

Walking to Work Tips

Walking to Work Tips

While getting started as a first-time walker to work can seem intimidating, it is actually much easier than you might think. These are some great tips to help you create and maintain a successful commute by foot.

Plan Your Route. Take the most pleasant route. Use quieter side streets or greenway paths as much as possible. Look for a route that is a block or two off of major roads. If possible, plan a route that does not cross major streets to avoid the noise and delay.

Predict Your Walking Time. How long will it take you to walk to work? For your first walking commute, plan on a pace of 20 minutes per mile. If you have many streets to cross with walking signals, you may want to increase that to 25 minutes per mile. Keep track of how long the trip takes.

Wear the Right Shoes and Socks. Wear athletic shoes for any walk of over 10 minutes. If you need more formal shoes for work, carry them with you or leave them at work ahead of time.

Wear Walking Clothes. Can you walk to work in your usual work clothes? This will depend on the weather, the length of your walk, and whether you wear casual clothes or suits. For walks of more than 20 minutes, you may want to consider wearing appropriate walking clothing and changing when you get to work.

Protect Your Head and Skin. Hats are a good idea on walks of more than 10 minutes. Wear sunscreen in all weathers.

Carrying a Bag. Your typical briefcase or shoulder bag is likely to be uncomfortable to carry for more than 10 minutes. Switching to a backpack or messenger bag will allow you to carry the load while maintaining good walking posture. Aim for a load of five pounds or less (including the weight of the bag) for the best walking comfort.



Be Prepared for Bad Weather. Carry a lightweight rain poncho or umbrella. Dress in layers to allow you to add or remove a jacket, microfleece vest, or windbreaker.

Plan to Clean Up at Work. Give yourself an extra few minutes after arrival to cool down and clean up.

Drink Water. If your walk will take more than 20 minutes, plan to drink a cup of water every 20 minutes by carrying it with you or locating water fountains along your route. After arrival, have a glass of water to cool down.

Have a Plan B. Commuters used to driving may feel uneasy about not having a car to use for errands or emergencies. Find out what public transportation is available between home and work. Learn the bus and rail routes and have the fare on hand. Would any of your co-workers give you a ride if needed? Can friends or family be on call to pick you up? Planning this ahead of time will relieve stress and make you a more confident walking commuter.