

WALKING PROGRAM



**Change happens
one step at a time.**



Take the step. Get active.

INTRODUCTION:

This walking program is designed to last 12 weeks and is for people of all fitness levels. The goal of the program is to move more, and this is partially accomplished by increasing the amount of time employees dedicate to walking throughout the day – especially while at work.

To maximize these efforts, establish a walking on the clock policy. First, your worksite needs to determine how much time at work (time on the clock) can be dedicated to being physically active – 15 minutes on the clock? 15 minutes of break time on the clock? 15 minutes on the clock + lunch?

Second, once you pass this worksite policy – or if you already have it – let your employees know what time they have available to them to walk on the clock!

HOW TO:

The following pages have email templates you can send to employees during the program to give them tips and encourage them to keep going.

Additionally, you can find posters on our website to share throughout the challenge to remind employees of the importance of walking.

Finally, on pages 7-10, there is a walking program toolkit your worksite can distribute to your employees to help them set goals and track their progress.

Week 1 of program

SUBJECT: [Worksite] Walking Program

[Greeting],

[Worksite] cares about you, and we want to make it easier for you to move more throughout your day. Accordingly, we have implemented a XXXX policy which gives you the opportunity to [walk on the clock / move more during the workday]. Additionally, we are rolling out a walking program for people of all fitness levels, beginning [date].

Walking Program Details:

→ This is a free, 12-week walking program. Whether you typically walk 3,000 steps per day, 10,000 steps per day, or somewhere in between, you can benefit from this program.

→ Each week, you will aim to increase your steps at a moderate intensity level by a specified number of steps on a certain number of days.

→ The program includes an easy-to-use walking toolkit and a "tracker" so you can detail how you plan to meet your weekly target and monitor your progress.

→ If you do not have an activity monitor that tracks your steps, that's okay! 10 minutes of walking is approximately 1,000 steps.

Let XXXX know if you have any questions about our new policy or the walking program.

Take the step!

[Executive]

Week 2 of program

SUBJECT: Have you taken the step?

[Greeting],

As mentioned last week, we want to make it easier for you to move more, including at work! We hope you are finding ways to add more walking throughout your day. You can track your goals and progress by using the free Walking Program toolkit.

We are pleased to now offer a walking group at [Worksite]. If you are interested in leading a walking group on a specific weekday, let XXX know! I plan to join the walking group, and I hope to see you there.

Small steps make a big difference.

[XXX]

Week 3 of program

SUBJECT: Find a "Move More" Mentor

[Greeting],

We hope you are finding ways to add more movement throughout your day, including at work. Did you find the step tracker useful?

If you are struggling, enlist the help of friends, co-workers, and family members to support your efforts. In the workplace, mentors help you make good decisions and show you the ropes. Do you know someone who would make a good mentor or buddy in maintaining or increasing your physical activity? Reach out and ask them to be your "move more" mentor!

Remember, small steps make a big difference. Take the first step, and get active!"

[XXX]

Week 6 of program

SUBJECT: Plan for Setbacks

[Greeting],

Congratulations on all the walking you are doing. Keep it up!

Sometimes we may have setbacks. Accept that these lapses will happen and are a normal part of the change process. If you do lapse, start where you left off, if you can. To avoid setbacks, it's best to come up with ideas on how to overcome obstacles before they happen.

- Obstacle- A meeting comes up during the time you planned to walk. Solution? - walk later in the day, or after work.
- Obstacle- Bad weather. Solution?– find an interior route for those bad weather days
- Obstacle- Sick walking buddy. Solution?– organize a walking group, so if one walking buddy is not able to walk, you still have accountability
- Obstacle- You get sick. Solution?– rest and let your body heal. Once you are well again, get back to moving!

Again, lapses are a normal part of the change process. Having a plan in place when they happen will help get you back on track. Small steps make a big difference. Get active!

[XXX]

Week 9 of program

SUBJECT: Checking in

[Greeting],

We are almost 75% of the way through the walking program. I hope you are feeling the benefits of the additional activity in your daily life. I know I am! It is good to see employees taking health seriously and supporting each other.

How is your tracker looking? Remember that it is important to track your progress. Self-monitoring is a good way to stay focused and on track to meet your goals.

If you have not been tracking your progress so far, take the next step and start tracking your progress today!

[XXX]

Week 12 of program

SUBJECT: Congratulations!

[Greeting],

Congratulations – you have completed the 12-week walking program, however, that doesn't mean we want you to stop moving! Make additional copies of the tracker to continue to monitor your progress. Also, consider other ways to increase your physical activity so you don't get bored.

Below are some other ideas you may want to try!

