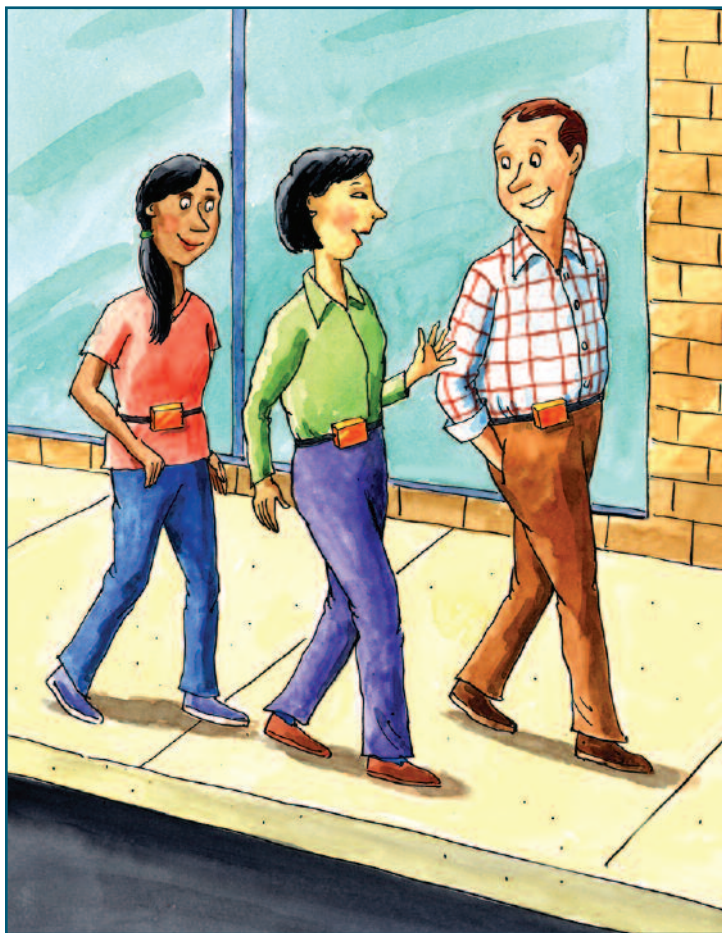


Walk into Health



For use with the “Walk into Health” pedometer

walk *into* health

Why walk?

- It is an activity for all ages.
- It is good for your health.
- It can help you feel better.
- It can help you sleep better at night.
- It can give you more energy.
- Brisk walking can help you reach and maintain a healthy weight.
- Brisk walking can improve how well your heart and lungs work.
- It can make the muscles and bones in your legs stronger.
- It can help decrease the risk of diabetes, heart disease, stroke, cancer, depression and falls.
- It is easy and does not cost a lot.
- It can be done in many places.
- It can be done all year long.

Are you ready to walk?

- Walking is safe for almost everyone.
- If you have ever had dizziness, shortness of breath or chest pain, check with your doctor first.

How much walking is good for my health?

- For health benefits, Public Health Agency of Canada advises to aim for at least 60 minutes of light walking every day or 30 – 60 minutes of brisk walking at least 4 days a week.
- A brisk walk means walking quickly at a speed that you can still carry on a conversation. You will breathe faster, feel warmer and your heart will beat more quickly.
- If you can sing, you can try to walk faster!
- If you cannot talk or you feel pain, then you are working too hard. Slow down or stop!
- Some pain is normal after starting a new activity. If you are still sore after 2 or 3 days, see your doctor.
- For good health, adults should work towards walking 10,000 steps each day. This booklet will explain how you can measure this.

How can I measure how much I walk?

Here are two ways you can measure if you are walking enough for your health:

- 1) Measure with the number of steps you take each day.
- 2) Measure how much time you spend walking.

What is a pedometer?

- It is a small tool you can wear when you walk.
- This tool can count both the **steps** you take and the **time** you walk.
- Wearing a pedometer can encourage you to walk more.
- The pedometer that you borrowed has been tested for accuracy; however, the number of steps it counts will not always be 100 percent correct.

Note: The instructions described in this booklet explain how you can use the pedometer that you borrowed. The instructions may not work with other types of pedometers.

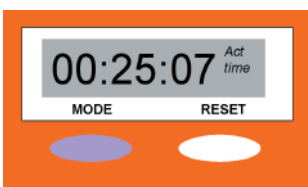
How do I use a pedometer?

