

# QUICKSTART GUIDE *To a Physically Active Organization*



Produced by The University of Texas at Austin  
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# WALK TEXAS!

## Quick Start Guide

**WALK TEXAS!** is a community-based program with the mission to promote the health of Texans by increasing awareness and opportunities for individuals to engage in regular physical activity, especially walking. Walking is one of the safest and most natural forms of exercise and can help control a variety of chronic diseases, particularly diabetes, obesity, and coronary heart disease. Walk Texas! takes a multifaceted approach to facilitating walking and physical activity among Texans through the support of the following:

- ★ Community coalitions
- ★ Environment and policy change
- ★ Health provider assessment and counseling
- ★ Walking groups
- ★ Media and special events

Because most organizations follow a *Plan, Do, Check, Act* cycle to systematize program development, the Walk Texas! guides are organized around this cycle and are meant to complement each other.

The Quick Start Guide is designed to walk you through the process of implementing a walking program in your community. It includes a turn-key Walk Texas! walking program complete with reproducible forms and suggestions for a point system with incentive items. Add your own creativity to plan a program that best fits the needs of your community.

### WALK TEXAS! PROGRAM MATERIALS

- ★ Sample Exercise Sign-in Waiver
- ★ Physical Activity Readiness Questionnaire
- ★ Examples of Activities Converted to Miles
- ★ Pedometers: Monitoring Physical Activity
- ★ Walk Texas! Monthly Log Walking Tips
- ★ Sample Point Structure and Incentive Prizes

#### Other guides in this series include:

- ★ Media Guide: Navigating Media Relations
- ★ Planning Guide for Community Events
- ★ Walking/Biking Guide: Advocating for Environmental Change
- ★ Evaluation Guide





# Eight Steps To A Physically Active Organization

## STEP 1 REVIEW THE WALK TEXAS! QUICK START GUIDE

## STEP 2 SECURE ORGANIZATIONAL SUPPORT

★ Share the basic information on Walk Texas! with management, organizational leaders, and stakeholders to ensure their buy-in

## STEP 3 IDENTIFY LEADERS TO FORM A STEERING TEAM

★ Get together with other interested people within your organization and form a steering team to define what your Walk Texas! program will look like

- ★ Define what Walk Texas! will be for your community
- ★ Establish your goals and objectives
- ★ Identify program champions in your organization
- ★ Identify community partners, resources and sources for funding incentives
- ★ Locate walking trails and routes and provide maps for participants
- ★ Establish your point system and incentives for participants (see program materials)

## STEP 4 PLAN YOUR KICKOFF EVENT

★ It's important to put a little *kick* in your kickoff meeting! You can do this with:

- ★ Food           ★ Humor
- ★ Giveaways   ★ Music
- ★ Anything your steering team can come up with to excite and motivate your potential Walk Texas! participants

## STEP 5 HOLD YOUR WALK TEXAS! KICKOFF EVENT

★ Be prepared to have a little fun at your kickoff! Share your enthusiasm for the program with your community



- ★ Pass out program materials to attendees
- ★ Share information about the point system and incentive prizes
- ★ Sign on the dotted line – have participants complete the readiness questionnaire and sign their waiver to become participants of the Walk Texas! program
- ★ Start walking!

## **STEP 6** MAKING YOUR GROUP A SUCCESS

★ A successful walking group is one in which the members are involved, active and enthusiastic! Consider the following:

- ★ Hold activity seminars for hands-on participant training
- ★ Distribute educational materials
- ★ Encourage participants to monitor their own progress
- ★ Maintain interest – change it up to keep it fun
- ★ Promote ownership – solicit members' ideas regularly
- ★ Publicly recognize participants and leaders
- ★ Publicize – word of mouth from participants is one of the best methods
- ★ Keep in touch with participants you haven't seen in a while

## **STEP 7** MONITOR PROGRESS

★ Identify a record keeper, perhaps the group leader or an enthusiastic walker, to volunteer to keep and post individual mileage on the group chart. This may be posted on an e-mail web site or posted on a colorful wall poster. Participants should turn in their monthly walking records (see program materials).

