

12 Ways to Add Value to Your Daily Walk

A daily walk is one of the best ways to maintain a healthy weight. Research also shows that 30 to 45 minutes of brisk walking helps boost your immune system, reduce your risk of disease and lower your stress level. If these benefits aren't enough to get you off the couch, here are twelve easy ways to make your walking time even more valuable.

1. **Take a friend:** Walking and talking with a friend is good for your body, good for your heart and good for your soul.
2. **Take a child:** See the world through the eyes of a child – in a stroller, in a wagon, in a backpack or just hand-in-hand.
3. **Take a pet:** America's pets are facing their own weight crisis. Do your dog a favor – take a long walk together.
4. **Take a song on CD or tape:** Music lightens every step and makes the time go faster. Pick your favorite tunes and pick up the pace.
5. **Take a book (on tape):** If you need to do two things at once, walking and listening to books on tape is the perfect solution.
6. **Take a camera:** Want to be a better photographer? Make every walk a photo expedition and you'll be a pro in no time.
7. **Learn about birds:** Wherever you walk outdoors, there are birds to watch and hear.
8. **Learn about plants:** City parks, country roads and wilderness trails all have flowers and trees waiting to be enjoyed.
9. **Learn about geology:** With a little reading and a lot of observation, you can learn about the forces that shape our land.
10. **Learn about history:** History is all around us. Use a map or guidebook to learn what happened before your time.
11. **Learn about your community:** Become more informed and more involved by walking around your neighborhood and your town.
12. **Learn a language:** Language tapes or CDs make ideal walking companions and you can even practice out loud.

