

start!

American Heart
Association



Learn and Live

start!

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Walking
This Winter

Have colder weather and shorter days turned you into a couch potato? Or are you snowed under by seasonal obligations? If you're decking the halls — and the malls — staying fit might fall last on your to-do list.

But don't give physical activity the cold shoulder. Learn how you can improve your heart health by walking. And don't forget to bundle up!

What is **start!**?

Start! is the American Heart Association's national movement that calls on all Americans to live longer, heart-healthy lives by walking. If you're going to make walking part of your life, then you should make Start! part of your life, too.

Join Start! today to receive free monthly e-newsletters with expert advice on health and fitness. You'll also receive access to MyStart! Online, a free online activity tracker to help you reach your health goals. Sign up for free at www.heart.org/start.

Why Walking?

You can walk almost anywhere and anytime. And walking can give you more energy and help relieve stress. You can stay connected by walking with friends or family or enjoy some solo time by walking alone. It's up to you.

If you have trouble sticking to a workout routine, there's more good news. Walking has the lowest dropout rate of any physical activity. It's a simple, positive way you can improve your health. You don't need expensive equipment — just a good pair of sneakers or walking shoes.

Walking is also good for your heart. Did you know that for every hour of regular, vigorous exercise you do, like brisk walking, you can live two hours longer? Research has shown that 30 minutes of moderate physical activity a day can:

- ✿ Reduce your risk of coronary heart disease;
- ✿ Improve your blood pressure and blood sugar levels;
- ✿ Help you maintain your body weight and lower your risk of obesity;
- ✿ Reduce your risk of osteoporosis, breast and colon cancer and Type 2 diabetes; and
- ✿ Enhance your mental well-being.

Getting Started

Safety First

Walking is safe for most people, but you may want to check with your physician if you've never been physically active. You should definitely seek medical advice if:

- ✿ Your doctor has recommended only medically supervised physical activity;
- ✿ You've experienced chest pain in the past month;
- ✿ You're experiencing any pain or pressure anywhere in your body; or
- ✿ You tend to lose consciousness or experience dizziness.

What to Wear: Put your best foot forward

Hit the ground running with a good pair of walking shoes or sneakers. Here are some tips:

- ✿ Choose shoes with thick, flexible soles that cushion your feet and absorb shock for the rest of your body.
- ✿ Make sure your shoes fit comfortably. Buy the right size.
- ✿ Replace your shoes every six months, even if they still look nice. You'll want shoes that provide full support in the soles to protect your joints and arches as you walk.



Layer your clothing.

Layering provides the best insulation for a workout. The first layer (the layer closest to your body) should be thin and made of synthetic fibers (not cotton) that draw sweat away from your body. The second layer should provide insulation, be lightweight and dry quickly (such as a fleece or sweatshirt). The last layer should protect you from the elements.

Cover your head, hands and feet.

You can lose a lot of body heat if your head is exposed. Cover your head and ears or use a face mask to protect yourself from cold and wind. Your hands and feet are the farthest points from your heart and are the least insulated. Gloves or mittens and wool socks insulate and wick moisture away.

Don't forget to apply sunscreen.

You can still sunburn in the winter. In fact, snow can reflect the sun's harmful ultraviolet rays, increasing your exposure.



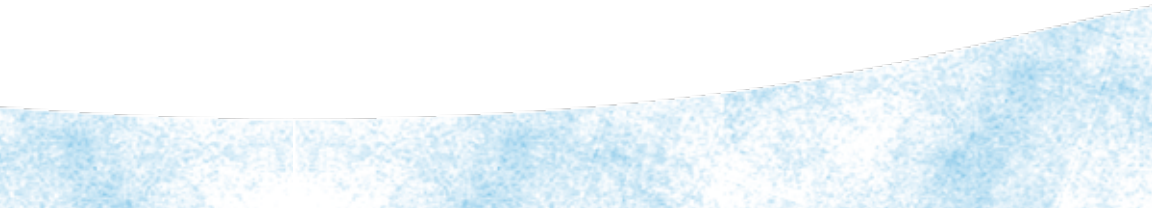
Before You Go Out



“Everyone thinks of changing the world, but no one thinks of changing himself.”

— Leo Tolstoy

You can usually work out outdoors even when the weather outside is frightful. Just remember to:

- ❄️ **Check the temperature and wind chill.** The wind can remove warm air that surrounds your body. Any activity that increases motion also increases wind chill. If the temperature or wind chill is below zero, exercise inside.
 - ❄️ **Drink plenty of fluids.** It's easy to become dehydrated in cold weather because you don't realize you're sweating or don't want to drink cold water. But you need to drink as much in cold weather as you do in hot weather. Drink water or sports drinks while you exercise to lower your risk of dehydration.
 - ❄️ **Avoid alcoholic beverages before and after you exercise.** Alcohol gives an initial feeling of warmth, because blood vessels in the skin expand. Heat is then drawn away from your body's vital organs.
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If it's just too cold to walk outside, don't put your fitness plans on ice. Try one of these ideas:

- ❄️ **Start mall walking.** Many malls will open their doors early and may have a track marked off for mall walkers.
- ❄️ **Join a gym.** You can exercise at a health club, YMCA or recreation center year round.
- ❄️ **Buy a treadmill.** Putting a treadmill in front of the TV will encourage you to be active year round. Save money by searching the newspaper or online postings for used equipment.
- ❄️ **Walk at work.** Don't let the holidays set you back. With most of our holiday consumption coming from those hard-to-resist goodies at the office and so many year-end commitments, this is a perfect time to recruit co-workers to walk at lunch, take walking breaks, or set up walking meetings.

