

June is a Great Time to Get Walking

12-week walking schedule

Are you looking to ease into getting in shape? This 12-week walking schedule from the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute can start you on the path to better health. But before starting this walking plan, talk with your doctor if you have serious health issues, or if you're older than age 40 and you've been inactive recently.

Aim to walk at least three days a week, working your way up to five days a week. Start out warming up with a five-minute, slower paced walk. Slow your pace to cool down during the last five minutes of your walk.

Start at a pace that is comfortable for you. Then gradually pick up speed until you're walking briskly — generally about 3 to 4 miles an hour. You should be breathing hard, but you should still be able to carry on a conversation. Each week, add about two minutes to your walking time.

In addition to walking, add strength training exercises — such as pushups, planks and squats — to your routine.

For most healthy adults, the Department of Health and Human Services recommends these exercise guidelines:

- **Aerobic activity.** Get at least 150 minutes a week of moderate aerobic activity or 75 minutes a week of vigorous aerobic activity, or an equal combination of moderate and vigorous activity. The guidelines suggest that you spread out this exercise during the course of a week. Even small amounts of physical activity are helpful, and accumulated activity throughout the day adds up to provide health benefits.
- **Strength training.** Do strength training exercises for all major muscle groups at least two times a week. Aim to do a single set of each exercise, using a weight or resistance level heavy enough to tire your muscles after about 12 to 15 repetitions.

Week	Warmup	Brisk walking	Cool-down
1	5 minutes	5 minutes	5 minutes
2	5 minutes	7 minutes	5 minutes
3	5 minutes	9 minutes	5 minutes
4	5 minutes	11 minutes	5 minutes
5	5 minutes	13 minutes	5 minutes
6	5 minutes	15 minutes	5 minutes
7	5 minutes	18 minutes	5 minutes
8	5 minutes	20 minutes	5 minutes
9	5 minutes	23 minutes	5 minutes
10	5 minutes	26 minutes	5 minutes
11	5 minutes	28 minutes	5 minutes
12	5 minutes	30 minutes	5 minutes

Based on National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute