

Every Step Counts: Getting the Most Out of Activity Trackers

Why Wear an Activity Tracker?

It's a wearable piece of accountability. They help remind you to move. Trackers are fun, you can compete with friends, enjoy better sleep, track your food and beverage choices and keep on schedule for achieving your step goals.

Different Types of Trackers



Smart Watches: like a regular watch for telling time, but this has a processor and a touch screen. It's often paired with a smart phone, so you can receive calls, emails, texts. They have a fitness tracker app with heart rate and sleep summary, too!



Fitness Trackers: primary goal is monitoring health.

Sports Watches & GPS Watches: beneficial for those who want to track runs, enjoy cross-country skiing, or hiking.



Hybrid Watches: a fusion between a regular mechanical watch and a smart watch, they look like a traditional watch but offer step tracking, sleep monitoring, and phone notifications. Being a traditional look, there is not a touchscreen, and you will not charge daily.

Trust in a Fitness Tracker?

Studies show fitness trackers are accurate for steps, heart rate, and sleep but, they are less accurate for calories burned.

If you are using a smartphone or pedometer, the best place to wear your tracker is near your hip.



Why 10,000 Steps a Day?

- ❗ The average American walks 3,000 to 4,000 steps a day, or roughly 1.5 to 2 miles-Mayo Clinic
- ❗ In 1960 in Japan they figured out that the average Japanese man, when he walked 10,000 steps a day burned something like 3,000 calories and that is what they thought the average person should consume so they picked 10,000 steps as a number—They used it as marketing gimmick to sell pedometers before Science was involved.
- ❗ 10,000 steps are an estimated 300-400 kcals/day of energy expenditure depending on speed and body size.
- ❗ 10,000 steps per day adds up to about five miles for the average person, approximately 2000 steps equal one mile.

- ❗ The Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommend adults get at least 150 minutes of moderate-intensity aerobic physical activity or 75 minutes of vigorous-intensity physical activity, or an equivalent combination each week.

Setting Step Goals?

- ❗ **Establish a baseline:** Wear your tracker through the day for about a week. Add your steps up and divide by 7. This is your baseline number – now launch!
- ❗ **Set short-term step goals:** Once you know your baseline, set some goals for the week and then keep expanding.
- ❗ **Set long-term goals:** What is your fitness goal? You build up to your long-term goal with our building blocks (short term goals), Long term, example 10,000 steps a day 3-5 times a week or walking faster as you get more fit – Use the talk test.
- ❗ **Track your progress:** Monitor your progress over time. Your tracker may or may not have a memory function to track your steps on a weekly or monthly basis. You can choose to use that feature or record your steps in a log of your own making. You could also upload the information digitally to your computer or mobile device. Tracking your progress can help you see whether you're meeting your goals and when it may be time to reevaluate and set new goals.

Talk Test:

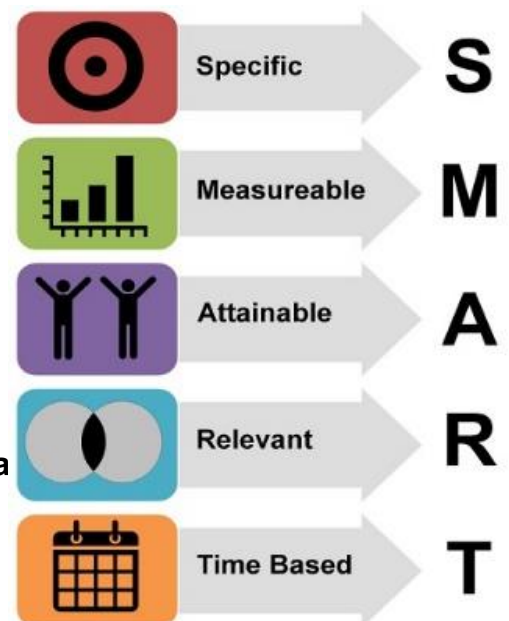
You are exercising too hard if you can't talk while doing your activity.
You may not be exercising hard enough if you can sing while doing your activity.

Moderate aerobic activity; you can talk but can't sing while doing an activity.

Vigorous aerobic activity; you can only say a few words while doing your activity.

Setting up for Success! SMART Goals

- Is this goal specific?
- How might I measure it? Example, fitness tracker, smart phone, smart watch.
- Is it attainable? Can you accomplish this goal?
- Is it realistic? For instance, will I be able to take those 10 minutes or 20 minutes on the weekend to walk?
- Is there a time limit? Rather than something general like 14 days give yourself an exact date when you want to accomplish this goal. Time can also prevent procrastination.



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Tips for improving activity tracker accuracy:

- ❗ Wear your tracker in the same spot every day.
- ❗ Set dominant or non-dominant hand.
- ❗ Enter your data, sync.
- ❗ Calibrate stride length if possible.
- ❗ Use add-on features and obtain updates.

How often should I move?