“People say that losing weight is no walk in the park. When I hear that I think, yeah, that’s the problem.”

— Chris Adams

“Walking is the best possible exercise.”

— Thomas Jefferson

Warming Up and Stretching

“Motivation is what gets you started. Habit is what keeps you going.”
— Jim Ryun

“The difference between the impossible and the possible lies in a person’s determination.”
— Tommy Lasorda

To prevent injuries, be sure to warm up and stretch, especially in colder weather. Warm up by walking slowly for about five minutes. After that, limber up your body and prepare it for more strenuous physical activity with stretching exercises. Try these:

Wall Push

Stand 18 inches away from a wall. Lean forward, pushing against the wall with your hands and keeping your heels flat on the ground. Hold it for 10 seconds, then relax. Repeat 1–2 times.

Palm Touch

Bend your knees slightly. Try to touch the floor by bending from the waist, but don’t bounce. Hold the position for 10 seconds, then repeat 1–2 times. If you have lower back problems, do the same thing, but with your legs crossed.

Toe Touch

Place your right leg on a chair or railing, making a 90-degree angle with the other leg. Keep your left leg straight and lean forward, touching the toes of your right leg – and again, don’t bounce. Switch legs and do the same thing. Repeat the entire exercise 1–2 times.

It’s also a good idea to stretch after your walking session. It’s a great way to wind down after an exhilarating walk!

On Your Mark, Get Set, Start!

You've layered up, stretched and mapped out your plan. Now what? Find a course with a smooth, soft surface away from traffic where you can walk year round. Be sure to check the temperature and wind chill before heading outside to walk.

Even the best walkers had to start at the beginning.

Thirty minutes of walking most days of the week is enough to start improving your heart health. You don't have to do it all at once. Split that half hour into two 15-minute segments or three 10-minute segments if you want.

If 30 minutes feels like too much, you might want to ease into your routine. The first week try walking for 5–10 minutes at a time. On each subsequent week add 2–3 minutes until you've reached a full 30 minutes. The important thing is to keep moving – every step counts! If weight loss is a goal, you may want to increase your walk to at least 45 minutes to an hour.

Maintain a moderate pace. That means walking about 1.5 to 3 miles per day at 3 to 4 miles per hour.

Watch your form

Pay attention to how you walk. Keep your arms relaxed and at a 90-degree angle by your sides. You should fall into a natural stride. Here are some tips:

- ❁ Stand tall and straight.
- ❁ Keep your eyes straight ahead and avoid looking down.
- ❁ Hold in your stomach and keep your tailbone under to support your lower back.
- ❁ Roll your feet from heel to toe on each step.

Challenge Yourself



There's walking, and then there's *really* walking!

So you've been walking at least 30 minutes a day and the cold hasn't slowed you down a bit! Consider advancing your walking level and changing your scenery. Use these tips to step up your routine:

- * Search for hills. Walking uphill builds strength and stamina.
- * Change your route and find a place with nice scenery.
- * Look up all the local walking trails and try a new one every week.
- * Start walking in faster intervals. Add a burst of speed walking for 1–2 minutes every five minutes. Gradually increase the intervals.
- * Walk faster by taking more steps instead of increasing your stride.
- * Increase your distance.
- * Introduce strength training two days a week.
- * Get a walking partner for inspiration. Need help? Go to www.heart.org/start to find a Walking Buddy.
- * Sign up for a 5K walk, such as the Start! Heart Walk. Go to www.heart.org/start to find one in your area.



The Road To Success

Whatever your goal — a smaller dress size, less stress or more energy — be sure to write it down. Measure your weekly and monthly accomplishments. Think ahead: What's your New Year's resolution? Take it a step further. What are your goals for spring? Assign a reward to each goal. Then start a daily walking log. Use a simple spiral notebook or take advantage of an online walking tool such as MyStart! Online at www.heart.org/start.

Your walking log will help you stay on track with your fitness goals. And reading back through your log will show you how much you've accomplished. Reminding yourself of your successes will help you stay motivated and focused on your health goals.



Winter Heart Fact

Seventy percent of Americans don't get enough exercise, blaming lack of time and lack of motivation.

