aspc.ca/pau-uap/fitness/work/

³ Lochhead, C (2002): Vancouver International Airport Authority, BC

- Canada Life Assurance Co. employees who participated in physical activity programs had a 32.4% lower turnover rate than non-participants. (Business Case for Active Living at Work)
- After just six months, City of Toronto employees who were enrolled in the Metro Fit program missed 3.35 fewer days than staff not enrolled in the program.
- For every \$1 invested in its Workplace Wellness Program, Canada Life realized a return of \$3.40 in reduced turnover, productivity gains and drops in medical claims.
- The Public Health Agency of Canada states that work performance improves by a factor of up to 15% when people are regularly physically active⁴.

Progressive workplace practices that include things like access to physical activity opportunities and supportive healthy environments such as walking initiatives are increasingly important for business success. Organizations that embrace and apply these practices can gain access to the best and brightest workers who typically seek out comfortable and healthy working conditions.

⁴ www.phac-aspc.ca/pau-uap/fitness/work/

Workplace Charter Agreement

We, the undersigned, are committed to fostering workplace wellness at:

by: _____

1. Acknowledging the importance of the formal establishment of a Workplace Walking Committee and the need for ongoing support and resources for its activities.
2. Actively participating in the assessment and identification of our workplace strengths and health issues.
3. Offering environmental supports and skill- building opportunities for staff to improve their individual health as well as the overall health of the work environment.
4. Supporting the development, implementation, and ongoing evaluation of healthy workplace policies.
5. Making a long-term commitment of both time and resources to creating and sustaining a healthy and supportive work environment.

Signature Date

Management: _____

Union Employees: _____

Human Resources: _____

Community Partners: _____

Other: _____

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TAKING STOCK

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Employee Needs and Interests Questionnaire

Do you presently walk on a regular basis?

Yes No

If not, why not?

No time lack of energy lack of motivation fear of injury
 lack of resources lack of skill no one else to walk with don't like the outdoors
 Other

If so, how frequently do you walk?

Once a week More than once a week Once every two weeks
 Less than once every two weeks

On average how long does each walk last?

Less than 30 minutes 30 minutes to an hour one hour or more

What motivates you or would motivate you, to walk (tick all that apply)?

Socializing/meeting people Improving fitness To enjoy the outdoors
 Recommendation from doctor Environmentally friendly Other

On a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 being not active and 10 being very active, how active would you say you are?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Which of the following workplace walking initiatives would interest you?

walking club walking challenges campaigns/activities
 tracking programs workshop/informational sessions walking buddy

How do you prefer to be reached with information about future walking initiatives?

Colleagues Poster Intra web Email Blog
 SWAG (e.g., water bottle etc) Workshop/educational sessions

If you were in charge of planning and implementing a walking initiative in the future, what would you do to make sure it was a success?

Would you like to help plan workplace walking initiatives? If so, please provide your name and contact information below.

Name

Phone number

Do you have any general comments about workplace walking initiatives?

Thank you for your time.

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NOW YOU'RE WALKING



Starting a Walking Club at the Workplace

Start a walking group at your workplace so you and your colleagues will have an opportunity to be physically active during the workday. Many people find it hard to fit physical activity into their schedule so try going for a 10 -20 minute brisk walk at work.

It is important to remember that there is not a “one size fits all” for motivation. Some walkers are motivated by the health hazards of a sedentary lifestyle, and still others by fun or companionship, and some because of environmental reasons. The list of reasons to walk is endless and as varied as the individuals who walk!

Designate a leader

- Leader led walks are most effective and help to motivate and sustain walking groups. Walk leaders plan the route, spread the word, and lead the group. Contact your local recreation centre and ask about ways they might support a walking club. Visit the BCRPA Interactive Map to find the recreation centre closest to you at <http://www.walkbc.ca/>. Start slowly so that none of your co-workers are too intimidated to continue.

Set a time

- The time will vary depending on the needs of those in the walking group and what is convenient for the walk leader. Encourage your colleagues to take walking breaks instead of coffee breaks in order to get some fresh air. Promote a noon-hour walking group. Better yet, ask your colleagues when they would prefer to walk. Some people need a “pick me up” in the morning while others require one in the afternoon.

Set a route

- If you are the walk organizer, take a friend to help you map out a safe route that takes between 15 and 40 minutes so that people at all fitness levels may enjoy the walk. Create an indoor walking route in case of poor weather - go to a local mall if your workspace is not conducive to walking. Check the BCRPA Interactive Map for potential walking routes near your workplace: <http://www.walkbc.ca>.
- Each walking route should be easy to follow by people who are unfamiliar with them. Difficult routes with a lot of obstacles may become frustrating and discourage individuals from participating.
- Make sure the walking route matches the amount of time available and enables walkers’ time to freshen up before returning from their break.

Materials to help you get prepared

- Visit the Resource Section in this toolkit for information on health screening before the walk, warm-up stretches, what to wear, barriers to being active, and information about pedometers as well as numerous fact sheets.
- Walking Programs: increase the length of time your walking group spends walking gradually so that everyone is motivated to keep on walking. Visit the Now You’re Walking Section of this toolkit for walking programs you may wish to use.

Motivate employees

- Spread the word! See the Now You’re Walking Section of this toolkit for ideas about how to get the word out.
- Encourage walkers to bring a friend or partner with them on some of the walks. Bringing a friend gives the walker an opportunity to introduce their friends to the group, promotes socialization and companionship as well as adherence to activity.
- The walking group may like to be involved in the development of a walking route with maps and descriptions of routes that can be used.
- Wearing a pedometer can increase motivation to walk because some participants like to track their progress in tangible ways. Information about how to use pedometers and a log to track pedometer steps can be found in the Resource Section of this toolkit.
- Keep in regular contact with walking group members. When possible, support walking group members by sending them reminder emails and using donated goods from sponsors as prizes to celebrate successes throughout the workplace. Potential sponsors could include banks, restaurants, running shoe stores and companies, vitamin makers, pedometer manufacturers,

health clubs, your Employee and Family Assistance Program (EFAP) company and other local businesses. The Talk the Walk Section has some good information to keep your walkers walking!

- Keep everyone motivated to continue and inspire others by tracking your walking group's progress on a graph or poster in a main foyer. You might even want to hold a contest or challenge between departments. The Now You're Walking Section of this toolkit has information on challenges and other motivational walking activities.

On the Walk-if you are the walk leader

- Warm up! Start the walk at a slower pace for the first 5 to 10 minutes.
- Stretch. Check out the best walking stretches in the Getting Your Body Ready-Warm Up for Walking located in the Resource Section of this toolkit. Pace the walk at a speed that works for the whole group.
- Remind people of the rest areas.
- Position yourself amongst the group to observe those who may have problems. Don't march off too far ahead of your group.
- Encourage people to go at their own walking speed and/or distance.
- Remind people that they should be breathing a little faster than normal but still be able to carry on a conversation.
- Observe for signs of distress and inform walkers to stop immediately if they experience:
 - Sickness or dizziness
 - Excessive sweating
 - Excessive fatigue
 - Unsteadiness
 - Chest pain or discomfort of chest (heaviness or tightness)
 - Muscle strain or cramps
 - Significant breathlessness
- Remind walkers to drink plenty of water before, during and after walking, especially in the summer.
- Cool down-after the more intensive portion of the walk for about 5 to 10 minutes. A cool down should include a slower paced walk and gentle stretching (the same stretches done during the warm-up can be done for the cool down).

At the end of the walk

- Meet at a designated end location.
- Stretch.
- Check that all walkers have returned and are feeling well.
- Allow time for questions and informal chat.

NOW YOU'RE WALKING



Health Screening Questionnaire

If you are planning on becoming much more physically active than you are now, start by answering the questions in the box below. If you are between the ages of 15 and 69, this screening form will tell you if you should check with your doctor before you start. If you are pregnant, you are advised to consult with your doctor before exercising.

Common sense is your best toolkit when you answer these questions. Please read the questions carefully and answer each one honestly: answer either **YES** or **NO**

Is it OK For Me to Walk?

