

## Thank you for coordinating an offsite walking group!

As an offsite coordinator, you are providing your coworkers with a great opportunity to get active during the workday. Walking together can be a fun way to get to know your colleagues and improve your health. This guide will help you organize a successful walking group at your facility.



## Why walk?

Walking can:

- Increase energy levels
- Improve coordination and flexibility
- Improve blood pressure
- Reduce high cholesterol and improve blood sugar levels
- Enhance mental well-being
- Reduce risk of breast and colon cancer
- Reduce risk of chronic diseases including heart disease, type 2 diabetes, and stroke
- Help improve mood and relieve symptoms of depression and anxiety
- Strengthen bones

These are just some of the many benefits of walking at least 30 minutes a day. Walking is one of the best things you can do for your health. Walking boosts not only your physical and mental health, but your social health as well. It is a great activity to do with a friend or group of friends. It is helpful to walk with others because you can encourage and motivate each other to keep going and it makes it fun. All you need is a good pair of walking shoes and you are ready to get started!

### IMPORTANT

## Safety First!

- If you're walking outside, [protect your skin](#).
- Wear comfortable, supportive [shoes](#).
- If you're going for a longer walk, remember to start with a [warm-up](#) and [cool-down](#) at the end of your walk.
- Practice [correct posture](#).
- Take a water bottle with you and [drink plenty of water](#) before, during and after your walk.
- Take the proper [safety precautions](#) when walking outside.
- Utilize walking trails when available.

## Getting started

1. **Identify several coworkers to help you organize the group.** Find three to five individuals who are interested in fitness and health. Together you can encourage your fellow employees to participate.
2. **Set a time each week to walk.** Choose how many times a week you will meet, as well as how long you will walk each time. Avoid times when there are regularly scheduled meetings so that the majority of your coworkers will be available to attend. Try to set it during a time that will break up the workday.
3. **Choose a walking route.** Parks or walkways nearby your office may offer a breath of fresh air. If you work in a large facility, an indoor route may be more practical. Designate a meeting place where the walk will start and finish. This allows individuals of all fitness levels to walk as much as they feel comfortable and find their way back. If possible, measure the distance of your chosen route so that members can keep track of how far they walk.
4. **Start spreading the word.** Reach out to colleagues and invite them to join the walking group. Create flyers or posters promoting your kick-off event and advertise in your worksite newsletter. Use the flyer included in this guide, or make your own. Be sure to include when and where the group will meet and remind potential walkers to bring the proper footwear.
5. **Stage a kick-off event.** At this event circulate a sign-up sheet for those interested in participating. Make sure to get their contact information so that you can alert them to any group news. Let potential walkers know that individuals of all fitness levels are welcome and they can join at any time. Encourage walkers to go at their own pace.
6. **Have fun!**

Exercising in a group increases motivation, alleviates boredom, and builds friendships.

walking for just 30 minutes everyday can provide all of the same health benefits as more intense forms of exercise.

The average person takes 9,000 steps each day. In a lifetime that is 3 ½ trips around the Earth.

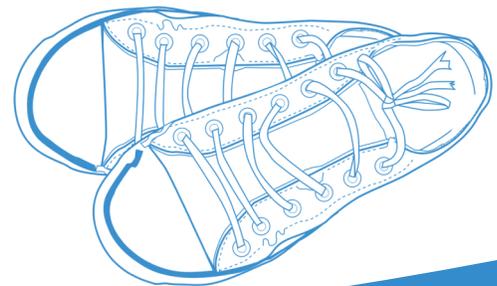


## Motivation Through Fun

It is important to keep your walking group motivated, or the number of walkers may dwindle. Some methods of maintaining attendance and enjoyment include:

- **Highlight** the walking group or an individual member in your worksite newsletter
- **Promote** the walking group by sharing a calendar with scheduled walking events
- **Assign** each walk a fun theme, for example: “Sweatin’ to the Oldies”
- **Play** music during your walks
- **Challenge** your group by creating goals that can be met by as a team or by individuals
- **Share** healthy snacks
- **Quiz** your group by asking them trivia questions and sharing fun facts
- **Recognize** walkers when they reach special milestones that can be measured using minutes, hours, feet or miles
- **Pick** a fun group name
- **Identify** plants and animals if walking outside

Walking sideways burns 78 percent more calories than walking forward. Lateral motion takes extra effort by putting your body to work in unfamiliar ways.



Join US  
FOR the

# WALKING

workdays

## Kick-off

**WHEN:**

**WHERE:**

**TIME:**

**CONTACT:**

Come take advantage of the opportunity to get to know your colleagues and improve your health during the workday.

**HealthyMe**  
S2 SALT LAKE COUNTY

**Healthy**  
**LIFESTYLES**  
SALT LAKE COUNTY WELLNESS

## Appendix

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