



10 Ways to get the most out of walking



TWEAK YOUR TECHNIQUE

1. **Tighten your tush.** Squeezing your glutes strengthens your lower back and sculpts your backside. Imagine holding a fifty-dollar bill between your butt cheeks.
2. **Pay attention to your posture.** Don't stare at your feet – looking down will discourage you from contracting your abs and stepping quickly and powerfully. Look forward, and hold your chest up and shoulders back.
3. **Tread lightly.** The top treadmill “don't” is slapping your feet. Heavy landing can cause shin splints. Think “light” as you step, and if you start slapping, slow your pace down a notch.
4. **Squeeze your abs.** Pull in and up, as if you're zipping up tight jeans. This provides a wall of muscular support for your lower back and automatically improves your posture.

PUMP UP YOUR EFFORT

5. **Keep on pushing.** To boost your intensity, go faster or add hills to your route. Increase the duration of your workouts by walking a little longer each time. Or walk four instead of three days a week. But don't do all of this at once; you could get hurt or burn out.
6. **Shorten your stride.** To walk faster, you just need to take longer steps, right? Wrong. The best way to increase speed is to take shorter, quicker steps.
7. **Try running spurts.** Interval training – alternating between easier and harder segments – is an effective way to work harder without feeling as if you are. Clock up several minutes of speed walking, or even running, by inserting 60-second intervals within your longer walk.
8. **Arm yourself.** Pumping your arms high and hard won't increase your calorie burn. Instead, keep the elbow bent at about 90 degrees, and let your hand go from a couple of inches behind your hip to the chest line.

9. **Get hip.** You'll burn about as many calories as a runner if you adopt the race walking wiggle. Slightly swivel your hips with each step, letting the motion propel you forward. When taking a step with your right foot, push your hips slightly forward and then back. Start by doing your normal walk for a few minutes, then try interspersing with a few minutes of the hip technique.

FOCUS ON COMFORT

10. **Find a buddy.** Looking for extra motivation? Sometimes, teaming up with a like-minded partner can be just the thing. To find a walking buddy, ask your coworkers, family, or friends!

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