- Open the pedometer.
- The pedometer has two buttons: “**Reset**” and “**Mode**.”
- Press and hold the **Reset** button for 2 seconds to clear all your totals and set the pedometer to “0.”
- The **Mode** button changes the display from “steps” to “activity time.”
- Close the pedometer.

Set in “STEP” Mode



Set in “TIME” Mode

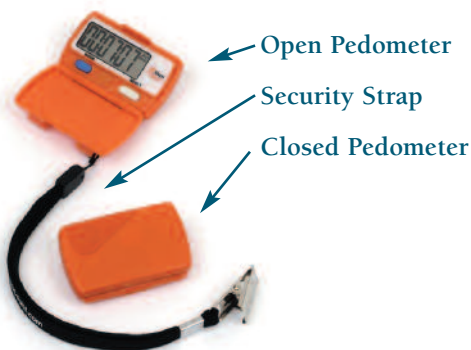




- Clip the pedometer onto your belt or the waistband of your pants or skirt. Start by sliding one corner of the clip onto your waistband, moving it into position until it is in line with your knee.
- Wear your pedometer *on the same side as the hand you normally write with*.
- Do not force the clip onto a thick belt, as the clip may break.
- The pedometer should be in line with your knee, straight up and down (no tilting or angle).
- Attach the security strap. This is the long thin black strap with a metal clip you can attach to your pants or skirt to prevent the pedometer from falling off.
- The pedometer cover needs to be closed for the pedometer to work.
- To make sure the pedometer is working, set the counter to 0 and walk 20 steps.
- Open the pedometer.
- The pedometer should read 18-22 steps.



- If the pedometer is not reading between 18 and 22, try attaching it in a different location such as the middle of your back, as long as the pedometer points straight up and down and moves with your body.



DO NOT

- Wear the pedometer in water.
- Drop or throw the pedometer.

How to use the pedometer to count daily steps

- In the morning clip on your pedometer using the instructions above.
- Make sure the pedometer is set in “step” mode.
- Use the “Reset” button to set the counter to “0.”
- Wear the pedometer all day long.
- At the end of day before you go to bed, take off the pedometer and open the cover. Write down your number of steps. This number is your **daily steps**.

Set walking goals: increase the number of steps you take

- To increase the number of steps you take, first you must count how many steps you take on an average day.
- To measure your average, count your “daily steps” for 7 full days.
- At the end of the week, add up all of your steps and divide (\div) by 7 to get your daily average.

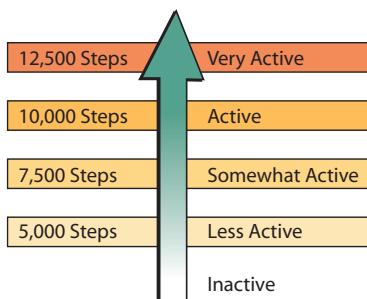
Here is an example of how to measure your daily average:

Monday	3600 steps
Tuesday	2305 steps
Wednesday	3100 steps
Thursday	3010 steps
Friday	4000 steps
Saturday	6045 steps
Sunday	<u>2440 steps</u>

Total **24,500 steps**

$24,500 \div 7 = 3500$ steps is your daily average


- Use the chart below to see how active you are right now and to set goals to walk more.



(Adapted from Tudor-Locke & Basset, 2004, How Many Steps/Day are Enough?: Preliminary Pedometer Indices for Public Health).

To slowly increase your activity level each week, try to add 500 steps to your average.

Here is an example of how you can add 500 steps to your average every week:

Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4	Week 5	Week 6
3,500 steps	4,000 steps	4,500 steps	5,000 steps	5,500 steps	6,000 steps
Starting Average					

Keep going! Over time, you can reach the goal of walking 10,000 steps every day.


Measuring your walk using time

For health benefits, Public Health Agency of Canada advises that adults aim for at least 60 minutes of light walking every day or 30 – 60 minutes of brisk walking at least 4 days a week.

Walking for at least 10 minutes at a time can also be good for your health.

In one day, you can add up your walks to get your 30-60 minutes.

Here is an example:

7:45 am - 8:00 am — walk with the kids to school	15 minutes
12:50 pm - 1:00 pm — go outside for a brisk walk after lunch	10 minutes
3:20 pm - 3:35 pm — walk to pick up the kids from school	15 minutes
 Total = 40 minutes/day	

You can keep track of time using your pedometer or your wrist watch.

How to use your wrist watch to keep track of time

- If you are using a wrist watch, write down the time when you start and finish your walk to record your minutes.