## **STEP 8** EVALUATE AND CELEBRATE

★ The primary purpose of evaluation is to support improvement in the program, not to judge participant failure or success. Through monitoring and feedback, evaluation can provide the valuable information you will need to make adjustments in your program. Be sure to ask participants what aspects of the program they find most rewarding and what they would like to see added or changed. Continue to review, renew, and celebrate!





# Sample Exercise Sign-In Waiver



**Note:** *Be sure to use a form approved by your organization's legal department.*

In consideration of being permitted to participate in \_\_\_\_\_, I hereby assume any and all risks, which might be associated with the event, for heirs, my personal representatives, and myself. I further waive, release, discharge, and covenant not to sue either the \_\_\_\_\_, their management, their officers, members, sponsors, organizers, or their representatives for any injuries or damages of any kind whatsoever suffered as a result of taking part in the event and any related activities.

SIGNATURE \_\_\_\_\_

DATE \_\_\_\_\_

PRINT NAME \_\_\_\_\_

PARENT'S SIGNATURE (IF UNDER 18) \_\_\_\_\_

**Thank you.**

*Participants under the age of 18 must be accompanied by a parent or guardian or have this consent countersigned and on file.*



# *Physical Activity* *Readiness Questionnaire*



## WALK TEXAS! PROGRAM

For most people, physical activity should not pose any problem or hazard. This questionnaire has been designed to identify the small number of adults for whom physical activity might be inappropriate or those who should have medical advice concerning the type of activity most suitable. Circle your response.

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- ★ Has your doctor ever said you have heart trouble?..... yes  no
  - ★ Do you frequently suffer from pains in your chest?..... yes  no
  - ★ Do you often feel faint or have spells of dizziness?..... yes  no
  - ★ Has your doctor ever said your blood pressure is too high? ..... yes  no
  - ★ Has your doctor ever told you have a bone or joint problem  
such as arthritis that has been aggravated by exercise or might  
be worse with exercise? ..... yes  no
  - ★ Is there a good physical reason not mentioned here why you  
should not follow an activity program even if you wanted to? ..... yes  no
  - ★ Are you over the age of 65 and not used to vigorous exercise? ..... yes  no
- 

If a person answers yes to any question, vigorous exercise or exercise testing should be postponed until medical clearance is given. Talk to your doctor about the kinds of activities you wish to participate in and follow his/her advice.

*Please sign after completing the Readiness Questionnaire.*

\_\_\_\_\_  
SIGNATURE

\_\_\_\_\_  
DATE

**Reference:** "Guidelines for Exercise Testing and Prescription," American College of Sports Medicine, 4th Edition. Lea and Febiger. Philadelphia; London. 1991.37. British Columbia Department of Health, June 1975 (Modified Version). Reprinted with permission from "Cut Diabetes Culturally," Austin, Texas.



# Examples of Activities Converted To Miles

According to the Surgeon General's Report, individuals should engage in moderate-intensity physical activities for at least thirty minutes on five or more days of the week. In addition, it is recommended that adults walk 10,000 steps per day to reduce chronic heart disease risk and to maintain health or to walk 12,000 to 15,000 per day for weight loss. To be considered moderate aerobic activity, exercise must use the large muscle groups (arms and legs) and be brisk enough to deepen breathing and increase heart and breathing rates.

Walking is "natural" when it comes to moderate aerobic activity. Walking 1 mile burns approximately 100 calories (depending on your size) and takes 15–30 minutes. You would need to walk briskly to cover 1 mile in 15 minutes. Taking 30 minutes to walk 1 mile would be a "stroll." At a normal walking pace, most people can walk 1 mile in 20 minutes. You still burn approximately 100 calories for every mile. What differs is how long it will take you to do so. The faster you walk, the less time it will take to burn 100 calories.\*

Using the estimate that an individual burns approximately 100 calories for every mile walked, the chart below converts other activities to a 1 mile/100 calorie equivalency. For each activity the second column lists how many calories the activity would burn in 30 minutes.\*\* The third column converts these calories into "miles" based on 100 calories per mile. The purpose of the conversions are to allow you to "map" your miles using a variety of activities. Note that the number of calories burned in 30 minutes will vary according to the type of activity.

