

# EVERY STEP YOU TAKE

## POWER YOUR WALK



Walking is our most natural form of movement. It's a basic instinct that develops very early in life that we don't need to consciously think about. This can pose a problem when bad habits develop over the years and become automatic, especially when you move from a casual stroll to making a walk part of your fitness regime. A good stride means proper form and a purpose to every move you make. It will help you to avoid injury, lessen the impact on joints, and move more efficiently to meet your fitness goals. Remember to always consult with your physician prior to making any changes to your physical activity.



### FORM & FUNCTION

**Stand tall.** Stand up tall, with a straight back. Avoid strain on the back muscles from leaning forward or backward.

**Look ahead.** Head and eyes should be forward. Don't look at your feet. Focus 20 feet ahead of you to engage full peripheral vision.

**Keep your chin up.** Keep your chin parallel to the ground to avoid strain in the neck and upper back. This is a good reason to leave your phone at home!

**Relax.** Shoulders should be back and relaxed. Shrug and release to let your shoulders naturally fall to relieve tension. You can do this during your walk to ensure that you are keeping them relaxed.

**Engages the core.** This will help to maintain good posture and resist slouching. Keep your stomach pulled in just slightly while still being able to take deep, full breaths.

**Tuck the tush.** Rotate your hips slightly forward to eliminate an arch in the back.

**Roll with it.** Roll your foot in a heel-to-toe motion. Keep your feet always pointed forward.

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### TAKE YOUR WALK AND RUN WITH IT

You've perfected your stride, and you're ready for the next challenge. As you gain more strength and endurance, continue to challenge yourself in distance and speed. Power your walk with a Walk-to-Run or walk/run interval program. Running will burn about twice as many calories as walking and, if time is short, running can cut your exercise time in half. Before you begin, you should feel that your fitness routine has helped to develop mobility, stability, endurance, and strength. Once your walk has remained at a comfortable pace for a few weeks, gradually pick up speed into a brisk walk (5km/hour) and add a few minutes to your walk for the next few weeks.

### Do you feel ready to take that walk to a run?



Here is a simple way to get started while keeping your workout time to 30 minutes:

Week	Jog in Minutes	Walk in Minutes	Reps
1	1	4	x6
2	2	3	x6
3	3	2	x6
4	4	1	x6

A 30-minute walk/run interval program with a 5-minute warm-up and cool-down done every other day meets Health Canada's recommendations of at least 2½ hours of moderate to vigorous physical activity each week. If it feels hard, repeat the prior week. If you have a persistent ache or pain, take an extra rest day.

### Want to feel more challenged?

Contact your local municipal recreational centres for Learn-to-Run Programs, join a Walk-to-Run meet-up group, or contact a local running or fitness retail store for events. You can even download an app like one of these!

- 1 RunKeeper.** Real-time tracker training for a walk, run, hike or any activity while encouraging you to challenge yourself and get active more often.
- 2 Ease Into 5K.** This iPhone app will get you off the couch and change your life in 8 weeks.
- 3 Map My Run.** Adaptive training plans that let you create and discover new and challenging routes to walk or run. Use challenges to set goals to motivate yourself or compete with friends.

Sources: <https://www.verywellfit.com/how-to-walk-walking-posture-3432476>  
<https://www.prevention.com/fitness/fitness-tips/a20463057/walk-to-run-program/>  
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