Six-Week Beginner Walking Plan

This six-week program is for the beginner walker who wants to improve overall health and increase energy. Walks start at 10 minutes or less and gradually work up to 30-plus minutes. Health experts have found that about 30 minutes a day of regular moderate exercise is effective for improving health and reducing the risk of many diseases.

Monday, Wednesday and Thursday are the core workout days, with Tuesdays and weekends optional at the beginning. Fridays are rest days or "Alternate Activity" days. Pick which days of the week work best for you and your schedule. Always start your walk with 3–5 minutes at an easy warm-up pace. To find more advanced plans or the plan that works for you, visit **Heart.org/NationalWalkingDay** and take our walking plan quiz to get started.

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Weekend Workout (optional)
Week 1	Easy walk: 5–10 mins Stretch: 2 mins Easy walk: 5–10 mins	Easy walk: 10–15 mins NOTE: always rest when necessary!	Easy walk: 5–10 mins Stretch: 2 mins Easy walk: 5–10 mins	Easy walk: 10–15 mins	Rest	Easy walk: 15–20 mins Window shopping is great!
Week 2	Easy walk: 5–10 mins Stretch: 2 mins Brisk walk: 5–10 mins	Easy walk: 10–15 mins	Easy walk: 10–15 mins Stretch: 2 mins Brisk walk: 5–10 mins	Easy walk: 10–15 mins Remember: rest when necessary.	Rest	Easy walk: 15–20 mins
Week 3	Easy walk: 10–15 mins Stretch: 2 min Brisk walk: 5–10 mins	Easy walk: 15–20 mins Stretch: 2 mins	Easy walk: 10–15 mins Stretch: 2 mins Brisk walk: 5–10 mins	Easy walk: 15–20 mins Stretch: 2 mins	Rest	Easy walk: 15–20 mins Don't window shop! Keep moving!
Week 4	Easy walk: 10–15 mins Brisk walk: 5–10 mins Stretch: 2 mins	Easy walk: 15–20 mins Stretch: 2 mins	Easy walk: 10–15 mins Brisk walk: 5–10 mins Stretch: 2 mins	Easy walk: 15–20 mins Stretch: 2 mins	Rest	Brisk walk: 20–25 mins
Week 5	Easy walk: 10–15 min Brisk walk: 10–15 mins Stretch: 2 min	Easy walk: 25–30 mins Stretch: 2 mins	Easy walk: 10–15 mins Brisk walk: 10–15 mins Stretch: 2 mins	Easy walk: 25–30 mins Stretch: 2 mins	Alternate Activity of your choice: Go dancing, rake leaves for 20+ mins	Easy walk: 25–30 mins
Week 6	Total Time: 24–34 mins Easy walk: 15–20 mins Power Intervals –Power walk: 30 secs –Easy walk: 1 min Repeat 4–6 times. Easy walk 3–5 mins	Alternate activity of your choice for 20–30 minutes	Easy walk: 30–35 mins Stretch: 2 mins	Easy walk: 25–30 mins Stretch: 2 mins	Rest	Easy walk: 25–35 mins

Congratulations! Now that you've completed the American Heart Association's six-week walking program, continue to make walking a regular part of your life. For ongoing health and energy, try to walk at least 30 minutes a day, five days a week. As you've learned in this program, vary your speed, course and time to challenge yourself and to keep your program interesting. You're on your way to a healthier lifestyle!

Walking program developed by American Council on Exercise® in collaboration with the AHA.
©2011 American Council on Exercise. All rights reserved