



Walk this Way

Your seven-month
progressive
walking workout



TORRANCE MEMORIAL
A CEDARS-SINAI AFFILIATE

Rules of the Road

Start easy. Even if you've been biking, rowing or doing yoga, fitness walking could surprise you. So go slowly at first.

Get warm. Begin and end each walking session with 5 minutes of easy walking, then stretch your legs and your back with forward bends, first centered, then over each leg. Don't bounce.

Carry plenty of water. Best bet is a hands-free system such as the CamelBak Delaney Hydration Waist Pack, \$40, amazon.com.

Go out on the shoulders of the day. Early morning is great because you're done for the day, but some prefer taking a brisk walk after dinner to shake off the day. If you can, avoid walking in the noontime sun.

Vary your routes. Case out your neighborhood to find interesting hills, stairs and trails.

Join the crowd. Studies show that if you can exercise with a friend or a group, you'll keep it up with more regularity. Look for training and walking clubs; even the Sierra Club hikes.

Monitor your exertion. Using the Rate of Perceived Exertion (RPE), you can manage the level of your workout. The RPE goes from 0 to 10, and our progressive workout will refer to your target levels. In most cases you'll be at a level that feels 3 (moderate) to 4 (somewhat heavy), and will add intervals of 5 to 6 (heavy) and speed bursts of 7 (very heavy). An RPE of 3 to 4 should also allow you to talk or sing while you walk. When using this rating scale, remember to include feelings of shortness of breath, as well as how tired you feel in your legs and overall.

Rate of Perceived Exertion (RPE)

- 0 – Nothing at all
- 0.5 – Just noticeable
- 1 – Very light
- 2 – Light
- 3 – Moderate
- 4 – Somewhat heavy
- 5 – Heavy
- 6
- 7 – Very heavy
- 8
- 9
- 10 – Very, very heavy

MONTH 1



Ease into your program and start with the shorter workout times, but go ahead and add 5 minutes to each day as you get stronger. Your goal for the end of the 4th week is in parentheses.

MONDAY: Walk 20 minutes, RPE level 3, mostly flat surfaces (30 minutes).

TUESDAY: Walk 10 minutes in the morning, 10 minutes in the evening, mostly flat surfaces, RPE 4 (20 minutes total).

WEDNESDAY: Off

THURSDAY: Walk 20 minutes, RPE level 3 (30 minutes).

FRIDAY: Walk 15 minutes, RPE 4 (25 minutes).

SATURDAY: Walk 25 minutes, RPE 3 to 4 (35 minutes).

SUNDAY: Off

Total: 100 minutes/week (160 minutes by week 4)

MONTH 2



This month we add speed bursts, which means picking up the pace for 1 minute, then resuming your normal brisk pace. We also are adding a day of work.

MONDAY: Walk 25 minutes, flat and gentle hills, RPE level 4.

TUESDAY: Walk 30 minutes, and include six 1-minute speed bursts, each with a 1-minute normal pace in between. Try for a level 6 or 7 on the bursts.

WEDNESDAY: Walk 10 minutes in the morning, 10 minutes in the evening, RPE level 4.

THURSDAY: Walk 25 minutes, RPE level 4, with 10 minutes of level 5 at minutes 10 to 20.

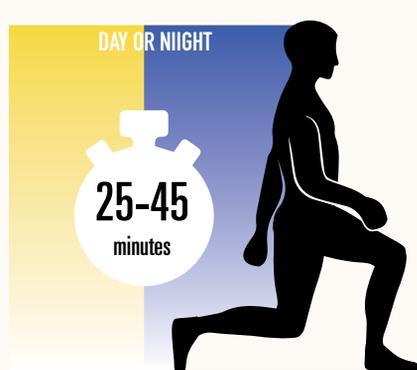
FRIDAY: Walk 20 minutes, RPE level 4, and include some hills.

SATURDAY: Walk 35 minutes, RPE level 4.