Yes **No**

- | | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Has your doctor ever told you that you have heart trouble? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | When you are physically active, do you have any pains in your chest or on your left side (neck, shoulder, or arm)? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Do you often feel faint or have dizzy spells? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Do you feel extremely out of breath after you have been physically active? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Has your health care provider told you that you have uncontrolled high blood pressure? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Has your health care provider told you that you have bone or joint problems like arthritis, that could get worse if you are physically active (though these conditions often get better with exercise)? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Are you over 50 years old and not used to a lot of physical activity? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Do you have a health problem or a physical reason not mentioned here that might keep you from starting a walking program? |

If you answered "Yes" to any of these questions, please check with your doctor before starting a walking program. If you answered "No" to all of these questions, it is safe to assume that you can participate in a walking program. However, if you are unsure, you should check with your doctor.

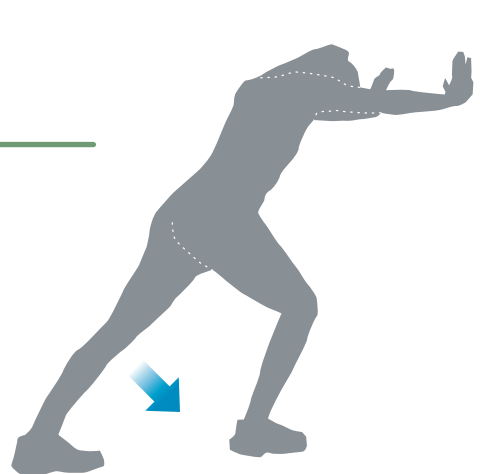


Getting Your Body Ready—Warm Up for Walking

It's easy. Before doing the following stretches, warm up the muscle groups by simply moving the muscle groups around, such as walking at a slower than normal pace for five to 10 minutes. Warmed muscles are much more easily stretched than cold muscles and the muscle that is used is more pliable and has more ability to be stretched. Hold each stretch with easy tension, on both sides, for a count of 20, no bouncing.

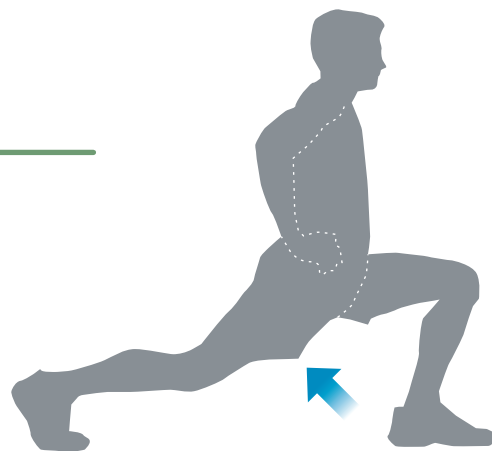
Standing Gastrocnemius Stretch

- Standing in a walking position with one leg stretched straight behind you and the other leg bent in front of you.
- Using a wall or chair for support, lean forwards and down until you feel the stretch in the upper part of your back calf.
- Make sure that both feet are pointing straight ahead and that your heels stay on the floor the whole time.



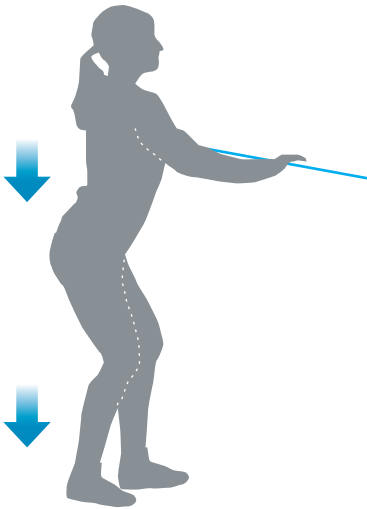
Hip Flexor Stretch

- Stand in a stride standing position.
- Put both hands on your front knee while keeping the back knee straight.
- Push your pelvis forward keeping your back straight.
- The stretch should be felt in front of the hip and slightly down the front of the thigh.



Standing Hamstring Stretch

- Place one heel on a low step or bench and, keeping your knee and back straight, bend your upper body forwards from your hips.
- You should feel the stretch behind your knee.

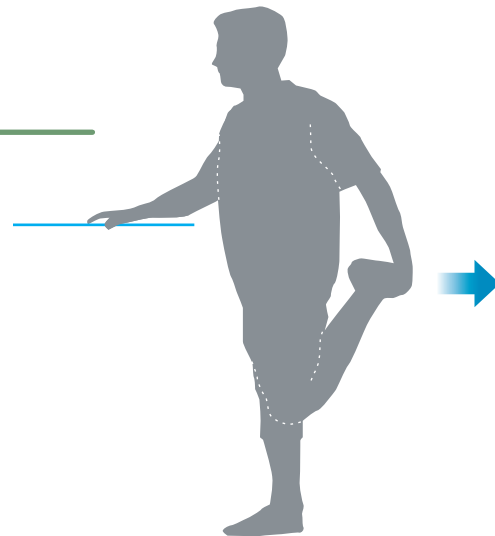


Standing Achilles Tendon Stretch

- Standing with one leg slightly behind the other, push your heels down while bending your knees.

Standing Quadriceps Stretch

- Hold onto something for support with one hand and grab your ankle with the other hand.
- Pull your ankle towards your bottom, then try to straighten your knee while resisting with your hand and allowing no movement.
- Then pull your ankle toward your bottom again.





How Much Walking is Enough?

Although this varies somewhat by age and fitness level, walking at a brisk pace, 4 to 7 days per week, for at least 30 minutes (30 to 60 minutes is best), is the widely accepted prescription. While continuous walking is optimal, several short bouts of exercise (i.e. 10 minute sessions) at varied times throughout the day is also widely accepted for achieving health benefits.

Being physically active is very safe for most people. Some people, however, should check with their doctor before they start becoming more physically active. The Health Screening Questionnaire found in the Resource Section of this toolkit can be used to determine if walking is for you. The questionnaire is designed for people between the ages of 15 and 69.

A simple way to work out how briskly you should walk is to aim to walk “fast without overexertion”. Anyone should be able to hold a conversation while walking – this is the ‘talk test’.

A few things to note before you get started:

- Walk with your chin up and your shoulders held down and back, rather than rounded and forward. Think tall.
- Walk so that the heel of your foot touches the ground first, then roll your weight forward to the ball of your foot.
- Walk with your toes pointed forward.
- Swing your arms naturally as you walk, and do not allow your arms to cross the centerline of your body.

It is important to invest in a good pair of walking shoes. Look for the following in your walking shoes:

- Shoes that fit snugly on your feet.
- Have a well cushioned heel.
- Have good arch support.
- Have adequate toe room.
- Have flexible slip-resistant soles.

There are a number of walking routines available, you will find a Walkabout routine below.

NOW YOU'RE WALKING



Walk-About

The Walking Calendar below provides you with a routine to gradually get you walking. By the end of 12 weeks, you will be walking for 60 continuous minutes.