The Road To Success



If you're walking to lose weight, you'll need to burn more calories than you consume. To lose a pound of body fat a week (about 3,500 calories) you need to burn 500 more calories than you eat each day. For example, a 155-pound person needs to walk for about an hour at a brisk pace to burn 500 calories.

The figures below show the approximate calories burned per hour by a 100-, 150- or 200-pound person performing a particular activity.

Activity	100 lb.	150lb.	200lb.
Walking 2 mph	160	240	312
Walking 3 mph	210	320	416
Walking 4½ mph	295	440	572
Jogging 5½ mph	440	740	880
Jogging 7 mph	610	920	1230

Determining Calorie Use

Activity: **Walking** (3 mph, 100-pound person)

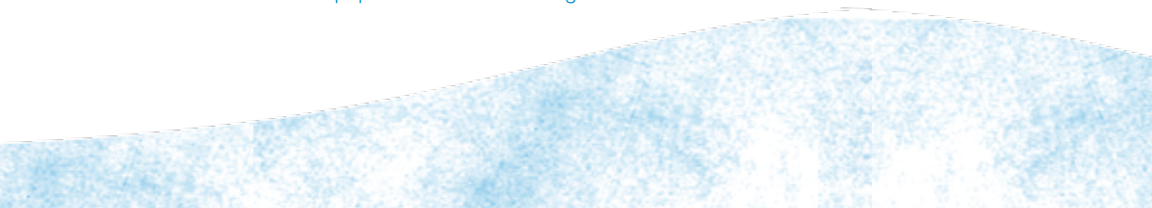
Calories per hour (210) x number of hours (½) = (105) calories.



Don't Chill Out!

Easy tips for getting more activity into your winter day

Finding it hard to set aside time to walk? Here are some ideas for adding more activity to your daily routine — add your favorite tips to the list:

- ❄️ Take the stairs instead of the elevator.
 - ❄️ Take walking breaks at work or suggest walking meetings.
 - ❄️ Stop trying to find a close parking space. Park farther from the entrance and count the extra steps.
 - ❄️ Make 1–2 laps around the mall before making your purchases.
 - ❄️ Keep moving at the airport. Flight delayed? Walk up and down the terminal to make the most of your wait time.
 - ❄️ Meet a friend for dinner, then walk for 30 minutes.
 - ❄️ Walk with your family for extra bonding time. Don't forget the dog.
 - ❄️ Start a caroling group and stride through the neighborhood.
 - ❄️ Walk to your favorite coffee shop or bookstore and treat yourself to a cup of coffee or a new paperback before walking back.
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Take a Break

Take-A-Break Snack Mix

Serves 10; ½ cup per serving

Whether your schedule is go-go-go or hurry-up-and-wait, you'll be glad you packed these tasty tidbits for healthy snacking.

- * Cooking spray
- * ¼ cup sliced almonds
- * 1 tablespoon light brown sugar
- * 2 teaspoons water
- * ¼ teaspoon ground cinnamon
- * ⅛ teaspoon ground nutmeg
- * 2 cups whole-grain oat cereal with yogurt-flavored coating
- * 2 cups whole-grain wheat and bran flakes with raisins
- * ½ cup dried unsweetened cranberries
- * ½ cup dried unsweetened blueberries

1. Put a piece of aluminum foil about 12 inches square on a platter or baking sheet. Lightly spray with cooking spray. Set aside.

2. In a small nonstick skillet, dry-roast the almonds over medium heat for 2 to 3 minutes, or until lightly golden brown, stirring occasionally.

3. Stir in the brown sugar, water, cinnamon, and nutmeg. Cook for 1 to 2 minutes, or until the liquid has evaporated and the almonds are coated with the mixture, stirring constantly. Transfer to the foil. Let cool completely, 15 to 20 minutes.

4. Meanwhile, in a medium bowl, stir together the remaining ingredients.

5. Add the cooled almonds to the cereal mixture, stirring to combine. Store in an airtight container for up to 7 days.



Cook's Tip: For variety, substitute different nutrient-dense dried fruits, such as cherries, apricots, and plums, for the cranberries and blueberries. Cut them into $\frac{1}{4}$ - to $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch pieces before adding them to the cereal mixture.

Nutrition Analysis (per serving)

Calories	139
Total Fat	2.0 g
Saturated Fat	0.5 g
Trans Fat	0.0 g
Polyunsaturated Fat	0.5 g
Monounsaturated Fat	1.0 g
Cholesterol	0 mg
Sodium	124 mg
Carbohydrates	28 g
Fiber	4 g
Sugars	15 g
Protein	2 g

Dietary Exchanges: 1 fruit, 1 starch

This recipe is brought to you by the American Heart Association's Food Certification Program. Recipe copyright © 2008 American Heart Association. For more information heart-healthy grocery shopping, visit heartcheckmark.org.





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7272 Greenville Ave.
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www.startwalkingnow.org

We hope you've found the information and motivation you need to start leading a heart-healthy lifestyle by walking. **For more information about Start!, please visit www.startwalkingnow.org.**

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