

## Welcome to the March Walking Challenge!

Do you want to start exercising consistently, or do you long to get moving again after hibernating these cold winter months? Our 30-day Walking Challenge for beginners is a safe, approachable way to start exercising, even if you're feeling winded walking up a flight of stairs or haven't worked out regularly for years. Over the course of our 30-day Walking Challenge, you will gradually build your endurance and strength and will start to feel fitter, healthier, and confident in your new routine. Ready to start walking your way to better health? Keep reading for our 30-day Walking Challenge for beginners.

### What Are the Benefits and Goals Of the 30-Day Walking Challenge?

If you're not used to exercising, starting an exercise program can be daunting. Let's consider the benefits.

- *Walking can strengthen your heart, particularly if you walk at a brisk pace.*
- *Walking can reduce stress and lower your blood pressure.*
- *Walking also burns calories, so it can help you maintain or achieve your ideal weight.*
- *Walking is a low-impact form of exercise, so if you suffer from joint pain or carry extra weight, starting with walking can be a more pain-free way to build up your cardiovascular stamina and muscular strength while getting your joints used to exercise again.*



The goal is not to mold you into a champion athlete or marathon walker over the next month, but to help you build a consistent habit of physical activity and to increase strength and stamina so that you are not limited in enjoying the activities of life.

### What is the 30-Day Plan?

This 30-day walking challenge will help you work up to walking briskly for 30 minutes without stopping. Walking briskly gives us the cardiovascular and weight management benefits mentioned above. Walking briskly is different for each one for briskly is determined not by speed but effort.

*During an easy walk, you should be able to carry on a full conversation with complete sentences.  
During a brisk walk, you should be able to talk, but in choppy, somewhat breathless sentences.*

Attached is the 30-day walking schedule. You can begin on February 27 (Monday) and follow along on the days of the week at the top of the calendar. Or you can begin on March 1 and simply check off each day as you complete it. At the end of March, simply bring in your 'checked off' calendar to be entered into a drawing for a Ladder drawstring backpack....a great tool to carry needed items as you walk!

### A few simple suggestions as we take on this 30-day challenge:

1. *Grab a friend to join you. You may walk together or simply check in with each other for accountability. Those who have an exercise partner are much more likely to maintain their exercise habit.*
2. *Set a schedule. Routine is key. Pick a time of day to get your walking in and stick to it.*
3. *Begin. Someone once said, beginning is half done. You may be unsure about committing to 30 days, but once you start, you may find strength and resolve to continue your journey. Begin the challenge. Begin each day. Research shows that consistency is the key to increased health and weight management. If there is a day you don't feel like walking, pledge to begin. You may find you have increased energy just by beginning!*

We hope this challenge encourages you to enjoy the gift of movement and health. We are FOR YOU! And we are BETTER TOGETHER.

# 30-DAY WALKING CHALLENGE FOR BEGINNERS



	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
1	10 Min Easy Walk	Rest Day or 15 Min Easy Walk	15 Min Easy Walk	10 Min Easy Walk	10 Min Easy Walk	Rest Day or 15 Min Easy Walk	10 Min Easy Walk + 5 Min Brisk Walk
2	20 Min Easy Walk	Rest Day or 15 Min Easy Walk	20 Min Easy Walk	15 Min Easy Walk	15 Min Easy Walk	Rest Day or 15 Min Easy Walk	10 Min Easy Walk + 10 Min Brisk Walk
3	25 Min Easy Walk	15 Min Easy Walk	15 Min Easy Walk + 10 Min Brisk Walk	20 Min Easy Walk	20 Min Easy Walk	Rest Day or 15 Min Easy Walk	10 Min Easy Walk + 15 Min Brisk Walk
4	30 Min Easy Walk	15 Min Easy Walk	15 Min Easy Walk + 15 Min Brisk Walk	25 Min Easy Walk	25 Min Easy Walk	Rest Day or 15 Min Easy Walk	10 Min Easy Walk + 20 Min Brisk Walk
5	35 Min Easy Walk	30 Min Brisk Walk					



## Top Tips for the 30-Day Walking Challenge

- **Walk By Effort, Not Pace** - Don't worry about how fast you're going. Just focus on using effort as your guide.
- **Set a Schedule** - Routine is king. Pick a time of day to get your walking in and stick to it.
- **Plan Your Routes** - Try out new routes to keep your walks fun, motivating, and engaging.
- **Walk with a Friend** - Walking with a friend, family member, or co-worker provides motivation and companionship, and can be safer than walking alone.
- **Wear the Right Gear** - Getting a good pair of walking shoes will help ensure your feet are properly supported.
- **Stay Hydrated!**
- **Keep It Fun** - Listen to a podcast, your favorite album, or bring your dog - whatever keeps you going!

Check out the full 30-Day Walking Challenge (and much more!) at [MarathonHandbook.com](http://MarathonHandbook.com)