Walking Calendar

WEEK	SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
1	15 min	15 min	20 min	15 min	20 min	15 min	20 min
2	15 min	20 min	20 min	15 min	20 min	15 min	25 min
3	15 min	25 min	20 min	15 min	25 min	20 min	25 min
4	20 min	30 min	20 min	20 min	25 min	20 min	30 min
5	20 min	30 min	30 min	20 min	30 min	20 min	35 min
6	25 min	30 min	30 min	25 min	30 min	25 min	40 min
7	25 min	30 min	40 min	30 min	30 min	30 min	40 min
8	25 min	30 min	40 min	30 min	40 min	30 min	50 min
9	30 min	40 min	40 min	30 min	40 min	40 min	50 min
10	30 min	40 min	50 min	30 min	50 min	40 min	50 min
11	40 min	40 min	50 min	40 min	50 min	40 min	50 min
12	40 min	40 min	60 min	40 min	60 min	40 min	60 min

NOW YOU'RE WALKING



Barriers to Being Active Quiz and Suggestions for Overcoming Physical Activity Barriers

Directions: Listed below are the reasons that people give to describe why they do not get as much physical activity as they think they should. Please read each statement and indicate (by circling the number), how likely you are to say each of the following statements:

3 = very likely | **2** = somewhat likely | **1** = somewhat unlikely | **0** = very unlikely

3	2	1	0	How likely are you to say the following?
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1. My day is so busy I just don't think I can make the time to include physical activity in my regular schedule.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	2. None of my family members or friends like to do anything active, so I don't have a chance to exercise.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	3. I'm just too tired after work to get any exercise.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	4. I've been thinking about getting more exercise, but I just can't seem to get started.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	5. I'm getting older so exercise can be risky.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	6. I don't get enough exercise because I have never learned the skills for any sport.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	7. I don't have access to walking paths, trails or sidewalks.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	8. Physical activity takes too much time away from other commitments like time, work, family, etc.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	9. I'm embarrassed about how I look when I exercise with others.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	10. I don't get enough sleep as it is. I just couldn't get up early or stay up late to get some exercise.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	11. It's easier for me to find excuses not to exercise than go out to do something.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	12. I know of too many people who have hurt themselves by overdoing it with exercise.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	13. I really can't see learning anything new to incorporate into my life.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	14. It's just too expensive. I don't have the right footwear, clothing or other walking related gear.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	15. My free time during the day is too short to include exercise.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	16. My usual social activities with friends do not include physical activity.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	17. I'm too tired during the week and I need the weekend to catch up on my rest.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	18. I want to get more exercise, but I just can't seem to make myself stick to anything.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	19. I'm afraid I might injure myself or have a heart attack.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	20. I'm not good enough at any physical activity to make it fun.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	21. If we had exercise facilities and showers at work, then I would be more likely to exercise.

Scoring and Interpretation

Follow these instructions to score yourself:

- 1) Enter the circled numbers in the spaces provided for each number. For example, put your response to number 1 on the line below for number 1, do the same for number 2 and so on.
- 2) Add the three scores on each line.
- 3) Your barriers to physical activity fall into one or more of seven categories: lack of time, social influences, lack of energy, lack of willpower, fear of injury, lack of skill, and lack of resources. A score of 5 or above in any category shows that this is an important barrier for you to overcome.

(1) _____ + (8) _____ + (15) _____ = _____ (Lack of time)

(2) _____ + (9) _____ + (16) _____ = _____ (Social influence)

(3) _____ + (10) _____ + (17) _____ = _____ (Lack of energy)

(4) _____ + (11) _____ + (18) _____ = _____ (Lack of motivation)

(5) _____ + (12) _____ + (19) _____ = _____ (Fear of injury)

(6) _____ + (13) _____ + (20) _____ = _____ (Lack of skill)

(7) _____ + (14) _____ + (21) _____ = _____ (Lack of resources)

Suggestions for Overcoming Physical Activity Barriers

Lack of time

- Identify available time slots.
- Monitor your daily activities for one week. Identify at least three 30-minute time slots you could use for physical activity.
- Add physical activity to your daily routine. For example, walk to work or to shop, walk the dog, park farther away from your destination, etc.
- Make time for physical activity. For example, walk during your lunch hour, or take walking breaks instead of coffee breaks.

Social influence

- Explain your interest in physical activity to friends and family. Ask them to support your efforts.
- Invite friends and family members to exercise with you. Plan social activities involving exercise.
- Develop new friendships with physically active people. Join a group, such as a walking club.

Lack of energy

- Schedule physical activity for times in the day or week when you feel energetic.
- Convince yourself that if you give it a chance, physical activity will increase your energy level; then, try it.

Lack of motivation

- Plan ahead. Make physical activity a regular part of your daily or weekly schedule and write it on your calendar. Invite a friend to exercise with you on a regular basis and write it on both your calendars.
- Join a walking club.

Fear of Injury

- Learn how to warm up and cool down to prevent injury.
- Learn how to walk appropriately considering your age, fitness level, skill level, and health status.

Lack of skill

- Select activities requiring no new skills, such as walking or climbing stairs.
- Walk with friends who are at the same fitness level as you are.
- Find a friend who is willing to learn new things with you.
- Take one of the walking workshops to learn new things.

Lack of resources

- Walking requires minimal resources. Choose a walking route near you so you don't have to drive or take public transport to get walking.
- Your walking gear does not have to be fancy. Don't worry about all the walking accessories.

Weather conditions

- Develop a set of walking options that you can do regardless of weather—stairs, mall walking, wet weather gear and/or walk on a treadmill.

Travel

- Walk the halls and climb the stairs in hotels.
- Stay in places with walking routes near by.
- Join the YMCA or YWCA (ask about reciprocal membership agreement).
- Visit the local shopping mall and walk for half an hour or more.

Family obligations

- Trade babysitting time with a friend, neighbour, or family member who also has small children.
- Go for a walk with the kids. You can spend time together and still get your exercise.
- Hire a babysitter and look at the cost as a worth-while investment in your physical and mental health.
- Try to exercise when the kids are not around (e.g., during school hours or their nap time).



Pedometers—Making Every Step Count!

This information sheet includes information on: what a pedometer is, how it works, do's and don'ts, tips on how to use and wear a pedometer, what to look for in a pedometer, advantages and limitations of pedometers.

A simple way to work out how briskly you should walk is to aim to walk “fast without overexertion”. Anyone should be able to hold a conversation while walking – this is the ‘talk test’.

What is a Pedometer and How Does it Work?

A pedometer is a pager (or matchbook) sized device worn on your belt that records the number of steps you take based on your body's movement. A pedometer is a great way to measure your current activity level and to motivate you towards a higher level of activity. Some pedometers are analog devices that simply measure steps. Some are fancier digital models that track the distance you walk and the calories you burn. Keep in mind that the calorie counters are less accurate and more expensive¹.

When worn properly, the pedometer records each step you take by measuring each time your hip moves up and down. Pedometers are nearly always more accurate recording fast walking than slow walking.² There are a few different mechanisms which enable pedometers to count your steps. The most common is the hairspring pedometer, which is generally considered to be somewhat less reliable and long lasting than the more expensive coil spring pedometer. Another type of mechanism is the magnetic reed proximity switch (MPPS) which seems to be quite dependent on its design and the quality of its manufacturing. Finally, there is the accelerometer type of mechanism, which tends to be the most sensitive and expensive³. Your pedometer works whether you are running, walking or climbing the stairs, but remember, it counts the number of steps you take and not the intensity of the steps.

How Many Steps Do You Need Per Day?⁴

For long term health and reduced chronic disease risk:	10,000 steps a day
For successful, sustained weight loss:	12,000 to 15,000 steps a day
To build aerobic fitness:	3,000 or more of your daily steps should be done briskly (e.g. fast paced)

Where is the Best Place to Wear a Pedometer?

To get the most accurate reading, place the unit on your waistband as close as possible to the top point of the hipbone and ensure that it is vertical. The pedometer must remain upright to record correctly, not tilted forward, backward or side-to-side. It will not record properly when open, so keep the pedometer closed – unless you are checking your steps. Also, make sure that it is secure, because if it shifts at all during your walk, it won't give an accurate reading. The pedometer should come with a clip, a security strap to ensure that it stays on, and a protective cover to prevent damage and accidentally resetting the buttons.

¹ Martin Collis (2005). Speakwell.WELL: Newsletter for Wellness, 7(3).Retrieved from: www.speakwell.com/well/2005autumn/pedometer.php

² Alberta Centre for Active Living (2003). WellSpring, 14(2).

³ Ibid

⁴ Government of Ontario, Active 2010 (2005). Using Your Pedometer.

The best way to find out if your pedometer is well positioned is to put your pedometer on, press reset and then take a quick 20 steps while you count your steps. If the pedometer is not reading between 19 and 21 steps, try placing it in a different position along your waist (between your navel and your hip) until you find the place that is best for you, again keeping in mind that it should be worn as close as possible to the top point of the hipbone.