How to use your pedometer to keep track of time

- You may choose to use your pedometer to measure your minutes *each time* you go for a walk.
- The activity timer will record when you are moving faster than 2.6 km/hour.
- Press the **Mode** button to change the display to “Act. Time.”
- Hold the **Reset** button down to set the pedometer to “0.”
- Close the pedometer.
- Clip the pedometer onto your belt or the waist band of your pants or skirt and attach the security strap.
- Begin your walk.
- At the end of your walk, take off your pedometer and open it to read your minutes.

Set walking goals: increase the amount of time you walk

- Try to start walking for 10 minutes at a time.
- Each week, you can try to add more minutes to your walks.

Here is an example of how to slowly add minutes to your walk each week:

Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4	Week 5	Week 6
Starting Try 3 10-minute walks	35 minutes/ day	40 minutes/ day	45 minutes/ day Try 3 15-minute walks	55 minutes/ day	60 minutes/day Try 3, 20-minute walks, OR 2, 30-minute walks



To measure both steps and time

You can use your pedometer to check how many steps you were able to take during the specific time that you walked.

Press the “**Mode**” button on your pedometer to change the display from “Act. Time” to “Step” to see both measurements.

The average person can walk 8 km (or 5 miles) if they walk 10,000 steps per day.

You can use this chart to convert your steps to miles or kilometres:

STEPS	MILES	KM	STEPS	MILES	KM
500	0.25	0.40	5500	2.75	4.43
1000	0.50	0.80	6000	3.00	4.83
1500	0.75	1.21	6500	3.25	5.23
2000	1.00	1.61	7000	3.50	5.63
2500	1.25	2.01	7500	3.75	6.03
3000	1.50	2.41	8000	4.00	6.44
3500	1.75	2.82	8500	4.25	6.84
4000	2.00	3.22	9000	4.50	7.24
4500	2.25	3.62	9500	4.75	7.64
5000	2.50	4.02	10000	5.00	8.05

How to use your “Walk This Way” Calendar

- When you borrow a pedometer, you will also receive the *Walk This Way* calendar to help you record how much you are walking for your health.
- This calendar comes with a special erasable marker that you can use to write down your steps and/or time.
- Keep track of when you walk by recording the number of steps you took or the number of minutes you walked each day.
- You can also use this calendar to write down your goals.
- To reach your health goals, it helps to make a walking plan at the beginning of each week. Make a date with yourself or your walking group!
- Use the erasable marker to write on your calendar the days and times you plan to walk.
- Keeping track on your calendar lets you know how well you are doing.
- Put your calendar where you can see it every day (on the fridge or mirror – the calendar package includes magnets).
- If other people can see your calendar, it shows that you want to reach your goals to walk more. This will help you stick to your plan!
- Continue to use the calendar until you have completed all 6 weeks.
- It may take 6 weeks to make walking a regular activity in your life and to feel changes in your body.
- Your calendar can be re-used. Use a damp paper towel to erase and keep going.

Getting ready to walk

- Eat a healthy snack.
- Wear shoes that are comfortable and fit you well.
- Bring water and drink small amounts as you walk.
- Start slowly, relax and breathe normally.

Safety tips

- Carry a whistle or cell phone.
- Tell someone where you are going and when you will be back.
- Walk with friends or family.
- Walk in a safe place where there is light and people around.
- Try your best to always walk on sidewalks, trails and paths. Keep to the right and be aware of cyclists. On roads without sidewalks, walk on the left of the road so you can see the traffic.
- Make sure to cross streets at traffic lights or crosswalks.
- Don't wear head phones in heavy traffic. If you want to wear head phones, listen to music at a low volume.
- Avoid using your cell phone when you are walking.
- Change your route and the places that you walk.
- If it is dark outside, wear clothes that are white, or another light colour.
- If you feel unsafe, return home. Try walking at a mall or with other people.
- Stay alert!

Be prepared for the weather

- In cold weather, wearing layers will help keep you warm. Remember to protect your hands and ears. Avoid slippery surfaces.
- In warm weather wear light clothing to keep cool (cotton clothes and socks are a good choice).
- Check the UV index and Air Quality Health Index before walking. See page 15 for details.
- Wear a wide-brimmed hat, sunglasses with UVA/UVB protection AND sunscreen and lip balm with at least SPF 15+. Try walking where there is shade from the sun.
- Think about walking inside on poor-weather days. You can go to a nearby mall or community centre to walk on these days.
- In the summer, wear an insect repellent especially if you walk in the early morning or early evening.

