Walking for health: getting started

Simple tips for walking more, with an 8-week record to fill in

For adults who want to walk more, including people who have not been very active for a while, and the people who help them.

Check first. If you have not been active for some time, or you have a health condition or worries, speak to a GP first. If a physiotherapist or care team has given you advice about walking, follow that first.

Getting started

- If you are not very active but can walk, build up how far you walk slowly.
- A brisk 10-minute walk every day is good for your health. It counts towards the 150 minutes of activity a week that adults are advised to do.
- Brisk means faster than a stroll. A simple test: you can still talk, but you could not sing.
- Wear comfortable shoes or trainers that support your feet and do not rub.
- On longer walks, take water, a snack and a spare top. In the sun, wear sunscreen and a hat.

Stop and call 999 if you have

- Chest pain that does not go away, or chest pain with sweating, feeling sick, light-headed or short of breath.
- Severe difficulty breathing.
- A fall where you cannot get up, or you may have hurt your head, neck, back or hip.

If you fall and are hurt or in pain, but none of these apply, call NHS 111.

Walking with others, and other ways to keep moving

- Walking in a group is a good way to start, make friends and keep going. The Ramblers run group walks for people of all ages and fitness levels: ramblers.org.uk.
- If walking is hard on your joints, ask your local pool about exercise classes in the water. The water supports your joints while you move.
- If you cannot get out, the NHS has free exercise videos to follow at home. Search for NHS Fitness Studio.
- Activities that improve strength and balance, done at least twice a week, help prevent falls. Our free sheet of simple exercises is at mobilephysiotherapist.co.uk/balance-exercises.

My walking record

Write down how many minutes you walked each day. Build up slowly. In the notes, write how it felt, or anything you want to ask about.

Week	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun	Notes
1								
2								
3								
4								
5								
6								
7								
8								

Coming home from hospital?

Our free hospital checklist covers what to sort before you leave, home safety, when to get medical help, and a 14-day diary: mobilephysiotherapist.co.uk/after-hospital-checklist.

General information, not a personal exercise plan. Prepared by Mobile Physiotherapist UK from NHS guidance. Sources checked 2 November 2026. Free to print, copy and share.