The rattling sound you hear in the pedometer does not mean it is broken. It is the suspended lever arm which moves when you do and counts your steps. The up and down motion opens and closes an electrical circuit. When your foot strikes the ground, the lever arm makes an electrical contact and this is recorded as a step.

Which Pedometer is Right for You?

The type of pedometer you buy is totally up to you. Most large sports or electronic stores carry pedometers. The simplest and least expensive pedometers display the steps and/or distance you cover and this is all you really need to keep track of. This number helps you to set goals to monitor and increase your physical activity level.⁵ Be sure to wear your pedometer all day in order to make sure all of your steps count.

Pedometers are relatively simple to operate and inexpensive, ranging from about \$15 to \$75, with an average cost of \$25. Pedometer price is not always a good indicator of quality. A pedometer that is accurate, reliable and easy to use makes the whole experience more enjoyable. Shop around, as the same brand of pedometer can be marketed under different names and sold through various distributors.

The pedometer uses a small watch type battery. These batteries are designed to last a long time, at least an average of one to two years. Make sure when you buy your pedometer that it is easy to replace the battery.

Advantages of a Pedometer

Pedometers are simple to operate. They give people immediate feedback about how many steps they have taken during the day, making it possible to track them and set goals to monitor and increase physical activity. The pedometer is small and lightweight, and virtually everyone (children, adults, people with disabilities, etc.) can wear them.⁶

Limitations of a Pedometer

Despite the obvious benefits of pedometers, they also have some limitations. The main concern is that they do not measure the intensity of physical activity (how hard), or the duration (how long). Pedometers may also underestimate the number of steps taken during high intensity activities and may not be as accurate for people who do a fair amount of bending and/or who have excessive abdominal fat, as the pedometer may move away from the person's body.⁷

Using the Pedometer for Motivation

Use the Pedometer Log to help you keep track of your steps. Use it for the first week with your pedometer to establish a baseline for future comparison.

That is, go about your normal daily routine while wearing your pedometer but don't change your activity pattern. After you see how many steps you accumulate in a day, you can determine if you need to be more active. Set a goal that you can reach, for example, an additional 200 steps per day, or add 20% more steps per day. When you have achieved this new level of activity, you can set a new goal for yourself, eventually working up to 10,000 steps per day.

Dos and Don'ts for Pedometers⁸

Do:

- Remember to wear it daily
- Purchase a pedometer that is comfortable and easy to use
- Purchase a pedometer with a protective cover to avoid resetting the device mid walk
- Change the battery as soon as you notice the digital display fading
- Keep the pedometer vertical to get the most accurate readings

Don't

- Get the pedometer wet – no swimming with it on!
- Drop or crush your pedometer – this could break the crystal inside
- Shake the pedometer as it will alter the step count
- Put a pedometer in your pocket, as it cannot stay vertical, therefore, will not accurately count your steps

⁵ Steps Count Inc. (2005). Retrieved from www.stepscount.com

^{6,7} Alberta Centre for Active Living (2003). *Wellspring*, 14(2), pp.2.

⁸ Government of Ontario, Active 2010 (2005). *Using Your Pedometer*.

NOW YOU'RE WALKING



Pedometer Walking Log

Walking is one of the easiest and safest ways to become more physically active! Use this log to help keep you on track and set goals for walking. Simply record your steps in each box after using a pedometer.

WEEK	MON Steps/Min	TUE Steps/Min	WED Steps/Min	THU Steps/Min	FRI Steps/Min	SAT Steps/Min	SUN Steps/Min
1							
2							
3							
4							
5							
6							

Week 1

Wear your pedometer for a week and don't change your normal routine. Log your steps daily. At the end of the week you will be able to see how many steps you have taken in your day to day living.

Week 2 to 3

Take the highest step count from week one and make that your daily goal for the next two weeks, or make it your daily goal three times per week for week two, then each day for week three. For example, if your steps varied from 800 to 2,000 steps per day in the first week, make your new daily goal 2,000 steps. You can increase gradually to build up your steps to the new goal.

Week 4 to 5

It is now time to increase your daily steps. Start with a 500 step increase per day in week four and increase that by another 500 by week five. If you walked 2,000 steps in weeks two and three, you should be walking approximately 3,000 steps per day in week five.

Week 6 Onwards

Continue to increase your daily steps on a weekly basis. Try to add 2,000 steps per day (about 20 minutes) but ultimately, increase as much as you feel comfortable, until you reach the ultimate goal of 10,000 steps per day.

Working into a 10,000 step program slowly will help you to avoid injury. Once you've reached your 10,000 step goal, maintaining this will be your biggest challenge. Celebrate your success and reward yourself for doing 10,000 steps a day! Consider walking with others to socially reinforce and support your hard work. Aim to maintain for six months which should help establish walking as part of your lifestyle!

Here's a checklist to get your walking program off on the right foot:

- A good pair of shoes
- Comfortable, loose-fitting clothing (remember to dress for the weather)
- A safe place to walk (check it out first)
- A watch to time yourself or a pedometer that has a clock feature
- A walking program/schedule that suits your lifestyle.

NOW YOU'RE WALKING



How Walkable is the Area Around Your Workplace?

Getting Started

Pick a place to walk around your workplace. Read over the checklist before you go, and as you walk note the locations of things you would like to change. At the end of your walk, give an overall rating to each question. Then add up the numbers to see how you rated your walk.

RATING SCALE

- 1 AWFUL
- 2 QUITE A FEW PROBLEMS
- 3 SOME PROBLEMS
- 4 GOOD
- 5 VERY GOOD
- 6 EXCELLENT

Location of Your Walk

From: _____

To: _____

Overall Rating (circle one number)

1 2 3 4 5 6

1. Did you have room to walk?

- Yes Some problems (see below)
- Sidewalks/walkways started and stopped
- Sidewalks/walkways were broken or cracked
- Sidewalks/walkways were blocked with poles, signs, shrubbery, dumpsters, etc.
- No sidewalks/walkways, paths, or shoulders
- Too much traffic (vehicles or pedestrians)

Something else? _____

Locations of Problems _____

2. Was it easy to cross streets?

1 2 3 4 5 6

- Yes Some problems (see below)
- Road was too wide
- Traffic signals made us wait too long or did not give us enough time to cross
- Needed striped crosswalks or traffic signals
- Parked cars blocked our view of traffic
- Trees or plants blocked our view of traffic
- Needed curb ramps or ramps needed repair

Something else? _____

Locations of Problems _____

Overall Rating (circle one number)

1 2 3 4 5 6

3. Did drivers behave well?

Yes Some problems (see below)

Drivers:

Backed out of driveways without looking

Did not yield to people crossing the street

Turned into people crossing the street

Sped up to make it through traffic lights or drove through red lights

Something else? _____

Locations of Problems _____

4. Was it easy to follow safety rules? Could you....

1 2 3 4 5 6

Yes Some problems (see below)

Could not cross at crosswalks or see and be seen by drivers

Could not walk on sidewalks or shoulders facing traffic where there were no sidewalks/walkways

Something else? _____

Locations of Problems _____

5. Was your walk pleasant and safe?

1 2 3 4 5 6

Yes Some problems (see below)

Needed more grass, flowers or trees

Scary dogs

Scary people

Not well lit

Dirty, lots of litter or trash

Something else? _____

Locations of Problems _____

How does your walk stack up?

Add up your ratings and decide _____

SCORING

26-30 Celebrate! You have a great area for walking.

21-25 Celebrate a little. Your area for walking is pretty good.

16-20 Okay, but it needs work.

11-15 It needs lots of work. You deserve better.

5-10 It's a disaster area, don't walk here.

Found something that needs changing? Continue through the checklist below to learn how you can begin making neighbourhoods better places for walking that match up with the problems you identified.