Before you start and end your walk...

Warm-up

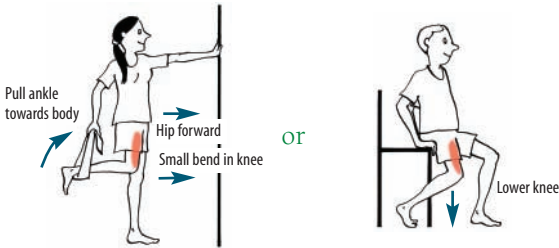
Walk slowly for the first few minutes of your walk to get your body ready.

Cool-down and Stretches

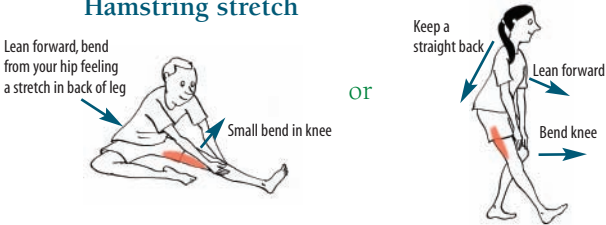
- Walk slowly for the last few minutes of your walk to slow down your heart and your breathing.
- Stretch to cool your body down (see pictures for ideas on how to stretch).
- Stretching helps to prevent injury and sore muscles.
- Stretching will improve your flexibility.

- Choose either a sitting or standing stretch, whatever is easier for you.
- Hold each stretch for 15-30 seconds, and then repeat on the other side of the body.
- Do not bounce when you are holding a stretch.
- If you are stretching correctly, you should feel the stretch in the red area shown in the pictures.
- Stop stretching if you feel pain.

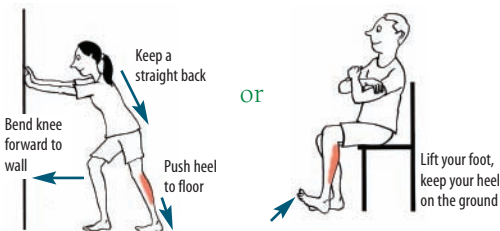
Quadriceps stretch



Hamstring stretch



Calf stretch



Tips to increase your walking

- Record your daily steps or time on a calendar – this will help you reach your goals.
- If you feel comfortable, try to walk faster.
- Try to add more steps to your daily average or take longer walks.
- Try to build up to walking 10,000 steps every day.
- Go walking with your friends or family.
- Join a walking group.
- Find a walking partner or “buddy.”
- Use the stairs instead of the elevator.
- Walk inside a shopping mall if the weather is bad or if you feel unsafe outdoors.
- Wake up a little earlier and walk before breakfast.
- Take a “walking break” instead of a coffee break.
- Take a quick walk at lunch time.
- Get off the bus 1 stop early or park your car farther away.
- Walk to the store or bank.
- Try to have “walking meetings” at work.
- Choose a route that allows you to walk continuously and challenges you to work harder.
- Enjoy and have fun!

Need more ideas on where to walk?

- Explore parks and walking trails.
- Try walking routes in your neighbourhood.
- Call your local community centre and ask about programs.

You can also look at these websites to learn more about walking trails in the City of Toronto:

Exploring Toronto's Parks and Trails map

www.toronto.ca/parks/maps.htm

Discovery Walks maps

www.toronto.ca/parks/recreation_facilities/discovery_walks/discover_index.htm

Toronto Heart Health Partnership Let's Walk maps

www.intohealth.ca Click on [Physical Activity](#), then click on [Resources](#).

To find out more about Canada's Physical Activity Guide to Healthy Active Living, visit www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/pau-uap/paguide/index.html

For Air Quality Health Index and UV index readings, visit airhealth.ca and toronto.ca/health/sun/index.htm

For more information about walking programs and resources available in your neighbourhood, call Toronto Public Health at 416-338-7600 or visit toronto.ca/health/walkintohealth

Acknowledgements/Disclaimers:

This Project is produced in partnership with: Toronto Catholic District School Board, Toronto District School Board, Toronto Parks, Forestry and Recreation, Toronto Public Health, Toronto Public Library and community volunteers.

The Walk into Health booklet was adapted from the *Walk This Way* User's Guide. *Walk This Way* is managed by the Physical Activity Resource Centre (PARC), and receives funding support from the Government of Ontario.

find
intohealth.ca