[other worksite physical activity programs, community physical activity events]

Remember, small steps make a big difference. Keep up the good work!

[Executive]

AIM: To increase the number of steps you take at moderate intensity in your daily routine.

- This is a 12-week walking program for people of all fitness levels. The goal each week is to increase the steps you take at a moderate intensity level by a specified number of steps on a certain number of days per week.
- Keep safety in mind. We advise participants to limit increases in training volume to 10% a week. It's best to not do too much too fast to avoid injuries. Below is a suggested plan to gradually and safely guide your progress for different fitness level.

Week	Novice	Intermediate	Experienced
1-2	1,500 for 3 days/week	5,000 for 3 days/week	6,500 for 5 days/week
3-4	1,500 for 5 days/week	5,000 for 5 days/week	6,500 for 6 days/week
5-6	2,500 for 5 days/week	6,000 for 5 days/week	7,500 for 6 days/week
7-8	3,500 for 5 days/week	7,000 for 5 days/week	8,500 for 6 days/week
9-10	4,500 for 5 days/week	8,000 for 5 days/week	9,500 for 6 days/week
11-12	5,500 for 5 days/week	9,000 for 5 days/week	10,000 for 7 days/week

We advise that you do not regularly exceed 10,000 steps a day

- Choose from the strategies (or come up with your own) and use the **What, Where, When** table to detail how you plan to meet your weekly target. Then self-monitor your progress on the tracker. See the next page for an example and list of strategies.
- You get maximum benefit from brisk but comfortable walking. It should not be at a pace where you feel breathless, uncomfortable, or feel like you need to stop. Please see the attached Rate of Perceived Exertion (RPE) chart.
- If you do not have an activity monitor that tracks your steps, that's ok! Track the amount of time you walk. 10 minutes = 1,000 steps.
- Extra walking does not have to be completed all at once. Add another 5, 10, or 15 minutes here and there.

*Always consult your physician before beginning any exercise program. This general information is not intended to diagnose any medical condition or to replace your healthcare professional. Consult with your healthcare professional to design an appropriate exercise prescription. If you experience any pain or difficulty during exercise, stop and consult your healthcare provider.

EXAMPLE

Daily Walking Goals for Week 1: To walk **1,500** steps at a moderate intensity on at least **3** days of the week.

Day	What, Where, When	Completed
Mon	Walk 1,500 steps (15 minutes) around parking lot mid-morning	✓
Tue		
Wed	Walk 1,000 steps (10 minutes) around inside of building mid-morning and 500 steps (5 minutes) around outside of building mid-afternoon.	✓
Thu		
Fri	Walk 1,500 steps (15 minutes) around outside of building mid-afternoon	✓
Sat		
Sun		

STRATEGIES

- Host a walking meeting
- Walk on your breaks
- Walk to your coworker's office vs sending an email or calling
- Park further from the entrance
- If you take public transit, get off at an earlier stop and walk the rest of the way
- Walk to lunch rather than driving
- Walk around as you talk on the phone
- Remove your desk trash can and use the one in a central location
- Take the stairs throughout the day
- Walk to the bathroom that is furthest from your workspace

Make copies of this tracking template to use throughout the program.

Daily Walking Goals for Week __:

Day	What, Where, When	Completed
Mon		
Tue		
Wed		
Thu		
Fri		
Sat		
Sun		

Daily Walking Goals for Week __:

Day	What, Where, When	Completed
Mon		
Tue		
Wed		
Thu		
Fri		
Sat		
Sun		

How fast do I need to walk?

The effort we need to put in to gain health benefits is termed “moderate intensity.” This equates to how we feel when we are walking at a normal to brisk pace. The chart below might help you identify a level of effort that is best for you. For moderate intensity walking, the chart suggests that the amount of effort required is 4-6 on the scale, or when you feel you can hold a short conversation with someone.

RPE CHART

RATE OF PERCEIVED EXERTION

10 **MAX EFFORT ACTIVITY**
Feels almost impossible to keep going
Completely out of breath/unable to talk

9 **VERY HARD ACTIVITY**
Very difficult to maintain exercise intensity
Can barely breathe and speak a single word

7-8 **VIGOROUS ACTIVITY**
On the verge of becoming uncomfortable
Short of breath/can speak a sentence

4-6 **MODERATE ACTIVITY**
Feels like you can exercise for hours
Breathing heavily/can hold a short conversation

2-3 **LIGHT ACTIVITY**
Feels like you can maintain for hours
Easy to breathe and carry a conversation

1 **VERY LIGHT ACTIVITY**
Anything other than sleeping
e.g., watching TV, riding in the car, etc.