Improving your Workplace Neighborhood

Area	What you can do immediately	What you can do with more time
Did you have room to walk? <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sidewalks/walkways or paths started and stopped• Sidewalks/walkways broken or cracked• Sidewalks/walkways blocked• No sidewalks/walkways, paths or shoulders• Too much traffic	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• pick another route for now• tell local recreation centre, health department, traffic engineering or public works department about specific problems and provide a copy of the checklist	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• speak up at board/development meetings• write or petition city for walkways• gather signatures• make media aware of problem
Was it easy to cross streets? <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Road too wide• Traffic signals made us wait too long or did not give us enough time to cross• Crosswalks/traffic signals needed• View of traffic blocked by parked cars, trees, or plants• Needed curb ramps or ramps need repair	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• pick another route for now• share problems and checklist with local recreation centre, health department, traffic engineering or public works department• trim your trees or bushes that block the street and ask other to do the same• leave nice notes on problem cars asking owners not to park there	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• push for: crosswalks/signals/parking changes/curb ramps at city meetings• report to traffic engineer where parked cars are safety hazards• request that the public works department trim trees or plants• make media aware of problem
Did drivers behave well? <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Backed without looking• Did not yield• Turned into walkers• Drove too fast• Sped up to make traffic lights or drove through red lights	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• pick another route for now• set an example: slow down and be considerate of others, encourage your colleagues to do the same• report unsafe driving to police	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• petition for more enforcement• ask city planners and traffic engineers for traffic calming ideas• request protected turns
Could you follow safety rules? <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cross at crosswalks or where you could see and be seen• Stop and look left, right, left before crossing• Walk on sidewalks/walkways or shoulders facing traffic• Cross with the light	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• educate yourself and your colleagues about safe walking	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• teach walking safety
Was your walk pleasant and safe? <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Needs grass, flowers, trees• Scary dogs• Scary people• Not well lit• Dirty, litter	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• point out areas to avoid; agree on safe routes• ask neighbors to keep dogs leashed or fenced• report scary dogs to the animal control department• report scary people to the police• take a walk with a trash bag plant trees, flowers and bushes around the workplace	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• request increased police enforcement• start a crime watch program in your the workplace neighbourhood• organize a community clean-up day• sponsor a neighbourhood beautification or tree-planting day

NOW YOU'RE WALKING



12 Month Calendar

One way to promote walking initiatives is to pick a walking theme for each month. The theme should be complimentary to the season, taking weather into account. For example, December could be Mall Walking Month. Try some of the following monthly themes:

- January - Treadmill Walking Month
- February - Stair Walking Month
- March - 10-Minute March Month
- April - Walk in the AM's Month
- May - Walk at Lunch Month
- June - Walk to Work Month
- July - Walk the Parks Month
- August - Walk the Trails Month
- September - Walk in the PM's Month
- October - Park 10 Minutes Away Month
- November - In-door Track Walking Month
- December - Mall Walking Month

Below are some specific ideas to get you going:

January

- READY-SET-GO for a walk!
- New Year's resolution get-started activities:
- Offer educational brown bag lunch sessions for beginners who want to start walking programs
- Offer goal-setting incentive programs
- Hold an Open House/New Year's resolution week
- Make January the official Treadmill Walking Month

February

- February is HEART MONTH, so contact your local office of the Heart and Stroke Foundation for free educational materials on heart healthy living
- Make February the official stair walking month

March

- Organize an employee team challenge
- Make March the official 10 minute 'march' month – indoors or outdoors

April

SPRING-TUNE UP

- Organize "Spring Tune-up" fair with check-out stations for running shoe tread, blood (valve) pressure, heart (engine) health, and so on. Involve community groups and company departments.
- Contact the Cancer Society for Cancer Month events, such as Relay For Life

May

NATIONAL PHYSICAL ACTIVITY MONTH

- Move for Health Day
- Take part in "May Madness Marathon Month", an activity incentive challenge organized as part of National Physical Activity Month
- Take part in National Sneaker Day; offer prizes and a lunch-hour walk

June

FRESH AIR MONTH

- Contact Environment Canada about Environment week
- Plug into Occupational Health and Safety Week
- Encourage “fresh air” walks to work
- Plan a Spring into Summer family walk, followed by a barbecue
- Recruit teams for the YMCA Corporate Challenge Week
- Hold a clean-up event for debris in surrounding grounds or local park
- Make June the official walk to work month

July

WATER SAFETY AWARENESS MONTH

- Contact the Canada Safety Council about National Boat Safety Week; combine with walking activities

August

GREAT OUTDOORS MONTH

- Plan a “Shorts and Shades” walk followed by a pot-luck beach party

September

FALL INTO FITNESS

- Support employee and family participation in the Terry Fox Run
- Plan a fall program kick-off and promotional events such as membership draws for reduced rates at community facilities

October

- Canada's Healthy Workplace Month
- Sponsor physical activities focusing on exercise and back safety
- Contact the Worker's Compensation Board for information on back care at work
- Promote frequent stretch breaks
- Plan a special theme day to celebrate

November

TURKEY-TROT MONTH

- Take part in “The Turkey Trot”, a two-week activity incentive challenge
- Hold an educational session on being active in the cold weather

December

HEALTHY HOLIDAYS

- Hold a “Gift of Christmas” carolling and walking tour to gather toys and food for needy families
- Stage ‘The Twelve Days of Fitness’ with walking activities to get people through the holiday season
- Hold annual incentive awards and recognition events
- Make December the official mall walking month – indoor exercise and window shopping for holiday presents



FAQs: Benefits of Walking

Many British Columbians are not active enough to receive health benefits. This is of serious concern since inactivity is associated with a number of health issues including obesity, coronary heart disease, osteoporosis, and cardiovascular disease.

Walking for 30 minutes on most days of the week is a simple way to improve overall wellbeing and reduce the chances of developing the health concerns associated with inactivity. When walking is combined with other types of physical activities (e.g., biking, strength training, yoga, swimming...), you will be able to experience more health benefits faster than just walking alone. While being physically active is vital to losing and maintaining a healthy body weight, paying attention to nutrition is also needed. Information about healthy eating is beyond the scope of this toolkit, but check out the Dietitians of Canada website for a trustworthy source of information and ideas: <http://www.dietitians.ca/>

- Walking is free and can be done almost anywhere.
- Walking is a form of exercise which is within the physical capabilities of many people .
- Walking may be a more realistic challenge than other more vigorous forms of exercise.
- Walking can be integrated into people's lifestyles relatively easily.
- The level of impact is low and strain on the feet and joints is minimized thus making the risk of injury very low.

Increasing physical activity through walking is associated with many health benefits including:

- Reducing the risk of coronary heart disease.
- Lowering blood pressure.
- Reducing high cholesterol.
- Reducing body fat.
- Enhancing mental wellbeing.
- Increasing bone density.
- Reducing the risk of cancer of the colon.
- Helping to control body weight.
- Helping osteoarthritis.
- Helping to increase flexibility and co-ordination.
- Helping you relax and sleep better.
- Lowering stress levels.



FAQs: Safety And Injury Prevention for Walkers

When taking on a new fitness activity your goal should be to develop a healthy body using a combination of exercise, diet, stress management and rest. Focus on preventing injury and illness. Most walking injuries are preventable. In order to remain healthy, it is important to understand the types of injuries that you may be susceptible to and learn how to incorporate some basic injury prevention strategies into your overall training. Here are some general suggestions.

Warm-Up & Cool Down

When muscles are cold, they feel stiff and hard to move. To perform well, and avoid injury, you need to warm up before activity and spend time cooling down afterwards. Develop your own routines based on the general principles listed below. Have fun putting together your own warm-up routine and try something new to keep your workouts interesting and fresh!

- Perform a general dynamic body warm-up. Move your arms, legs and trunk continuously to get the blood flowing faster. Walking is an ideal warm-up for any fitness enthusiast regardless of ability.
- Once warm, stretch your muscles through a slower, controlled sequence of exercises.

After Activity

- Keep your muscles active for 10-15 minutes using a similar but less intense version of your warm-up.
- Stretch using the same sequence of exercises you used in your warm-up. This is often an excellent time to work on your flexibility, holding stretches for 10-20 seconds or longer as you feel.

Progress Slowly

Progress slowly. It is important NOT to increase your activity level by more than 10 percent a week. The leading cause of injuries for new exercisers is walking too far before they're ready. Remember that your focus is on the time spent in your workout, NOT the distance that you cover.