<i>Activity</i>	<i>Calories used in 30 minutes</i>	<i>Miles conversion</i>
Cycling at 5.5 mph	132	1.25 miles
Dancing, ballroom	105	1 mile
Gardening, mowing	228	2.25 miles
Gardening, raking	111	1 mile
Gardening, planting	144	1.5 miles
Golf	174	1.75 miles
Jogging, 5.25 mph	276	2.75 miles
Mopping floors	126	1.25 miles
Swimming, crawl, slow	261	2.25 miles
Swimming, backstroke	345	3.5 miles
Table tennis	138	1.5 miles
Tennis	222	2.25 miles
Walking, stroll (2 mph)	100	1 mile
Walking, typical pace (3 mph)	162	1.5 miles
Walking, brisk (4 mph)	212	2 miles
Window cleaning	120	1.25 miles

\* The Surgeon General recommends we engage in activity that uses approximately 150 calories per day or 1,000 calories per week.

\*\*The activity conversions are based on an individual weighing 150 pounds and are approximate values only. The reference for calories per 1 minute per activity is: McArdle, W.D., Katch F.I., and Katch, V.L. (1981). *Exercise Physiology*, Lea and Febiger, Philadelphia (pp. 486–493).





# Pedometers: Monitoring Physical Activity

A pedometer is a pager-sized device worn on your waist that records the number of steps you take based on your body's movement. Pedometers can be used to help you more easily keep a running account of your daily physical activity. At the end of each day a pedometer provides a visible record to track your progress and help you meet your daily goal.

## ★ How to use it

- ★ Pedometers are best worn on the same side of the body each time you use it
- ★ Clip the pedometer on your waist belt loop right above your hip
- ★ Pedometers clipped on pockets or loose clothing will give inaccurate counts
- ★ Periodically check your step count throughout the day to monitor your progress in reaching the minimum 10,000 step goal

## ★ Different Pedometers

★ For most individuals, a basic step counter/ pedometer will be sufficient. Different styles and brands exist that provide caloric expenditure, mileage calculations, pulse monitoring, etc. However, for general purposes any basic model will do.

**Alert: Pedometers are not to be worn during swimming, bathing, or any water activities!**

## Steps to Miles Conversion

<i>Steps</i>	<i>Miles</i>	<i>Steps</i>	<i>Miles</i>
500	.25 mile	5500	2.75 miles
1000	.50 mile	6000	3.00 miles
1500	.75 mile	6500	3.25 miles
2000	1.00 mile	7000	3.50 miles
2500	1.25 miles	7500	3.75 miles
3000	1.50 miles	8000	4.00 miles
3500	1.75 miles	8500	4.25 miles
4000	2.00 miles	9000	4.50 miles
4500	2.25 miles	9500	4.75 miles
5000	3.00 miles	10000	5.00 miles



MONTHLY ACTIVITY LOG

MONTH \_\_\_\_\_



NAME \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_

		SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	WEEKLY TOTAL
WEEK 1	ACTIVITY								
	MIN OR MILE								
WEEK 2	ACTIVITY								
	MIN OR MILE								
WEEK 3	ACTIVITY								
	MIN OR MILE								
WEEK 4	ACTIVITY								
	MIN OR MILE								
WEEK 5	ACTIVITY								
	MIN OR MILE								
<b>MONTHLY TOTAL</b>									

MONTHLY ACTIVITY LOG

MONTH \_\_\_\_\_

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_

		SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	WEEKLY TOTAL
WEEK 1	ACTIVITY								
	MIN OR MILE								
WEEK 2	ACTIVITY								
	MIN OR MILE								
WEEK 3	ACTIVITY								
	MIN OR MILE								
WEEK 4	ACTIVITY								
	MIN OR MILE								
WEEK 5	ACTIVITY								
	MIN OR MILE								
<b>MONTHLY TOTAL</b>									



# Walking Tips

## CLOTHING

Wear comfortable, lightweight, loose-fitting clothes. Dress appropriately for weather conditions.

## SHOES

Your shoes are the ONLY special equipment required for walking. For most people, shoes should have thick, flexible soles. However, if you have trouble maintaining your balance, shoes with a thinner, harder sole (such as boat shoes) may be preferred.

