



American Heart Association
Learn and Live®

Walking in Boston is easy and fun, and the more you walk the better it is for you. Every hour of brisk walking can add two hours to your life. The American Heart Association encourages you to take your heart for a walk today.

Many popular destinations are no more than a 10-minute walk away – and many are closer than that. You'll be surprised how short the walks are – from subway stops, commuter rail stations and major thoroughfares to all points of interest in the Back Bay, Downtown, Waterfront and South Boston Seaport.

— walk route & time

Ⓜ MBTA station



walkBoston





What we do

While everyone walks, few people think about ways to make it safer, easier and more enjoyable. Just as wider roads and more traffic lanes encourage more car traffic, wider sidewalks, safer intersections and well-timed lights encourage more walking.

Here's how we advocate for better walking conditions:

- Talk with citizens to hear their concerns.
- Meet with public officials to initiate changes that benefit pedestrians.
- Make people aware of the importance of walking as a mode of transportation, for better health and vibrant communities.
- Propose and support legislation.
- Advise public and private officials, planners and agencies in the quest for safer, more convenient pedestrian environments.
- Produce educational materials guiding the planning and design of walkable communities.
- Lead interesting walks year-round, exploring the architecture, history and design of New England neighborhoods.
- Create unique walks. See our book *WalkBoston: Walking Tours of Boston's Unique Neighborhoods*.

Why we do it

Walking is a crucial form of transportation It is a central component of a multimodal transportation system and part of virtually every trip—alone or combined with public transit, driving or cycling.

Walking is good for your health It provides abundant benefits for your heart, lungs, muscles and energy, and exercises your body in a balanced way.

Walking builds stronger communities Pedestrian activity makes residential areas more neighborly and commercial areas more vibrant.

Walking should be safe and easy to do Streets, sidewalks and intersections must be designed for pedestrians.

Start! reducing your risk

Start! is the American Heart Association's call to all Americans to start walking to reduce their risk of heart disease and stroke. As obesity is skyrocketing and Americans are becoming busier and more sedentary, we want to get America walking!

Walking is great medicine for your heart

Walking is the one exercise that people stick with. It has the lowest dropout rate of any physical activity. Walking is the simplest positive change Americans can make to improve their heart health.

Walking as little as 30 minutes a day:

- Reduces risk of heart disease by improving blood circulation
- Keeps weight under control
- Improves blood cholesterol levels
- Prevents and manages high blood pressure
- Prevents bone loss
- Boosts energy levels
- Increases muscle strength, improving ability to do other physical activities

How to get started

Determine how active you are now, and work on up! Start slowly. Set achievable goals—30 minutes a day of moderate to vigorous physical activity. You can even divide the 30 minutes into chunks of 15 or even 10 minutes. Ask your spouse, a friend, or a co-worker to become your walking partner—it's more fun and you can encourage each other!

Tips for a heart healthy lifestyle:

- **Be physically active** For each hour of regular vigorous exercise [like brisk walking] you can gain two hours of life expectancy. [Harvard Alumni Study, 1986].
- **Eat foods low in fat and cholesterol** A balanced diet and healthy weight lower your risk.
- **Stop smoking today** Smoking greatly increases your heart disease risk.
- **Know your heart** Get regular medical checkups and follow your doctor's advice.

American Heart Association

The American Heart Association is working every day to reduce death and disability from America's No. 1 and No. 3 killers, heart disease and stroke. Physical activity—such as walking—is key to heart health and reducing your risk of heart disease. Add walking into your daily routine by taking the stairs, hopping off the T a stop early or walking during lunch.

Contact the American Heart Association's Start! Boston office at 508.656.2022 to find out how we can help you and your company get physically active.

WalkBoston

WalkBoston encourages walking throughout Massachusetts for transportation, health and vibrant communities. Our education and advocacy programs give voice to citizens to make their communities walkable.

WalkBoston is the state's foremost advocate for pedestrians and walking. We carry out our advocacy by speaking up for pedestrians, and by training citizens on how to work with local and state agencies to improve walking conditions. We are a non-profit organization with members from more than 60 Massachusetts communities and 70 businesses and organizations. Please learn more about us, and consider joining. Call us at 617.367.9255 for more information.

Resources

- americanheart.org Get info about heart disease and stroke, living a heart healthy lifestyle, and much more
- walkboston.org Learn about walking advocacy, Safe Routes to Schools and download walking maps
- bostonheartwalk.org Start a team and walk to fight heart disease and stroke
- ahastart.fitbug.com Track your daily activities and nutrition to achieve energy balance
- checkmark.heart.org Create a heart healthy grocery list for yourself online
- walkinginfo.org Pedestrian & Bicycle Info Center [PBIC]
- bikewalk.org Resources to create walkable communities