Choose Your Walking Surface Wisely

Asphalt is the surface on which most walkers log the most miles. While not the softest surface, asphalt is a little easier on your joints than concrete. Try to walk on the most level part of the road or pathway. Cambered or uneven roads will lead to imbalance and possible injury. Be alert when walking on grass and dirt trails. Look out for things like hard-to-see bumps, holes, sprinklers, and tree roots.

Never Walk With Pain

If something hurts, don't try to "walk through it". Listen to your body. Pain is a warning sign that should not be ignored. In the beginning, there will always be a few aches and pains that come with starting a new activity. However, they should dissipate within 24 to 48 hours. If they don't, or the pain intensifies, seek professional assistance. Early identification and treatment of an injury will result in minimal interruptions to your program schedule. It is very important to listen to your body and to be able to distinguish between an ache and pain. An ache is a low-level discomfort associated with exercising, while pain is sharp discomfort that can be pinpointed.

Promptly Treat Injuries

Muscle pulls, joint sprains or other injuries should be promptly treated using the RICE principle.

- Restrict activity or rest the injured area until an accurate diagnosis can be made.
- Ice for approximately 20 minutes every hour, allowing about 40 minutes in between treatments. Do this as often as possible for the first 24 to 72 hours. Do not use heat.
- Compression through the application of an elastic tensor bandage helps reduce swelling, pain, bruising and other signs of inflammation, especially when combined with ice and elevation.

- Elevation by raising the injured area above the level of the heart also assists in reducing swelling often associated with injury.

Not Every Day is a Walking Day

Some days, you just shouldn't exercise. If you've got the flu or a bad chest cold, take a couple of days off. Likewise, trying to exercise through an injury may result in the problem getting worse. What may have taken a few rest days to recover from ends up hobbling you for weeks. Better to take off an extra day or two or three, even if you think the pain isn't serious.

Plan to be "Safe"

Whether you are out for a stroll with friends or out on your own, take a moment to reflect and act on the following suggestions; they will help you to stay safe and show courtesy to others around you.

Before you head out:

- Carry identification or write your name, phone number, and blood type on a small piece of paper. Put it in a shoe key holder and attach it to the top of your shoes, or wear a small fanny pack. Carry your cell phone or some change in case you need to make a phone call.
- Write down or leave word of your route. Inform your friends and family of your favorite places to exercise.
- Remove any flashy jewellery that could attract attention.

Out on the road:

- If you are walking in a group, don't take over the road/sidewalk/trail. Where necessary, walk single file and leave room for someone to get by without being swarmed.
- If you are walking along in a tight pack or large group and see a hazard on the course ahead, call out or raise your hand so those following will know something is up before they have to leap.

Also, if you're coming from behind at a brisk pace, warn the unsuspecting pedestrian so that you don't startle them. "On your left/right" or "watch your back" are great phrases to use.

- Stay out of bike and traffic lanes for both safety and courtesy.

- If you are not on a sidewalk or safe pathway, walk against traffic so you can observe approaching automobiles. Don't try to beat cars, bikes, or trains across intersections!

Common Sense:

- Walk in familiar areas. Know the location of telephones and open businesses and stores. Don't be too predictable - consider frequently altering your route. Avoid unpopulated areas, deserted streets and overgrown trails. Especially avoid unlit areas at night. Walk clear of parked cars and bushes.
- Always stay alert. The more aware you are, the less vulnerable you are. Ipods and MP3 player are fun to wear but be careful. Keep the volume down if you choose to walk wearing headphones. You need your hearing to avoid danger and be better aware of your surroundings.
- Ignore verbal harassment. Use discretion in acknowledging strangers. Look directly at others and be observant, but keep your distance and keep moving.
- Wear reflective material if exercising outdoors before dawn or after dark.
- Use your intuition about suspicious persons or areas. React on your intuition and avoid any person or area that "feels" unsafe. Call the police immediately if something happens to you or someone else, or if you notice anything out of the ordinary during your walk.
- Carry a whistle or noisemaker.



FAQs: Shoes and Gear

Shoes, Shoes, Shoes

The most important piece of equipment you will need is a good pair of shoes for walking. A poor quality shoe will get you through the first few weeks, but eventually you will need a shoe that provides adequate cushioning to absorb the impact of your stride. Keep in mind that when you walk, your foot strikes the ground up to 1000 times per kilometer at 1.5 to 3 times the force that your body weight will impart with every step you take.

There are plenty of shoes on the market, and there is no ideal shoe that suits everyone. But the criteria outlined below should help you to find a pair that works for you:

1. Be prepared to spend in the range of \$100- \$175. This should give you a good performance shoe.
2. Your greatest concern should be fit- not air, gel, pump or other heavily hyped features. Make absolutely certain the shoes fit, allowing some extra room in the toe box.
3. Have your feet measured, even if you think you know your shoe size. (You may have larger feet than you think.) Don't be concerned if you take a half size or larger than your "normal" street-shoe size. Remember too that your feet will swell a bit with the increased circulation when you walk, so it wouldn't hurt to have a little extra room in the toe box.
4. When you go to try on new shoes, remember to bring along any support inserts you plan to wear while walking. Wearing dress socks to try on runners will adversely affect the fit of the shoe and not provide you with a proper indication of fit.
5. Where possible, go to a specialty running store where knowledgeable sales people are available for guidance and assistance. They will help you to make the best shoe choice for you. Try to bring a pair of well-worn shoes so they can analyze your wear pattern. Don't be swayed by large chain store offering special offers or discount. Go with your instincts and what feels best on your feet. Walk around the store. Make sure you feel comfortable. When you go home, wear the new shoes around in the house for awhile before you walk outside in them, just to be sure. You shouldn't feel any discomfort at all. If

you do, they are not the right shoe or you. Generally, the "having to break the shoes in" time period is nothing like it once was. The fit should be right, and the materials are so light and flexible that blistering should not occur.

6. Shop for shoes later in the day, not first thing in the morning. Most feet will swell as the day progresses, so you want to avoid buying shoes that are too small.

Gear

Over the past 10 years there have been significant improvements in exercise clothing. Today, most athletic clothing is primarily made from synthetic fibers. Technical exercise shirts, shorts, tights, and sport bras are made from multiple layers of nylons and polyester based materials. When you do start to make clothing purchases, here is what you'll need to know, starting from the feet up.

• Socks:

Various synthetic fabrics work better than cotton. Most walkers prefer socks that are thin, lightweight, and ankle length. Technical socks are probably your least expensive item, but test whatever pair you purchase in a few walks before filling your drawers with dozens more.

• Shorts:

Synthetics shorts with a slight side cut are popular with most runners, but most walkers prefer a more generous cut, length down to at least midway on the thighs. Most tech shorts come with built-in underpants. Some shorts are "unisex" for both men and women, but many women prefer purchasing shorts designed specifically for them.

• Shirts:

A simple, cotton T-shirt will work, however, there are many new "wicking" materials that dry quickly and are comfortable for hot or rainy days. "Wicking" means the perspiration is moved from the skin to the outside of the garment because of the technical weave in the fabric.

• **Underwear for men:**

Most walkers wear their normal underwear (briefs) beneath long-leg clothing or under their sport shorts.

• **Underwear for women:**

A sport bra can be worn under a tech shirt or as an outer garment on warm days. Large-breasted women sometimes wear two sport bras for additional support. Most specialty running/walking stores are happy to order in special fitting bras if they don't have one in stock to meet your needs.

• **Tights:**

In colder weather, nylon tights or a narrow-style fitness pant will keep you warm without limiting your ability to move quickly. The slimmer cuts are generally more comfortable and practical than floppy sweat pants. Lycra cycling shorts (or half-leg tights) are also popular, particularly if leg chafing is a problem.

• **Warm-ups:**

If tech tights are not for you, another idea is to wear a light, breathable track suit over your shorts and t-shirt. In colder weather, layering is definitely the way to go. Avoid overdressing – if you feel a little chilly for the first five to ten minutes, then you know you will be comfortable after you've warmed up.