## DRINK PLENTY OF WATER

If you don't get enough water you can easily become dehydrated and risk heat exhaustion, cramps, or heat stroke. Remember, you may not *feel* thirsty, but your body needs water. Drink water before, during, and after physical activity.

## WALK

Warm up with 5 minutes of light walking. Walk tall, with shoulders relaxed, stomach in, and back straight. Move at a steady clip, brisk enough to make your heart beat faster and cause you to breathe more deeply. If you can't comfortably carry on a conversation while walking, you are walking too fast and need to slow down. A 5 minute cool down- a gradual decrease in physical activity- is very important for a safe and effective walk. Follow the 5 minute cool down with 5-10 minutes of standing and sitting stretches.

## SAFETY

Walk with confidence and look at the people approaching you. Don't walk on unfamiliar trails alone. If walking after dark, walk with a friend and choose a path that is well lit.

Occasionally there are times when problems can arise that are legitimate reasons for NOT walking. These include:

- ★ nausea or lightheadedness during or after a mild walk
- ★ shortness of breath that feels as if you cannot get enough air even when you slow down
- ★ abnormal heartbeat that feels as if it is skipping beats or beating irregularly
- ★ heart pain or an uncomfortable feeling of squeezing or pressure in the center of the chest (or radiating in the neck, jaw, down the shoulder or arm). This could be a sign of a heart attack

*Any of the above symptoms mean you should slow down or stop. If symptoms persist you should get medical help immediately. Call 911 or Emergency Rescue Service.*





# Sample Point Structure and Incentive Prizes

We've included a few ideas and guidelines for how a point system and incentives might work. It's up to you to design a system that works for you and your resources.

You will most likely want to stagger incentive items for different reward levels. Below we've assigned point values and grouped several possible items for each reward level. You can decide how much a point is worth and how many points are needed for each level in your program.

For example:

*20 minutes of activity = 1 point or 1 mile or mile equivalent (see handout) = 1 point*

LEVEL 1 INCENTIVES (25 PTS)	LEVEL 2 INCENTIVES (50 PTS)	LEVEL 3 INCENTIVES (75 PTS)
WATER BOTTLES	WHISTLES	T- SHIRTS
SHOE ID TAGS	MUGS	CAPS
SHOELACES	HAND TOWELS	FANNY PACKS
GIFT CERTIFICATES	GIFT CERTIFICATES	GIFT CERTIFICATES

Beyond a certain level, use social recognition such as certificates of achievement (100 mile and 500 mile club), ribbons, celebrations, etc. This will help wean participants off prizes and provide good word of mouth for your program.

Past Walk Texas! users have been surprised to see their incentives go quickly. You may decide on a structure that is more difficult to achieve, such as 2 miles = 1 point. If so, we suggest making that first level an easy step, then making it more challenging later on.

Another suggestion from Walk Texas! practitioners is to hold public awards ceremonies to distribute all incentives at a set time – for example, every month or every three months – rather than as soon as each participant reaches a specific level. These groups have discovered that a simple celebration can give participants opportunities to recognize and support each other.

Other Walk Texas! programs have used some of the incentives to reward specific accomplishments, such as, most enthusiastic, best attendance, and best recruiter. Let people know that the incentive structure is subject to change based on availability. Remember too – the act of praising participants for their achievements is often the most powerful reinforcer.





# Benefits of A Physical Activity Program

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Every American adult should accumulate 30 minutes or more of moderate intensity physical activity for at least five days of the week.

*Surgeon General's Report on Physical Activity & Health*  
October 2005

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## **REGULAR EXERCISE CAN HELP YOU**

- ★ Feel good by reducing symptoms of stress and anxiety
- ★ Improve stamina and energy
- ★ Build and maintain healthy bones, muscles, and joints to aid in daily tasks
- ★ Control body weight
- ★ Reduce the risk of developing certain types of cancer
- ★ Reduce your blood pressure if you have high blood pressure
- ★ Reduce the risk of developing diabetes

## **WALK TEXAS! CAN BENEFIT YOUR ORGANIZATION BY**

- ★ Helping to fulfill the mission of your organization
- ★ Motivating and unifying staff
- ★ Providing increased opportunities to network within and outside your organization
- ★ Showing your concern for the health and well-being of your organization and your community

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