

PRINTABLE WALKING PLAN

Print out this handy walking plan and walk yourself **slimmer, stronger and smarter!**

Get Walking!

Stand tall, with your chin parallel to the ground and eyes focused ahead. Make sure you tighten your buttocks with each step and hit the ground heel first, then roll all the way through your foot and push off firmly with your toes.

Bend your arms at a 90° angle and pump your elbows back and forth – not from side to side – and take smaller steps rather than long ones to build up your pace.



1 Make it happen. Plan where and when you'll walk – the school run, your commute, during your lunch hour or before supper – and book it into your diary like any other appointment.

2 To keep supple and avoid injury, do some gentle stretches before you walk. For more advice, check out Nina Barough's book, *Walking For Fitness* (Dorling Kindersley). If you have an existing condition, see your doctor before starting a new exercise regime.

3 Try to walk at a constant pace that is faster than your normal speed, so you can feel your heart rate increasing – but you should still be able to hold a conversation as you walk. Aim for 15 to 18 minutes per 1.6km. The minimum and maximum distances suggested in this plan span most abilities, but whatever distance you choose, make sure you're out for at least 30 minutes, and on the days you aren't walking, try to do something else active instead.



Week 1

Monday 1.6km to 4.8 Well done for getting out there and taking the first step! Now treat yourself to a relaxing herbal bath.

Tuesday 3.2km
or spend 15 minutes doing some hamstring and calf stretches.

Wednesday 1.6km to 4.8km Give yourself a pedicure and make sure you smooth down any rough skin to avoid getting blisters.

Thursday Go for a 30-minute swim or, if you're pushed for time, spend 15 minutes stretching.

Friday 1.6km to 4.8km If you've been walking less than 3.2km, try walking further this time – and if you're already on 4.8km, try increasing the pace a little.

Saturday Spend 15 to 20 minutes stretching.

Sunday 3.2km to 6.4km Sunday 3.2km to 6.4km Remember, standing straight is the key to the power-walking technique.... And don't forget to use your arms – they help you to walk faster.

Week 2

Monday Book into a Pilates class. It's a wonderful companion to walking and a good way to strengthen core stability and overall strength. Find local instructors at www.pilatesinfo.co.za.

Tuesday 3.2km to 6.4, km Get a friend to join you and put the world to rights – you'll be amazed by how far you walk without even realising it!

Wednesday If you can fit it in, go for a 30-minute swim.

Thursday 3.2km to 6.4km Try walking a little bit faster and further than previously.

Friday Spend 20 minutes stretching, and finish off with five minutes lying on your back with your eyes closed, visualising and relaxing your entire body from your toes to the top of your head.

Saturday 4.8km to 8km By now your body will be finding its own rhythm and you should be feeling a difference in your walking pace and stamina.

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Well done! You've made it to the end of your two weeks – that's great progress.

To keep building up your fitness, find walks that include hills: you'll burn about a third more kilojoules than on the flat, as well as strengthening your bones and muscles. Varying the terrain to include sand, grass or mud also means you use more energy and muscle power. Continue walking regularly and gradually increase your distance, and you'll feel naturally more positive and energised.

