100 Ways to Add 2,000 Steps

It’s not just what we eat that’s important, but also how we use the calories we consume. As long as you’re active enough to balance the calories you eat with the calories you burn, you can enjoy an occasional treat and still avoid weight gain.

By walking an extra 2,000 steps and reducing 100 calories each day you’ll see how easy it is to achieve the energy balance that can stop weight gain.

Small changes in your daily activity can quickly add up to 2,000 extra steps or more! No one tip, by itself, will equal 2,000 steps, but selecting a few each day will get you well on your way!

AT HOME: Neighborhood walks, chores, and errands are great ways to add steps.

1 Circle around the block when you go outside to get your mail
2 Walk the outside aisles of the grocery store before shopping
3 Walk the track at a nearby high school—four laps is roughly 2,000 steps
4 Make several trips up and down the stairs doing laundry or other household chores
5 Pass by the drive-thru window and walk into the bank or restaurant
6 Stroll the halls while waiting for your doctor appointment
7 Listen to music or books on tape while walking
8 Invite friends or family members to join you for a walk
9 Accompany your kids on their walk to school
10 Take your dog for a walk
11 Start a walking club in your community
12 Walk to a nearby store, post office, or dry cleaner to accomplish errands
13 Benefit a good cause by joining a charity walk
14 Walk to your place of worship for services
15 Mow the lawn
16 Walk around your house while talking on the phone
17 Buy a walking video so you can get in your steps on rainy days
18 Experience the splendor of a sunrise on an early morning walk
19 Observe your neighbors’ landscaping and gardens while you walk—incorporate your favorites in your own yard
20 Walk to a friend’s house for a visit
21 Try retro walking—walking backwards more evenly distributes your weight
22 Keep a walking journal, note steps and how you feel afterwards
23 Focus on distance over speed—it’s better to get in more steps at a comfortable pace than to burn out quickly
24 Walk on a treadmill on rainy days or when dark
25 March in place while watching TV
26 Reverse your walking routine—start where you usually end
27 Boost the results of your walk by using trekking poles
28 Catch up on the day’s events with your family on an after-dinner walk
29 Take a walk a few hours before bed to sleep more soundly

AT WORK: Adding steps to your workday can help you reduce stress and stay alert.

30 Walk before your morning commute—you’ll energize yourself for the day
31 Get off the bus early and walk the rest of the way
32 Walk to work if you live close enough
33 Refill your coffee cup at the machine farthest from your workstation
34 Visit the restroom on the far side of the building
35 Hold a meeting while you go for a walk
36 Avoid elevators and escalators—take the stairs instead
37 Park in the far reaches of the parking lot
38 Escape the stress of a difficult day by excusing yourself for a walk
39 Walk to a nearby store to buy a treat for your co-workers
40 Designate 10 minutes of your lunch break for a quick walk
100 Ways to Add 2,000 Steps continued...

AT PLAY: Whether your leisure time is for physical activity or not, there are plenty of ways to add more steps.

48 Walk around the campus of a nearby college or university
49 Walk at the mall and do some window shopping
50 Take the long route when browsing at a mall—don’t visit the stores sequentially
51 Join a water walking class—the natural resistance of water strengthens muscles
52 Tour a museum, zoo, or nature preserve
53 Circle a swap meet or craft show before selecting your purchases
54 Take up photography—walk at a scenic location while hunting for photo opportunities
55 Sign up for a community 5K or 10K walking/running event

56 Hike on a wilderness trail
57 Vary your pace—start slowly, increase your speed, include short bursts of speed walking and cool down with a slower pace at the end
58 Strap masking tape around your child’s waist (sticky side out) so they can gather pretty leaves during the spring, summer, and fall
59 Drive to a new walking trail and explore the different scenery
60 Contact your local visitor’s bureau or historical society and sign up for a walking tour
61 Volunteer to walk dogs for an animal shelter
62 Organize a community clean-up day and designate areas of the neighborhood for teams to remove debris
63 Meet a friend for lunch at a restaurant you can walk to

64 Plan a picnic with friends and family and go for a walk after your meal
65 Seek out garage, yard, or estate sale bargains while walking in your neighborhood
66 Explore nature by keeping a field guide handy when walking
67 Skim the newspaper for upcoming events you can walk to, such as a garden tour, high school play, or a concert in the park
68 Walk around the restaurant or parking lot while waiting to be seated
69 Drive to a neighboring community and tour its main street on foot
70 Reward yourself for step accomplishments—every time you reach your step goal for the day put a dollar in a jar and save for a special reward
71 Take a step aerobics class

72 Spend a day at the beach and walk the shoreline
73 Watch birds while walking, especially during fall migration
74 Get lost in a corn maze (many are set up during autumn)
75 Entice your kids to join you by turning a walk into a scavenger hunt
76 Stroll around the field while watching your child’s sporting event
77 Play a round of golf but pass on the cart
78 Instead of talking on the phone with a friend, meet for a walk and talk
79 Walk with your kids to the local park

VARIETY IS THE SPICE OF LIFE: Other activities can count toward daily steps too.

80 Sign up for an aerobics session
81 Join a beach or indoor volleyball team
82 Play America’s favorite pastime—baseball or softball
83 Hit the tennis courts
84 Dance the night away at a club
85 Don’t forget the household activities, such as scrubbing floors and vacuuming
86 Weed, hoe, rake, and prune—gardening is an everyday way to be more active
87 Paddle away calories on a raft, kayak, or canoe trip
88 Tour a local trail by bike
89 Try in-line skating on your neighborhood’s sidewalks
90 Take a judo or karate class
91 Swoosh down the slopes—try downhill skiing
92 Snowshoe over hills and drifts in the colder months
93 Ice skate at a local ice rink
94 Enjoy the calm of nature while cross-country skiing on a trail
95 Swim laps in a pool—vary your stroke for the best results
96 Dive into a lake, river, or ocean for some summertime fun
97 Join a Tai Chi or yoga class for flexibility and relaxation
98 Sign up for an aerobics session
99 Water-ski over the waves
100 Ride your bike to accomplish errands such as going to the library or depositing your paycheck