

You Do Activity
Inference- 8th Grade

"Walking for Exercise and Pleasure"

Prentice Hall



Walking: An Exercise for All Ages

Walking is easily the most popular form of exercise. Other activities generate more conversation and media coverage, but none of them approaches walking in the number of participants. Approximately half of the 165 million American adults (18 years of age and older) claim they exercise regularly, and the number who walk for exercise is increasing every year.

Walking is the only exercise in which the rate of participation does not decline in the middle and later years. In a national survey, the highest percentage of regular walkers (39.4%) for any group was found among men 65 years of age and older.

Unlike tennis, running, skiing, and other activities that have gained great popularity fairly recently, walking has been widely practiced as a recreational and fitness activity throughout recorded history. Classical and early English literature seems to have been written largely by men who were prodigious walkers, and Emerson and Thoreau helped carry on the tradition in America. Among American presidents, the most famous walkers included Jefferson, Lincoln, and Truman.

Walking: The Slower, Surer Way to Fitness

People walk for many reasons: for pleasure...to rid themselves of tensions...to find solitude... or to get from one place to another. Nearly everyone who walks regularly does so at least in part because of a conviction that it is good exercise.

Often dismissed in the past as being "too easy" to be taken seriously, walking has recently gained new respect as a means of improving physical fitness. Studies show that, when done briskly on a regular schedule, it can improve the body's ability to consume oxygen during exertion, lower the resting heart rate, reduce blood pressure, and increase the efficiency of the heart and lungs. It also helps burn excess calories.

Walking burns approximately the same amount of calories per mile as does running, a fact particularly appealing to those who find it difficult to

sustain the jarring effects of long distance jogging. Briskly walking one mile in 15 minutes burns just about the same number of calories as jogging an equal distance in 8 $\frac{1}{2}$ minutes. In weight bearing activities, like walking, heavier individuals will burn more calories than lighter persons. For example, studies show that a 110 pound person burns about half as many calories as a 216-pound person walking at the same pace for the same distance.

In addition to the qualities it has common with other activities, walking has several unique advantages. Some of these are:

Advantage	Facts
Almost everyone can do it.	You don't have to take lessons to learn how to walk. Become a serious walker by stepping up your pace and distance and walk more often.
You can do it almost anywhere.	All you have to do to find a place to walk is to step outside your door (streets, roads, trails, parks, fields).
You can do it almost anytime.	You don't have to find a partner or get a team together to walk, so you can set your own schedule. Walking is not a seasonal activity, and you can do it in extreme temperatures that would rule out other activities.
It doesn't cost anything.	You don't have to pay fees or join a private club to become a walker. The only equipment required is a sturdy, comfortable pair of shoes.

Listen to Your Body

Listen to your body when you walk. If you develop dizziness, pain, nausea, or any other unusual symptom, slow down or stop. If the problem persists, see your physician before walking again.

The most important thing is simply to set aside part of each day and walk. No matter what your age or condition, it's a practice that can make you healthier and happier.