• **Hat:**

A hat or toque (along with a pair of gloves) is essential when walking in the winter. A billed cap will keep the sun off your head in the summer (and don't forget the sunscreen). The best hats for warm weather walking have mesh tops to allow heat to escape.

• **Sports watch:**

A sports watch that measures minutes and seconds would be useful for walkers to more easily and efficiently keep track of their time spent walking. A sports watch becomes particularly important when the program includes a variety of intervals.



FAQs: Pace and Technique

Finding your Walking Pace

Your walking pace is the speed at which you can comfortably walk. It's not important how fast you walk, but it will take time to get to know your body. All too often, beginners take the approach that exercise has to hurt in order for it to work. In the early stage of your walking program it's much better to walk too slowly than too quickly. Walking at an overly aggressive pace can lead to fatigue and possibly injury.

As you become fitter and stronger, you'll want to get your heart working and make walking a cardiovascular activity. To do this, you need to walk at a brisk pace. This is not a slow jaunt during which you can take in all the sights and sounds of the outdoors. Walking briskly means that you can speak at least two consecutive sentences without huffing and puffing, but you should be breathing heavily after speaking about 4 or 5 consecutive sentences. If you're out of breath after speaking only a couple of sentences, you need to reduce your speed. Don't be discouraged throughout this process- finding the right pace takes practice.

Good Walking Techniques

There is no such thing as a wrong way to walk, but you can certainly separate the graceful from the ungainly walking form. By incorporating good technique, you will engage your core (stomach and back) muscles, increase your speed and become a more efficient walker. Changing your form may feel awkward at first, but with a little practice you will soon feel as though you're floating along the path.

"Talk Test"

By giving yourself the "talk test" while exercising, you can easily establish whether you're exercising at your optimal level. If you can speak two consecutive sentences without gasping for air, you are probably exercising within a suitable aerobic range. If you cannot speak even one sentence without struggling to take a breath, you're likely pushing yourself too hard, and need to reduce your walking pace. Find the right pace. An easy pace requires little effort. A comfortable pace means you can hold a conversation. A brisk pace means you are slightly winded after speaking, but if you're

huffing and puffing it means you are pushing yourself too hard, and you need to back off.

Try these tips to walk with good technique

1. Arms dictate the pace, so you want to make the most of your arm swing, whether you're walking briskly or a comfortable talking pace.
2. For a good arm swing, you want your arms to be bent at approximately 90 degrees with your hands and fingers relaxed and palms should face inward with the thumbs pointed upwards and cutting the air to chest height in front. Your arms should swing easily and freely backwards to where the elbow reaches to the back such that the thumb brushes just past the hip.
3. When you're walking at a talking pace you should stand nice and tall, with square shoulders, arms swinging freely in an upwards and backwards motion and your stride should be wide with a strong heel-toe motion.
4. When you're walking at a brisk pace, your arm motion should be the same as described above but instead of swinging freely, there is a conscious effort to drive the arms forward and back. With a brisk pace, the thumbs swing higher in front almost to shoulder height instead of chest height, and the elbows drive further back as high as shoulder height so that the thumb and hand are well past the hip, depending on the comfort and flexibility of the participant.
5. During a brisk-paced walk, you want to stand tall and square. Open the chest to maximize breathing. The biggest difference, as described in the point above, is that the arms are driving the pace. When the arms are activated, the legs move with them! With a brisker pace, the torso tips slightly forward, the heel-toe action becomes stronger as the knee straightens and almost locks, while the hips swing left and right to accommodate the straightened knee and strong heel placement. Suggest participants consciously utilize their butt muscles to propel themselves forward as well. This is a "near race-walking technique" that comes naturally when the pace picks up.

Stay Relaxed

One of the best ways to improve your walking performance and overall enjoyment is to focus on staying relaxed. At various times throughout your walk, it's a good idea to go through a mental checklist to see if your head, shoulders, arms, hands, and hips, are relaxed.

Walking up Hills

- Lean forward into the hill, starting from your waist.
- Keep your stomach and back muscle taut.
- Focus your eyes only a few feet in front of you (avoid searching for the top of the hill).
- Shorten your stride and use small, quick steps.
- Pump your arms – as always, your arms will dictate the pace.
- Focus on rolling through your foot and pushing off with the balls of your feet.
- Be patient with yourself - it will take time to build your strength and confidence. After a few hills, you will begin to feel stronger and you'll love the feeling of reaching the top!

Dress for the Weather

Generally, when you first start your walk you should feel a little chilly. Body heat generated through exercise is amazing. Within only a short period of time you will warm up. You might even have to take off your outer layer and wrap it around your waist.

NOW YOU'RE WALKING



FAQs: Sticking with Training

Choosing to begin a walking program requires discipline, will power, and sometimes overcoming discomfort, particularly in the initial stages of the program. Lack of motivation can happen to the best of us. There will always be days when it is difficult to take those first steps out the door. Perhaps you are pressed for time, or the weather is cold and rainy. Perhaps you just don't feel like it. In most cases, try to remember that you'll almost always feel better once you get started into your workout. Think about how good you will feel after completing your walk; usually you feel better and are glad that you finally managed to struggle out the door.

Make an Appointment with Yourself

The key to becoming a regular exerciser is to build your workout into your daily routine. Make your workout a habit. Choose a time that works best for you, and try to stick with it. Maybe you like to get up and go first thing in the morning when you wake up, or find that you can clear your head a little by taking a break at lunch time. Just remember, that the longer you postpone your workout in the day, the more reasons you seem to be able to come up with NOT going out for your walk! No matter what time works best for you, pull out your scheduler and pencil in an hour-long appointment with yourself. Better yet, make an appointment to meet someone else to walk with. If your exercise partner is waiting on you at the street corner, you will be more likely to keep the appointment.

Get Inspired

Sometimes you may need a little inspiration to get yourself motivated. Listen to some uptempo music, read something uplifting, think about being out in your favorite running/walking area - the beach, a beautiful forest. If you are still feeling apathetic, it may be time for drastic action. Put on your workout gear, and tell yourself that you are only going to do half the scheduled workout. Once you get going, you may well find that you start to feel better and your full workout can be accomplished without difficulty.

Seek Out Variety

You may find walking around your neighborhood sufficiently rewarding in the beginning, but over time the experience may pale. When that happens, it's time to change your circumstances. Find a different place to walk. Go exploring. Go to the beach, a park, go to the country, take your dog with you.

Remind Yourself that it Will Get Easier

The further you go in your walking program, the easier it gets. You need to get through the initial phases where you are thinking about your feet, your breathing or how you are never going to get through the workout. If you do manage to push yourself into doing your training when you just don't feel like it - over time you will begin to feel good about being able to take on apathy and inertia and win.

Listen to Your Body

Sometimes you should listen to your body and not head out for your walk. If you're sick with the flu or a respiratory infection, take a day (or two) off. If you're sick, subjecting yourself to additional stress will only make you feel worse and might lead to injury or more serious illness. Give yourself a chance to recover, and then start back with the program.

Have a Positive Attitude

Negative self-talk tends to lead to negative results. If you are having trouble following the walking schedule, instead of thinking of yourself as a failure, tell yourself that you WILL complete the program, and BELIEVE it!!

"Our lives are not determined by what happens to us, but how we react to what happens; not by what life brings to us, but by the attitude we bring to life. A positive attitude causes a chain reaction of positive thoughts, events, and outcomes. It is a catalyst ... a spark that creates extraordinary results."



FAQs: Shift Work— Getting Enough Sleep & Physical Activity

Shift Work in Canada

About 25 per cent of workers in Canada do rotational shift work. Shift workers don't work from "nine to five" on weekdays. These workers rotate between day and night shifts or may only work nights.

Some people work 12-hour shifts rather than an eight-hour work day.

Many people enjoy shift work, as it allows them longer periods of time off to be with their families or to pursue other interests. For others, shift work is just part of their job. For example, shift workers often do critical work in hospitals, policing, emergency response, transportation and the oil and gas industry (to name a few areas). In these settings, round-the-clock service (24/7) is needed. In some cases, if life gets out of balance, shift work can affect workers' health and safety.

