

How To Series

How to calculate your step goal

Assumptions

1. You have no underlying health conditions
2. You have no joint issues
3. You have no mobility issues

If you are concerned about your health regarding exercise it would be advisable to seek out the help of your GP to guide you with exercise for specific conditions.

Why Step goals?

Walking is a mode of exercise that is accessible to most people and requires minimal to no equipment to participate. Thus it is often touted as a good place to start if you want to improve your health, fitness and well-being.

How many steps are you doing now?

We can use your current step count as a guide to what your target should be

1. Access your step counter on your phone, this is a free app usually part of the health settings on most modern phones
2. Log your steps for 7 days, this means taking your phone around with you to act as a pedometer (your phone will not track your steps if you do not carry it with you).
3. We can then take an average daily step count for the 7 days by adding all 7 total steps together and dividing by 7 (example below)

Day	Total Steps
1	5632
2	7598
3	10222
4	3652
5	4658

6	10589
7	2821
Total average daily steps	~6400

When we have an average daily step number we can compare this to the government recommendations and begin to create a graded increase to move toward the target.

What the government recommends

Before the covid crisis hit us, the government were recommending that we aim to get 10'000 steps per day.

I have a few issues with this as a blanket recommendation for everyone which I will outline below:

Achieving 10'000 steps is easier for some than others. If you work in a trade where you are on your feet (waitressing, dog walking, personal training, site visitor etc) you will probably find it quite easy to get to 10'000 every day. However if you work at a desk for the standard working hours, with a long commute each way every day, you will find it very hard, if not impossible to get to 10000 steps per day.

If you are an athlete, perhaps a cyclist, swimmer, climber etc you are spending time working on your physical fitness and health, we can question the need to meet the government recommendations based on the amount of exercise that you are already doing in your chosen sport.

We must consider our own situation, how our goals factor in and what is possible to achieve for us!

During the covid lockdown, we are limited to 60minutes of outside walking per day, so we just need to make sure that our goals are realistic and in line with what the government is currently allowing us to do.

What does 10000 steps really mean?

If you walk at an average pace you might achieve 1000 steps every 10 minutes, thus to achieve 10000 steps we would roughly need to be walking/moving for 1 hour and 40 minutes.

If we consider that we might get 3000 steps by pottering around the house, we are still needing to assign at least one hour and ten minutes of walking time. Consider your own lifestyle and what you might be able to justify as a part of a regular walking routine.

How do I get closer to the recommended guidelines?

If your step count is lower than you want it to be, and you are interested in making an increase, I would recommend doing this incrementally.

Initially begin with smaller and slower increments, i.e dont bite off more than you can chew. Remember that 10 minutes equates to around 1000 steps.

Person A	
Current average daily steps	6400
Personal step target	10000
Week 1	7000
Week 2-3	7500-8000
Week 4-5	8000-8500
Week 6-8	8500-10000

This isn't just about being able to do the steps, it's about finding the extra time in your day to do it regularly, and most importantly it's about conditioning your joints to be ok with adding the extra load.

Should I keep increasing my steps?

If you enjoy walking and perhaps want to consider training for a walking event, you may want to continue adding steps and see how far you can go!

However, in the interest of developing different aspects of fitness, you may want to consider spending additional time on some strength work, some yoga and some mobility.

When you begin to increase your step count, you may experience some muscle soreness so please do treat this like you would any other training session and do your due diligence in taking care of your body.

Disclaimer

The information being shared here is to be used at your own discretion and Rossell Fitness is not responsible for any issues that arise as a result of following this advice. If you are unsure, please seek out the advice of a medical professional before making any changes.