

# Get Moving



The Biggest Loser uses pedometers to measure your activity each day. On the first day you wear the pedometer, we recommend maintaining your normal activity level. Some of you may only be getting 2,000 to 3,000 steps a day, while others may already be at 5,000 to 6,000 steps or more daily. Then, set a goal for how much you want to increase daily for the next week. If you started at 3000 steps per day, an increase of 10% would be 300 more steps a day while those who are already walking 5000 steps would need 500 more to meet a 10% goal. The key to being successful when increasing activity is to start slowly with a goal of 10 to 20% increase. As you meet your goal, you will be motivated to set and reach bigger goals.

In addition to positioning your pedometer correctly to start recording steps, there are some other things you need to do to be successful as you "Get Moving". First and foremost is making sure that any activity you do - including walking - is done safely and with good equipment.

For walking, good equipment starts with good shoes. Athletic shoes don't have to be expensive, but they should have good cushioning, fit well, support your unique foot, and not result in discomfort while wearing. You might want to take a few minutes to examine your shoes, noting the wear on the soles, whether the shoe tilts toward inside or outside of the foot, and if there are parts of the shoe on the side or top where the foot may be rubbing abnormally. The American Council on Exercise recommends athletic shoes be replaced when they lose their cushioning, an average of three to six months (or 350 to 500 miles of running).

You may be tempted to wear ankle weights or carry hand weights while walking to increase your calorie use. Even though you see people doing this, it is NOT recommended. Wearing weights at the ankle, wrist or foot only burns a fraction more calories but increases the risk of injury because your normal walking gets thrown off balance and ligaments and tendons may be damaged. If you want to add weight, use a weighted vest or belt that distributes the weight around the center of your body.

How many miles have you walked? Depending on stride, a person walking a vigorous pace will take between 2000 and 2200 steps in a mile. To determine your own stride, measure a 30 foot distance, marking the start and finish line. Start walking a few feet before the starting mark so you have a natural stride. Count the number of steps you take within the 30 foot distance. Divide 30 by the number of steps, i.e. 12 steps in the distance would be 2.5 feet in the stride. Divide 5,280 feet (1 mile) by 2.5 and you have 2112 steps in 1 mile.

References: "Selecting a Running Shoe", American Academy of Podiatric Sports Medicine, [www.aspsm.org](http://www.aspsm.org)  
"Fit Facts: Walk A Day, Sneaker Savvy", American Council on Exercise, [www.acefitness.org](http://www.acefitness.org)  
Walk4Life, [www.walk4life.com](http://www.walk4life.com)