



Hello!

I hope you are having a great week :)

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Please don't hesitate to get in touch if there is anything I can for you or to make an appointment [just click here](#).

I look forward to hearing from you.

Body Fix Therapies

Offering Hope, Healing and Wellness from our purpose built clinic in Horsham, West Sussex.

[HOW TO TRAIN FOR A WALKING MARATHON FROM SCRATCH – Part 1](#)

By Jenny Swan on May 06, 2017 03:23 pm

My client base is wide and varied – some come in for maintenance massage, some for Personal Training, Pilates Instruction or rehabilitation exercise – most come with some sort of injury or serious health problem.

For those who are recovering from injury or wanting to get back into fitness or increase their health in a gentler, more holistic way, one of the best ways to exercise has to be simply – walking!



The health benefits are huge and the downsides are few if you start properly.

So, assuming you don't have any major injuries or other health issues, here are some basic tips on getting started ...

BEGINNING A FITNESS WALKING PROGRAM

Walking is one of the easiest, most enjoyable, and overall the most profitable form of exercise. All you need is a good pair of shoes, comfortable clothing, and – desire.

If you have any injuries, please do get them checked out before you start and listen to your body – your body is your best coach!

HOW TO START:

First of all, start out slow and easy – just walk out the door!

For some people this means heading out the door, walking for 10 minutes, and walking back. That's it! Do this ***every day for a week.***

If this is too easy for you, add five minutes to your walks next week (total walking time 25 minutes every day). Keep adding 5 minutes until you are walking as long as desired.

If you're new to walking, start off with slow, short sessions and build your way up gradually. Do not worry at all about speed in the beginning. After you have been walking for several weeks you can slowly start picking up your pace. Aim for consistency – if you miss a day here and there, no problem, but get back to it and make it a part of your daily and weekly routine.



THINGS TO THINK ABOUT:

- 1. POSTURE** – Watch your posture. Walk tall. Think of elongating your body. Hold your head up and eyes forward. Lift your chest up and allow your shoulders to relax down and move your arms in a relaxed way. Tighten your abdominal muscles and squeeze your buttock as you take each leg back. Push off the ball of your foot and try and have a heel to toe action with the whole foot. Work out what your natural stride feels like. (If you are concerned about your stride or your foot strike, why not book in for a postural consultation to check out what you need to be aware of as you build up your walking. Doing this could prevent injuries further down the line.)
- 2. YOUR SHOES** – If you are serious about this, invest in some good trainers that will support your feet on all terrains. Ideally get someone to look at your foot strike – it's very difficult to look at yourself while you are walking! You need to know if your ankle is rolling inwards (pronating) or outwards (supinating) – if you are doing either of these, it can put strain on not just the ankle but also the knee and the hip which can cause pain and injury further down the line.
- 3. DRINK WATER** – Be sure to drink plenty of water before, during, and after walking.
- 4. WARM UP, WORK HARD, COOL DOWN AND STRETCH** – Start walking at a slower pace to allow your body time to get warmer. Try and have a “peak” section in the middle of your walk where you allow your heart rate to come up and you work



a bit harder. You should walk fast enough to elevate your heart rate, but you should not be gasping for air. Then “cool down” by slowing your pace and allowing your heart rate to come back down. Make sure you do some stretches at the end to stretch out your leg muscles, your back and chest. You should do this every time to make you feel great and assist in injury prevention.

5. **MAKE IT A HABIT!** – The toughest thing about starting a fitness program is developing a habit. Just look at the gyms in January and then again in February or March! Every year it’s the same! You have to have a realistic goal, you have to enjoy it and you have to keep your eyes on the rewards you will get from making this a part of your life. If you aim to exercise a minimum of 5 days a week as a goal you will notice changes very quickly which will motivate you to maintain your habit.
6. **THINK ABOUT YOUR GOAL** – In the beginning, whether your ultimate goal is weight loss, cardio fitness, a marathon or just to start doing something for you, just focus on consistency – this is a great goal for many people! Once you have established your walking as part of your life – about 6 weeks to make a habit – then you will want to evaluate your goals and develop a training programme. For example, if your goal is weight loss, you will need to walk for a minimum of 45-60 mins five days per week at a moderate to brisk pace – if you walk faster, you will burn more calories in the same time, however, build up mileage and pace slowly to prevent injury. If your goal



is cardio fitness, 3-4 days per week for 20-30 minutes at a very fast pace is enough. For both you must warm up, cool down and stretch.

If this is all too prescriptive and strict for you – why not buy a pedometer to track your steps throughout your day and simply move more! A reasonable goal for most people is to increase average daily steps each week by 500 per day until you can easily average 10,000 per day.

So, assuming you either have followed this advice or are going to, my next Blog will detail how to design a walking marathon training programme ... in the meantime, if you have any questions as to how to get started that I haven't covered, shoot me a post and I'll try to help.

Above all – have fun and enjoy your time outside!

The post [HOW TO TRAIN FOR A WALKING MARATHON FROM SCRATCH – Part 1](#) appeared first on [Body Fix Therapies](#).

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