

Worksite Physical Environment Audit



This is a tool that will help you assess your worksite surroundings and learn how your environment can affect your physical activity habits. Use this tool to help you discover ways to use and shape your current physical activity environment to make it a more appealing place for you and others to be active.

For maximum effectiveness, review the tips provided for each question. You will find new ideas about how to make the most of your environment and be physically active.

Instructions:

- 1. All questions are answered by choosing A, B, or C.**
- 2. If you feel a question does not apply to you, do not record an answer. That question will not be counted toward your total score.**
- 3. To score your audit total the number of A's, B's, and C's you have answered.**
- 4. Read the description that corresponds to your score and review the tips provided.**



Physical Environment Audit

Question CHECK ALL THE APPLY:	A = ALWAYS	B = SOMETIMES	C = NEVER
1. Does your worksite keep hallways and other open areas accessible and clean so that you and your coworkers can use them to be active?			
2. Is it easy, safe, and comfortable for you to use stairs as an alternative to elevators or escalators? For example, do stairwells have proper lighting and do steps have skid strips?			
3. Does your worksite have showers or changing facilities so that you can exercise before, during, or after work hours?			
4. Do you have a cordless phone, headset, or cellular phone in your office that allows you to move around the room while talking on the phone in order to increase your daily activity?			
5. Does your worksite allow a dress code that is suitable for activity? For example, are women and men allowed to wear flat, rubber-soled shoes that are easy to walk in?			
6. Does your work environment provide opportunities to build exercise into your daily work routine? For example, can you walk to a restroom on a different floor or use a coffee machine farther down the hall from your desk to add activity to your day?			
7. Does your worksite have bicycle racks or a safe place to store your bicycle?			
8. Does your worksite offer transit passes or discounts (bus, light rail, etc.) to encourage forms of transportation that may require more physical activity?			
9. Can you bike or walk to do work errands? For example, can you walk or bike to the post office to deliver mail or to the bank to make deposits for work rather than driving?			
10. Does your employer support taking extra time to do work errands by foot or bike?			
11. Are there sidewalks, trails, or parks near your worksite where you can be active throughout your workday?			
12. Do you feel safe walking in or around your worksite?			
13. Does your worksite encourage participation in a wellness program? For example, one component of a wellness program might be a "lunch and learn" session where employees receive professional health information during the lunch hour.			

Physical Environment Audit

Question CHECK ALL THAT APPLY:	A = ALWAYS	B = SOMETIMES	C = NEVER
14. Does your worksite offer wellness benefits, such as discounted health insurance or gym membership.			
15. Does your worksite have a positive attitude toward health and wellness? For example, do you and your coworkers form walking groups, discuss physical activity with each other, or encourage one another to make healthy choices?			
16. Does management support physical activity breaks during work hours? For example, is your lunchtime long enough to allow time to eat and take a 15 minute walk?			
Totals:	A _____	B _____	C _____

Scoring:

If you chose mostly A's

Your work environment provides plenty of opportunities for employees to be active. Continue to use things in and around your worksite to add activity to your day, and try to promote physical activity among other staff to create a more active worksite. If you are still looking for ways to improve your work environment, review your answers and the tips provided.

If you chose mostly B's

Making small changes to your work environment may provide more opportunities for you and your colleagues to be active. Take advantage of opportunities that already exist and talk with colleagues to identify areas where your worksite might improve. Review your answers and read the tips for suggestions on how to add more opportunities. Come up with tips of your own or examples that will work in YOUR work place.

If you chose mostly C's

Your work environment needs more physical activity opportunities. To improve your environment, try to create better staff awareness of the benefits of being active. Also, identify parts of the physical environment that may be changed to support activity in the worksite. Review your answers and read the tips on the next page for some suggestions on how to create a worksite environment that supports physical activity before, during, and after work hours.

Tips for a Healthy Worksite Physical Environment



Question 1 HALLWAYS AND OPEN AREAS

There may be places in and around your workplace where you can be more physically active. Hallways, courtyards, and gardens are great places to take short walks. Look for different routes to eliminate boredom. If these areas are not well maintained and difficult to walk in, talk with management about making improvements.

Question 2 STAIRWELLS

Add physical activity to your daily routine by taking the stairs rather than an elevator or escalator. You can also include stairs in your short walks through the building while breaking from work. Adding just one more flight of stairs during a short walk can be beneficial to your health.