SUNDAY: Off

Total: 155 minutes/week

MONTH 3



By adding intensity, your workouts can still be relatively short but you still are progressing. Try to meet a friend at least once a week to walk with you. Note: Your RPE might vary since you are getting stronger. During the body of the work, try to stay at the point where talking is still possible (level 4); for speed bursts go beyond (5 to 7).

MONDAY: Walk 30 minutes, RPE level 4 with 1 minute of level 5 every 10 minutes.

TUESDAY: Walk 35 minutes, and include speed bursts of 1 to 3 minutes for a total of 12 minutes. Follow each with 1 minute at a slower pace.

WEDNESDAY: Walk 10 minutes in the morning, 15 minutes in the evening, level 4, with 5 minutes of level 5 in the evening.

THURSDAY: Walk 30 minutes, RPE level 4, adding stairs or gentle hills.

FRIDAY: Walk 20 minutes, adding in some walking lunges.

SATURDAY: Walk 45 minutes, RPE 3 to 4.

SUNDAY: Off

Total: 180 minutes/week

MONTH 4



Increase your total walking time to 200 minutes a week, and make sure that at least one walk is 45 minutes long. This will continue to build endurance and facilitate weight loss. Reward your progress with snappy new workout clothes that show off your changing body.

MONDAY: Walk 35 minutes RPE 4.

TUESDAY: Walk 30 minutes. Include speed bursts of 2 to 4 minutes, for a total of 18 to 20 minutes.

WEDNESDAY: Walk 15 minutes in the morning and 20 minutes in the evening, RPE 4 to 5.

THURSDAY: Walk 35 minutes, RPE 4.

FRIDAY: Walk 20 minutes, RPE 4 to 5.

SATURDAY: Walk 45 minutes, RPE 4.

SUNDAY: Off

Total: 200 minutes/week

MONTH 5



Take it up a notch with easy climbing on gentle hills one day a week. Try to hike with another adult, and bring your cell phone, water and plenty of sunscreen.

MONDAY: Walk 35 minutes, RPE 4.

TUESDAY: Walk 25 minutes and include several gentle hills or sets of stairs, shooting for 1 to 2 minutes of climbing.

WEDNESDAY: Walk 40 minutes, level 4.

THURSDAY: Walk 30 minutes, level 4, with intervals of level 5.

FRIDAY: Walk 25 minutes, and include gentle hills or stairs.

SATURDAY: Walk 55 minutes, level 3 to 4.

SUNDAY: Off

Total: 210 minutes/week

MONTH 6



Time to add some speed bursts back in and increase the duration of your workouts.

MONDAY: Walk 45 minutes, level 4.

TUESDAY: Walk 35 minutes and include 5 to 6 speed bursts. Either pick up the pace, go uphill or do a combination of the two for 20 minutes total in 2- to 5-minute segments.

WEDNESDAY: Walk 35 minutes, level 4.

THURSDAY: Walk 40 minutes, level 4, with 5 minutes of level 5 every 10 minutes.

FRIDAY: Walk briskly 20 minutes.

SATURDAY: Hike or walk 50 minutes or more, taking short breaks as needed.

SUNDAY: Off

Total: 225 minutes/week

MONTH 7



You're now fit enough to add jogging intervals so your body gets challenged by both impact and a faster pace. Avoid the temptation to overdo it; small increments are key to letting your body adjust. If you notice joint pain, particularly in your knees or ankles, reduce jogging time or switch to all walking. Note: Stretch your hamstrings, quads and calf muscles well after each workout.

MONDAY: Walk briskly 35 minutes, RPE level 5 to 6.

TUESDAY: Walk 10 minutes at RPE 3, then jog 1 minute, walk 1 minute and repeat 4 times. Finish by walking 5 minutes (23 minutes total).

WEDNESDAY: Walk 30 minutes, level 4 to 5.

THURSDAY: Walk 45 minutes, RPE level 4.

FRIDAY: Walk 10 minutes, then jog 1 minute, walk 1 minute and repeat 4 times. Finish by walking 5 minutes (23 minutes total).

SATURDAY: Walk or hike 60 minutes.

SUNDAY: Off
Total jogging: 8 minutes/week

Total exercise: 216 minutes/week