Sleep and Shift Work

Most shift workers don't get enough sleep. They often work when other people sleep and sleep when the rest of the world is awake. The human body has a 24-hour cycle of wakefulness and sleepiness regulated by an internal clock. This cycle means that we are naturally wakeful in the morning when it gets light and naturally sleepy when it gets dark at night.

When you're tired because you didn't get enough sleep, you may think and move slowly, make more mistakes and have difficulty remembering things. So, getting a good sleep is important for safety and other reasons.

Getting more physical activity and eating right can be a good strategy for getting a better sleep.

Physical Activity to Feel Better, Physically and Mentally

If you do shift work, you may benefit from physical activity because:

Physical activity is refreshing and gives you energy.

Physical activity increases alertness.

So, exercising before work is a good idea. Finding the time to be physically active may be difficult but is worthwhile even if you feel tired already. You may have more energy after you exercise than before!

Taking an active break during your shift can make you less sleepy and help you focus.

Often, we are more likely to be active with someone else or with a group of co-workers. Try getting your co-workers interested in going for a walk during your break rather than heading for the cafeteria.

The key to regular physical activity is finding something you enjoy and can fit into your day and then making it a part of your life. For many people, having a partner or group of friends to be active with can make a big difference to whether they actually do it. There may be someone else who works your shift who would also like to be more active and is open to doing something together. A fast 30-minute walk outdoors every day is all you need to do to be active enough for health benefits. Walking with friends also allows for a visit.

STEP BY STEP: A Workplace Walking Resource

WALK ON: QUALITY ASSURANCE RESOURCE



WalkBC
www.walkbc.ca



This Walking Resource Guide is a resource of the British Columbia Recreation and Parks Association (BCRPA). Several of the resource materials contained in this resource were adapted from existing BCRPA resources.

Walk BC is a joint initiative between the Heart and Stroke Foundation of BC & Yukon and the BC Recreation and Parks Association. Funding is provided by the BC Healthy Living Alliance, with support from ActNow BC.

An initiative of these BC Healthy Living Alliance members



ActNowBC.ca



WALK ON: QUALITY ASSURANCE



Implementation Tracking Sheet

Use this sheet twice a year to help you track what you are putting into your Workplace Walking Initiative and what is happening as a result. It is a helpful way to pull all of your good work together!

Inputs			
<i>RESOURCES</i>	Numbers	Types	Comments
Staff			
Volunteers			
Financial			
Time			
In-kind			
Other			

Inputs

MARKETING	Numbers	Types	Comments
Word-of-mouth			
Formal Presentations			
Posters, Flyers Brochures Print materials			
Phone calls			
Point of Decision Prompts			
Website or digital newsletters, blogs, email etc.			
SWAG or incentives			
Other			

Outputs

Outputs	Numbers	Types	Comments
Products (e.g., mugs pedometers, t-shirts, water bottles)			
Walking Activities (e.g., Move for Health Day, Stairway to Health, 10,000 Step Challenge)			

WALK ON: QUALITY ASSURANCE



Event Observation Sheet

Name & Purpose of the event

Place, Time & Duration of Event

Resources necessary to implement event (e.g., staff, volunteers, financial support, space, supplies etc.)

Types and number of participants (e.g., specific employee groups, families etc.)

Main accomplishments of results of the event

Ideas to improve/Liked most

Overall rating



1

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

10

Not at all successful

Will do this again!

Additional Information (e.g., weather, time of day, seasonal or thematic theme, incentives)

WALK ON: QUALITY ASSURANCE



Impact Questionnaire

1) Have you heard about the _____ (insert name of your walking initiative) _____ ?

Yes No

If you answered yes, how did you hear about the _____ (insert name of your walking initiative) _____ ?

Please tick as many as may apply.

Colleagues Poster Intra web Email Blog

SWAG (e.g., water bottle etc) Lunch-time workshop

2) How effective were these communication materials in getting you motivated to attend

_____ (insert name of your walking initiative) _____ ?

1	2	3	4	5
Not Very Effective	Not Effective	Neither Ineffective Or Effective	Effective	Very Effective

Comment

3) How do you prefer to be reached with information about future walking initiatives?

Colleagues Poster Intra web Email Blog

SWAG (e.g., water bottle etc) Lunch-time workshop

Other

4) Can you name any _____ (insert name of your walking initiative) _____ walking initiatives that you attended in the past year?

Yes No

If yes, what were the walking initiatives that you attended? _____

5) Overall, on a scale of 1-5, how satisfied were you with _____ (insert name of your walking initiative) ?

1	2	3	4	5
Very Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Neither Dissatisfied Or Satisfied	Satisfied	Very Satisfied

Comment _____

6) Please describe what SWAG or incentives or recognition you may have received from your participation:

What do you think of about any of the SWAG or incentives or recognition that you received from the initiative:

1	2	3	4	5
Very Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Neither Dissatisfied Or Satisfied	Satisfied	Very Satisfied

7) We're interested in knowing what difference you think the _____ (insert name of your walking initiative) _____ has had on yourself AND the workplace. Please tick all that apply:

- I feel more energized
- I feel more productive at work
- I have lost weight
- I feel stronger and have more endurance
- I feel less stressed
- I take the stairs more often
- I sit less at work
- I feel more connected to my colleagues
- I know more about the benefits of walking for my health
- I have had less illness and/or bounce back more quickly
- I am able to concentrate better on tasks
- I have taken up other physical activities
- I have reduced my blood pressure
- I have reduced my blood sugar levels
- I have reduced my blood cholesterol levels

Other (please describe): _____

8) If you were in charge of planning and implementing a walking initiative in the future, what would you do to make sure it was a success?

STEP BY STEP: A Workplace Walking Resource

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

RESOURCE



WalkBC
www.walkbc.ca



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ADDITIONAL RESOURCES



Workplace Wellness

Active Living at Work

Information about workplace activity, relevant statistics, trends, case study examples, and more.

<http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/alw-vat/index-eng.php>

ActNow BC

A variety of tools and resources, including a workbook, tool kit and activity posters to help create a healthier workplace.

<http://www.actnowbc.ca/>

Alberta Centre for Active Living

Research, reports and resources related to programs and frame-works specific to the workplace.

<http://www.centre4activeliving.ca/workplace/en/index.html>

Canada's Healthy Workplace Month

Activities and ideas for taking part in Healthy Workplace Month or Week.

<http://www.healthyworkplacemonth.ca/>

<http://www.healthyworkplacemonth.ca/2003/HealthFair.php>

Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety (CCOHS)

Information and advice about Bringing Health to Work. <http://www.ccohs.ca/>

Canadian Council for Health and Active Living at Work (CCHALW)

A 'how-to' manual with practical ideas and creative approaches to active living in the workplace.

<http://www.cchalw-ccsvat.ca/english/>

Canadian Fitness and Lifestyle Research Institute

Information about barriers to and benefits of physical activity in the workplace. <http://www.cflri.ca/eng/>

National Quality Institute

Tools and resources to help you develop and implement your workplace health promotion program. <http://www.nqi.ca/>

Health Work & Wellness™ Conference

Annual national conference that provides a forum for sharing of ideas on all aspects of workplace health.

<http://www.healthworkandwellness.com>

Physical Activity

Bike to Work Week

Campaign that promotes commuter cycling. Online tracking system allows participants to log their kilometres cycled.

<http://www.biketowork.ca/>

British Columbia Recreation and Parks Association (BCRPA)

BCRPA registered fitness leaders can lead various programs to assist with your Active Workplace Initiatives.

Contact BCRPA (bcrpa@bcrpa.bc.ca) for a list of qualified leaders in your area. <http://www.bcrpa.bc.ca/>

Canada's Physical Activity Guide to Healthy Active Living

Toolkit to getting active, benefits associated with living actively, examples of activities, how much activity is required to realize health benefits, and more. <http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/hp-ps/hl-mvs/pag-gap/index-eng.php>

Getting Started: Centres for Disease Control and Prevention

Research, information and advice about physical activity programs.