

100 Ways to Add 2,000 Steps*

It's not just what we eat that's important, but how we use the calories we consume. As long as you're active enough to balance the calories you eat with the calories you burn in physical activity, you can enjoy an occasional treat and still avoid unhealthy or excessive weight gain.

By walking an extra 2,000 steps and reducing 100 calories each day you'll see how easy it is to achieve the energy balance that can stop weight gain.

Small changes in your daily activity will quickly add up to 2,000 extra steps or more! Find ways to add steps at home, at work, at school, and at play with this list of ideas.

* No one tip, by itself, will equal 2,000 steps, but selecting a few of your favorites each day will get you well on your way!

AT HOME

Household chores, neighborhood walks, and errands are great opportunities for adding steps. Try these ideas for increasing your walking:

1. Circle around the block once when you go outside to get your mail
2. Walk around the outside aisles of the grocery store before shopping
3. Drive or walk to a nearby high school and go around the track: 4 laps equals approximately 2,000 steps
4. Make several trips up and down the stairs to do laundry or other household chores
5. Pass by the drive-thru window and walk into the bank or restaurant
6. Stroll the halls while waiting for your doctor's appointment
7. Listen to music or books on tape while walking
8. Invite friends or family members to join you for a walk
9. Mow the lawn
10. Accompany your children on their walk to school
11. Take your dog for a walk
12. Start a walking club in your community
13. Walk to a nearby store, post office, or dry cleaners to accomplish errands
14. Catch up on the day's events with your spouse and children on an after-dinner walk
15. Walk to your place of worship for services
16. Pace around your house while talking on the phone
17. Buy a walking video so you can get in your steps on rainy days
18. Experience the splendor of a sunrise on an early morning walk
19. Spur your imagination by observing your neighbor's landscaping and gardens while you walk — incorporate ideas from your favorites into your own yard
20. Walk to a friend's house for a visit
21. Try "retro walking"; walking backwards distributes your weight more evenly (be sure you're in a safe area and are aware of your surroundings)
22. Focus on walking distance over speed, it's better to get in more steps at a comfortable pace than to burn out quickly
23. Keep a walking journal, in addition to tracking steps, jot down how you feel after returning from a walk — enhanced energy is a great motivator
24. Walk on a treadmill on rainy days or when it's too dark to walk outside
25. March in place while watching your favorite TV show
26. Put your grocery cart back in the store after you unload purchases
27. Boost the results of your walk by using trekking poles
28. Benefit a good cause by joining a charity walk
29. Sleep more soundly at night by taking a walk a few hours before you go to bed

AT WORK

Adding steps to your workday can help you reduce stress and stay alert. Try these ideas:

30. Go for a walk before starting your morning commute, you'll energize yourself for the day
31. Exit the bus 1 or 2 stops early and walk the remainder of the way
32. Walk to work if you live close enough
33. Refill your coffee cup at the machine farthest from your workstation

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34. Visit the restroom on the far side of the building
35. Hold a meeting while you go for a walk
36. Designate 10 minutes of your lunch break for a quick walk
37. Avoid elevators and escalators: take the stairs instead
38. Park in the far reaches of the parking lot
39. Escape the stress of a difficult day by excusing yourself for a few minutes of walking
40. Walk to a nearby store to buy a treat for your co-workers
41. Start an office walking club
42. Ask co-workers to join you on a before or after work walk
43. Walk to co-workers' desks to speak to them instead of sending an email
44. Create a step competition with fellow employees — see who can get the most steps in a day
45. Encourage your co-workers to join you on walks during breaks
46. Climb the stairs or stroll the sidewalks for a few minutes at the end of your shift
47. Shake off the effects of your evening commute by walking before dinner
48. Walk around the campus of a nearby university
49. Window shop while you pace through a shopping mall
50. Take the long route when browsing at a shopping center — don't visit the stores sequentially
51. Join a water walking class, the natural resistance of the water strengthens muscles
52. Tour a museum, zoo, or nature preserve
53. Circle around a swap meet or craft show before selecting your purchases
54. Strap a length of masking tape around your child's waist (sticky side out) so they can gather pretty leaves during the spring, summer, and fall
55. Vary your pace when walking, start out slowly then increase your speed, include short bursts of speed walking, then cool down with a slower pace at the end of your walk
56. Sign up for a community 5K or 10K walking/running event
57. Hike on a wilderness trail
58. Take up photography — walk through a scenic location on a hunt for photo opportunities
59. Drive to a new walking trail and explore the different scenery
60. Contact your local visitor's bureau or historical society and sign up for a walking tour
61. Volunteer to walk dogs for an animal shelter
62. Organize a community clean-up day and designate areas of the neighborhood for teams to walk through and remove debris as they go
63. Meet a friend for lunch at a restaurant you can walk to
64. Seek out bargains by walking through your neighborhood looking for garage/yard sales
65. Explore nature by keeping a field guide handy when walking
66. Skim the newspaper for upcoming events you can walk to such as a garden tour, high school play, or a concert in the park
67. Walk around the restaurant or parking lot while waiting to be seated
68. Drive to a neighboring community and tour its main street on foot
69. Watch for birds while walking; especially during the fall migration
70. Take a step aerobics class
71. Spend a day at the beach and walk the shoreline
72. Take a class in judo or karate
73. Reward yourself for step accomplishments — for example, every time you reach your step goal for the day put a dollar in a jar and save for a special reward
74. Get lost in a corn maze (many are set up during autumn)
75. Entice your kids to join you by turning a walk into a scavenger hunt
76. Stroll around the field while watching your child's sporting event

AT PLAY

Whether your leisure time is specifically for physical activity or not, there are plenty of ways to add more steps. Try these ideas:

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77. Play a round of golf but pass on the cart

78. Instead of talking on the phone with a friend, meet for a walk and talk

79. Walk with your kids to the local park

80. Sign up for a water aerobics class

VARIETY IS THE SPICE OF LIFE

Other activities can count toward your daily steps. Here are some ideas for adding “steps” through minutes spent in other physical activities:

81. Join a beach or indoor volleyball team

82. Play America’s favorite pastime — baseball or softball

83. Hit the tennis courts

84. Dance the night away at a club

85. Don’t forget the household activities, such as scrubbing floors and vacuuming

86. Paddle away calories on a raft, kayak, or canoe trip

87. Tour a local trail by bike

88. Ice skate at a local ice rink

89. Try in-line skating through your neighborhood

90. Swoosh down the slopes — try downhill skiing

91. Weed, hoe, rake, and prune — gardening is an everyday way to be more active

92. Snowshoe over hills and drifts in the colder months

93. Enjoy the calm of nature while crosscountry skiing on a trail

94. Swim laps in a pool — vary your stroke for the best results

95. Dive into a lake, river, or ocean for some summertime fun

96. Join a Tai Chi or Yoga class for flexibility and relaxation

97. Sign up for an aerobics session

98. Water-ski over the waves

99. Reverse your walking routine — start in the direction where you usually end

100. Ride your bike to accomplish errands such as going to the library or depositing your paycheck

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