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SCORING:

Question 3 SHOWERS

Exercising before or during the workday is more convenient if showers are available. If your worksite does not have showering or changing facilities, there may be some close by (perhaps in a recreation center or park) you can use. Otherwise, store toiletries in your office so that you can conveniently freshen up after activity.

Question 4 TELEPHONE

Request a cordless phone, headset, or cellular phone for your office. Whenever possible, get up and move while talking on the phone. If these items are not an option, try the speakerphone feature.

Question 5 DRESS CODE

Some work attire can limit movement. Talk with your employers and co-workers about a dress code that allows comfortable shoes to make walking around the office less difficult. If a strict dress code requires shoes that are not suitable for walking, keep a pair of comfortable shoes in your office to slip on before heading out for a post-lunch walk.

Question 6 BUILDING ACTIVITY INTO YOUR DAILY ROUTINE

Become aware of opportunities to build activity into your daily routine. For example, walk farther to do daily tasks such as faxing and photocopying. Also, walk to a co-worker's office to deliver a message rather than sending an email. Choose to walk to a restroom on another floor rather than the one closest to your office. Apply these concepts to other daily tasks and you'll be well on your way to a healthy lifestyle. If your workplace does not provide opportunities to walk farther, look for other ways to incorporate activity into your day. For example, purchase an exercise ball, resistance bands, or some hand weights and store these items in your office to use at your convenience. Think about creative routes for "break walks" or longer "lunch walks" and map them out using your step counter. Share them with co-workers and brainstorm new routes that start and stop at your work place.

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Question 7 BICYCLE RACKS

If your worksite does not offer bike racks or other safe storage places for your bicycle, talk with co-workers and management to see what can be done. If you have room in your office, talk with your employer about storing your bike there.

Question 8 TRANSIT PASSES

Taking the bus or light rail allows you to incorporate more activity into your daily routine because you often have to walk or bike to get to and from stops. Find out if your worksite offers transit passes. You can also call or go online to research routes and fares that are suitable for your commute.

Question 9 and 10 WORK ERRANDS

There may be several destinations that are within walking distance from your worksite. Try walking to the bank or post office to run errands rather than driving. Not only will you benefit from the activity, you'll appreciate the money saved on fuel. Talk with your employer about your interest in running errands by foot or bike. If your employer does not support this, explain your needs and ask if he or she has other suggestion on how you can build activity into your day.

Question 11 SIDEWALKS, TRAILS, AND PARKS

Take advantage of sidewalks, trails and parks near your workplace. Talk with other staff members about forming a walking group. Take walks around the building after lunch, or walk to the nearest park to enjoy your lunch. If sidewalks and pedestrian crossings do not exist or are not maintained, contact your management and city officials to see if improvements can be made. If trails and parks do not exist or are not maintained, opt to walk in the neighborhood around your worksite.

Question 12 SAFETY

If there are elements of your workplace that keep you from feeling safe while being active, such as poor lighting or limited security, voice your concerns to others and lobby to management or city officials for improvements. Also, ask co-workers to join you on your walks. It is always better for safety to travel in groups.

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Question 13 WELLNESS PROGRAM

If your workplace has a wellness program, meet with the program coordinator to brainstorm ways to improve promotion among staff and encourage the coordinator to make physical activity a key component. Also, request sessions explaining the benefits of physical activity and how to use the work environment to be active.

Question 14 WELLNESS BENEFITS

Your employer may offer wellness benefits that you are not aware of. Benefits may include discounted health insurance if you qualify based on certain biomarkers, such as body mass index, blood pressure, and cholesterol level. If benefits are not offered, discuss this issue with co-workers to determine if there is an interest in lobbying for wellness benefits.

Question 15 ATTITUDE

A positive attitude toward health and wellness makes physical activity more enjoyable. Talk with your co-workers about physical activity. Ask questions about what activities they like to do and brainstorm ideas on how staff can be more active at work. Encourage one another to be more active by suggesting that staff meetings take place while walking around the block or by signing a group up for a bowling league. The more employees that become interested in physical activity, the easier it will be to change your work environment into one that supports activity.

Question 16 SUPPORT

Talk with your employer about his or her feelings toward physical activity. Employees often fear that management would not approve of physical activity breaks. Discuss your activity needs with management and work together to determine how much of your workday may be allotted to physical activity.