

# FUN FACTS ABOUT WALKING

ACE prepared a list of fun facts about walking to help motivate individuals to Step It Up! They include statistics, history and some that are just plain fun. For instance, we bet you didn't know that before baseball, competitive walking was America's favorite spectator sport. In the 1870s and 1880s, large crowds would pack arenas like the first Madison Square Garden in New York City to watch—and bet on—men walking around in circles for 600 miles over six days.

In addition, you will find a list of ideas on how you can use the facts in a variety of settings and as a springboard for other ideas. We hope you consider this list as just the beginning of an extensive library of fun walking and physical activity facts, and that you will continue to add to them. We encourage you to think of creative ways to share these facts with friends, family, peers, clients and customers—your whole social network.



# 52 WALKING FUN FACTS

1. Walking is good medicine: It can help you reduce the risk of coronary heart disease.
2. Dog owners walk significantly more than their non-pooch owning counterparts.
3. A 15-minute walk can curb chocolate and sugar cravings.
4. The fastest 5k (3.1 miles) time for walking is 21:58 (about a 7-minute mile) for a woman and 19:09 (about a 6-minute mile) for a man—faster than most runners!
5. The first Wednesday in April is National Walking Day.
6. Walking can boost creativity by up to 60 percent.
7. People who track their steps take an average of 2,500 more steps each day.
8. Replacing 1½ miles of driving with walking will reduce the amount of greenhouse gases produced by about 75 percent.
9. Walking is good medicine: It can help you improve blood pressure and blood sugar levels.
10. About 2,000 steps equal one mile.
11. A lunchtime walk can make you more productive at work.
12. The risk of exercise-related injuries is 1 to 5 percent for walkers compared to 20 to 70 percent for runners.
13. Taking less than 5,000 steps each day is considered sedentary.
14. Your walking speed can predict how long you'll live.
15. Jobs that get you moving: waiters (23,000 steps a day), nurses (16,000) and retail workers (15,000).
16. Race walking made its Olympic debut in 1908.
17. Walking is good medicine: It can help elevate your mood and enhance mental well-being.
18. Interval walkers lost six times more weight than walkers who maintained a steady pace, according to a Danish study.
19. The claim that you'll burn 100 calories whether you walk or run a mile is false. Your speed and body weight affect the amount of calories you burn. The faster and heavier you are, the more calories you'll burn.
20. Walk to the beat of "Shut Up and Dance" and you'll be going about 3.5 mph. If you can keep up with "Shake It Off," you'll be cruising at more than 5 mph.
21. Walking just 21 minutes a day can cut your risk of heart disease by 30 percent.
22. Focusing on an object ahead of you can increase your speed by as much as 23 percent.
23. Walking is good medicine: It can help you reduce the risk of breast and colon cancer.
24. Walking uphill activates three times more muscle fibers than walking on flat terrain. It also burns up to 60 percent more calories.



25. The ultimate calorie burner: stair climbing. You'll burn calories two to three times faster than walking without an incline.
26. Australians walk the most, taking an average of 9,695 steps each day. Americans stroll the least (5,117 steps each day) of all the industrial countries surveyed.
27. Walking is good medicine: It can help you avoid osteoporosis and osteoarthritis.
28. Being short doesn't have to slow you down: At the 2008 Olympics, 5'2½" Olga Kaniskina of Russia beat out Norway's 5'8" Kjersti Plätzer for the gold in the women's 20k race walk.
29. The longest uninterrupted walk was 19,019 miles from the southern tip of South America to the northern most part of Alaska and took 2,425 days.
30. It would take a person walking nonstop at a 3-mph pace approximately 347 days to walk around the world.
31. A typical pair of athletic shoes will last for approximately 500 miles of walking.
32. Walking is good medicine: It can help you maintain body weight and lower your risk of obesity.
33. Babies typically begin to walk around 12 to 13 months of age, though some may start as early as 9 or 10 months and as late as 15 or 16 months.
34. Walking is the most popular form of exercise in the U.S.
35. Today, less than one out of seven children walk to school. In 1970, two out of three children walked to school.
36. The average walking speed for the typical adult is approximately 3 mph.
37. Eliminating just 10 miles of driving each week would eliminate roughly 500 pounds of carbon dioxide per year.
38. The average person will walk an estimated 65,000 miles in his or her lifetime—the equivalent of three trips around the world.
39. A person needs to walk the length of a football field to burn enough calories to offset eating a single piece of candy-coated chocolate.
40. Adding 150 minutes of brisk walking to your routine each week can add a little over three years to your lifespan.
41. Walking is good medicine: It improves cerebral blood flow and lowers the risk of vascular disease that may help you avoid dementia later in life.
42. You use an estimated 200 muscles during walking.
43. You need to walk roughly 13 miles or the equivalent of a half marathon to burn off a super-sized meal.
44. Walking a typical 18-hole golf course equates to about 12,000 steps.
45. During a typical day of walking, the cumulative impact forces on the feet can total several hundred tons—so invest in good quality footwear.
46. Hippocrates had it right—"walking is man's best medicine."
47. Consider getting a wearable device to track your steps taken or distance covered. Watching your improvement over time can be a great source of motivation.



48. To get a rough estimate of how fast you walk, count the number of steps you take in a minute and divide by 30.
49. Listening to music while walking has been observed to improve mood, motivation and performance.
50. A significant difference between walking and running is the amount of time each foot contacts the ground. During walking, at least one foot is in contact with the ground at any given time, and the length of time the foot is in contact is longer than while running.
51. Since the days of Socrates, walking has been linked to enhanced cognitive functioning and creativity.
52. Thomas Jefferson, who lived to be 83 when life expectancy was 40, walked four miles a day.



## IDEAS FOR SHARING

1. Share a “Walking Fact of the Week” on your social media networks such as Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest, etc. Use the hashtag #StepItUp.
2. Use Instagram to post a weekly walking photo accompanied by a walking fact. Use the hashtag #StepItUp.
3. Design a bulletin board on walking for your office, place of worship, community center, school, etc. Include multiple fun walking facts or have a dedicated place where you change out the fact on a daily or weekly basis.
4. Print out each fact and hang them at random intervals in the stairways of your office building, community center, school or condominium complex (anywhere that has stairs). Intersperse them with motivational sayings about walking.
5. Ask your local school to engage teachers in an effort to promote walking and, each week, provide a fun fact they can share with their students, perhaps while the students walk in place.
6. Create a partnership with a local mall that encourages mall walking to use the fun facts in signposts placed strategically throughout the mall. Perhaps engage mall tenants to sponsor each post.
7. Work with the local park and recreation department to find a way to distribute fun walking facts along trails or at trailheads.
8. Create a partnership with a local hospital around walking that can include the walking facts in newsletters, signage, bulletin boards, etc.
9. Ask the health blogger at your local newspaper to include a walking fact at least once a week with his or her blog.
10. Ask the health reporter at a local television station to do a segment on walking and then create continuity by broadcasting a fun walking fact of the week.

A printer-friendly PDF is located at [ACEfitness.org/WalkingFunFacts](http://ACEfitness.org/WalkingFunFacts) allowing you to easily print hard copies for distribution.