Ideas for moving more at home or office:

- ✓ Stand up when answering calls.
- ✓ Keep a small glass of water at your desk, drink, get up and refill
- ✓ Take short walks around the office.
- ✓ Walk over to a co-worker's desk instead of emailing.
- ✓ Take the stairs
- ✓ Pace while talking
- ✓ Walk the office or outside during lunch or breaks
- ✓ Exercise or stretch at your desk.
- ✓ Set a time to remind yourself to move on your activity tracker.
- ✓ Have a work partner keep you accountable to meeting moving/standing goals.

Physical Activity Recommendations:

- Get at least **150 minutes per week** of moderate-intensity aerobic activity or 75 minutes per week of vigorous-intensity, or a combination of both, preferably spread throughout the week.
- Add moderate to high-intensity muscle-strengthening activity (such as resistance or weights) at least 2 days per week.
- Spend less time sitting. Even light-intensity activity can offset some of the risks of being sedentary.
- Gain even more heart health benefits by being active at least 300 minutes (5 hours) per week.
- Increase amount and intensity gradually over time.

Activity Level	Steps
SEDENTARY LIFESTYLE	LESS THAN 5,000 STEPS/DAY
LOW ACTIVE	5,000-7,499 STEPS/DAY
SOMEWHAT ACTIVE	7,500-9,999 STEPS/DAY
ACTIVE	10,000 STEPS/DAY
HIGHLY ACTIVE	12,500 STEPS/DAY



Are my kids getting enough physical activity?

You know kids need physical activity to grow up strong and healthy.

But did you know it can help them feel better right away?



Better sleep



Better mood



Better grades

And when your kids are feeling good, your life is easier, too. So find ways to help your kids fit more activity into their day.

How much do they need?

Kids and teens ages 6 to 17 need at least **60 minutes** every day.

Most of it can be **moderate-intensity aerobic activity**. Anything that gets their heart beating faster counts.



At least 3 days a week, encourage your kids to step it up to **vigorous-intensity aerobic activity**.



Is it moderate or vigorous?
Use the “talk test” to find out.

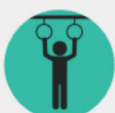
When you're being active, try talking:

- ✓ If you're breathing hard but can still have a conversation easily, it's **moderate-intensity activity**
- ✓ If you can only say a few words before you have to take a breath, it's **vigorous-intensity activity**

As part of their daily 60 minutes, kids and teens also need:

Muscle-strengthening activity

At least 3 days a week



Anything that makes their muscles work harder counts — like climbing or swinging on the monkey bars.

Bone-strengthening activity

At least 3 days a week



Bones need pressure to get stronger. Running, jumping, and other weight-bearing activities all count.

My kids are younger than 6. What about them?

Younger kids love to be active naturally!

- Aim to keep them moving 3 hours a day — and more is better
- Limit time when they're just sitting around (like screen time)

What counts?

Whatever gets them moving!



Encourage active play with friends



Give them rewards for active chores



Sign them up for free or low-cost classes



Or get active together!



Make your morning walks a race



Dance while dinner's in the oven



Show them your favorite ways to move

Most of all, help them find activities they really like to do!

It all adds up. And so do the benefits.

Help them get active now, and they'll build healthy habits for life. So take the first step. Get your kids moving. And when you can, move with them!

Find out how your kids can get 60 minutes of activity every day.

health.gov/MoveYourWay/Get-Kids-Active



ADULTS



What's your move?

You know you need physical activity to stay healthy.
But did you know it can help you feel better right away?



Boost your mood



Sharpen your focus



Reduce your stress



Improve your sleep

So get more active — and start feeling better today.

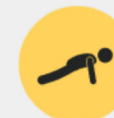
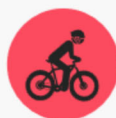
How much activity do I need?

Moderate-intensity aerobic activity

Anything that gets your heart beating faster counts.



AND



Tight on time this week? **Start with just 5 minutes.** It all adds up!

Or get the same benefits in half the time. If you step it up to **vigorous-intensity** aerobic activity, aim for at least **75 minutes** a week.

Is it moderate or vigorous? Use the “talk test” to find out.

When you’re being active, just try talking:

- If you’re breathing hard but can still have a conversation easily, it’s **moderate-intensity activity**
- If you can only say a few words before you have to take a breath, it’s **vigorous-intensity activity**

What counts?

Whatever gets you moving!



Even things you have to do anyway



Even things that don't feel like exercise

You can get more active.

No matter who you are, where you live, on your own, or together.
You can find a way that works for you.



And over time, physical activity can help you live a longer, healthier life.

- ✓ Lower your risk of diseases like type 2 diabetes and some cancers
- ✓ Control your blood pressure
- ✓ Stay at a healthy weight

So take the first step. Get a little more active each day. **Move your way.**

Find tips to get moving and build a weekly activity plan.

health.gov/MoveYourWay/Activity-Planner

