



WALKING FORM

HEAD TO TORSO POSITION

How you hold your body is very important to walking comfortably and easily. With good posture, you will be able to breathe easier and you will avoid back pain.

PROPER HEAD TO TORSO POSITION

- Stand tall; engage abdominal muscles, shoulders slightly back (shrug once and let shoulders fall and relax then pull back slightly) avoid arching the back but allow natural curve of spine.
- Don't lean forward.
- Keep eyes forward and chin up, looking 20 feet ahead, head remains level as you walk.
- Your hips will rotate front to back as you walk. Avoid side-to-side swaying which is wasted motion.
- Do not lean back or sit back on your hips.





ARM MOTION

Using your arms more can boost your walking speed. However, some arm movements can slow you down.

PROPER ARM MOVEMENT

- As your arm comes forward, don't raise it up past the level of your breastbone; keep it moving straight forward rather than crossing your body. It is like extending for a handshake.
- Bend your elbows at 90 degrees.
- For the backward arm motion, exaggerate it slightly so as your arm goes back your hand comes to your hip like you're reaching towards your back pocket. (Don't over exaggerate the backward motion of your arm to the point of leaning).
- Keep your elbows close to your body as they swing forward and back.
- Relax your hands. Then close them into a partially closed curl, not clenched tightly. It is best not to carry anything in your hands.
- Your arms will work opposite of your legs. Your right arm is back when your right foot is forward. Relax and let your arms assume this natural motion at first.





WALKING FORM

FOOT MOTION

Your feet will take an active role, using your heel and ankle to roll through the step and push off powerfully at the end of your stride.

PROPER FOOT MOVEMENT

- Your heel should hit the ground first, before the rest of your foot.
- Keep your ankle flexed as your foot comes forward and land on your heel.
- As your foot rolls through from heel to toe, it passes underneath your body.
- Once your heel lands, your foot rolls through the step from heel to toe.
- The power portion of your step is the push off in back when your foot is behind your body. As you push off with the back foot, your opposite leg is forward with your heel striking the ground.
- The power and speed in your step will come from getting a good push off from your rear leg.





WALKING TO BUILD SPEED

Boosting your walking speed has some great benefits; it can make for a shorter workout, increase the intensity of your workout, and burn more calories. It's important to begin increasing the pace of your workout gradually over time. Upgrade your shoes to flexible and lightweight; you will need more cushioning for longer walks. See Walking form article for proper form; start out focusing on form for 10 minutes (after warming up); if no aches and pains are present after a few days, gradually increase to 20 – 30 minutes. It is important to note that shin pain is common when you change your walking technique so take it easy at first.

Once you have built up to 20-30 minutes – you could incorporate an economy workout for speed as follows:

ECONOMY WORKOUT FOR SPEED

1. Warm up for 10 minutes at an easy pace.
2. Walk as fast as you can for 30 seconds or 200 meters (two city blocks in most cities).
3. After 30 seconds, drop down to an easy pace for 2 minutes.
4. Repeat the 30 seconds speed/2 minutes rest 8 to 12 times.
5. Cool down with a 10-minute easy pace walk.

Once a solid walking route is established injury free, you could incorporate up to three speed workouts a week – do not do more than four of these workouts.





WALKING SCHEDULE FOR BEGINNERS

Week 1

Start with a 15-minute walk at an easy pace. Walk five days the first week. Consistency is key in building a new walking habit. Incorporate rest days such as making day 3 a rest day and day 6 a rest day.

Weekly total goal: 60 to 75 minutes

Week 2

Up your time to 20 minutes per day by adding five minutes a day. Or, you may wish to extend yourself more on some days, followed by a rest day.

Weekly total goal: 80 to 100 minutes

Week 3

Add five minutes a day so you are walking for 25 minutes, five days a week

Weekly total goal: 100 to 125 minutes

Week 4

Add five minutes a day to walk for 30 minutes, five days a week.

Weekly total goal: 120 to 150 minutes

Tips

If you find any week to be difficult, repeat that week rather than adding more time. Do this until you are able to progress comfortably.

Once you are able to walk for 30 minutes at a time comfortably, you are ready to use a variety of different workouts to add intensity and endurance.

