

Getting started

If you can only walk for a couple of minutes and then you need to rest that's OK. Where you start from isn't important - it's where you're going that counts!



Try to walk on most days of the week - you could start with a 10-minute walk and gradually increase the time you spend walking. Don't overdo it on your first walk. If you are very unfit you may want to start by walking every other day. Build it up bit by bit and know what you are aiming for.

To get health benefits from walking, you only need to walk for 30 minutes, 5 days a week. If it suits you to break this down and do, 3 sessions of 10 minutes walking in a day, that's a good start.

What to wear

A pair of comfortable shoes is the only equipment required when you first start walking. If your shoes continue to be comfortable then there is no need to go for anything else.

Building a habit of regular walking

To make a habit of regular walking, try this 10-week plan.

Starting off:

Week 1 - two walks of 10 minutes each on three days of the week
Weeks 2 and 3 - two walks of 15 minutes each on four days of the week
Week 4 - two walks of 15 minutes each on five days of the week

Getting going:

Weeks 5 to 9 - two walks of 15 minutes each, or one walk of 30 minutes, on five days of the week. Try to increase your pace slightly or include a route which has some inclines or uphill slopes.

Staying with it:

Week 10 onwards - aim for a brisk pace and challenge yourself with steeper inclines or hills.

Note:

If you find any week difficult then repeat the week and stay at that level until you are able to progress comfortably. If, from week 5 onwards, you cannot fit a 30-minute continuous walk into your day then break it down into three 10-minute walks or two 15-minute walks.



Developing your own walking route

If you are walking on your own, stick to areas that you are familiar with. You might want to design a circular route that links your local shop with other local features - choose busy, more populated areas.

In poor weather conditions you may want to include an indoor shopping centre on your route (no excuses).

Investigate local parks, pathways and open spaces.

Start by walking on flat ground and by going a short distance. Increase the distance you walk before you increase the speed or gradient.

The information on this sheet is taken from www.whi.org.uk

If you would like to join a social, healthy led walking group in Pembrokeshire, contact

Steps2Health (Paul Morris) on 07747 564042

- it's all free too!

