



Walking the Walk - Managing Your Walk

Focuses on good practice for managing your community walk

Now you have your group how do you manage the walk?

BEFORE YOU WALK THE WALK

First you need to find somewhere to walk. Explore your neighbourhood - lookout for little roads, passages and loops you could use (see factsheet Walking the Walk - Finding a Suitable Community Walk).

Know where you are going so you can tell everybody about the walk and how long it will take.

Build up a selection of walks over time so that you have a variety varying in length and route.

Ideally you are looking for shorter walks until everybody gets used to the idea. Perhaps start with 20 to 30 minutes, gradually increasing time and distance as people gain experience.

Over time you can find ways to extend your routes, discover longer ones or venture further afield (see Going and Growing factsheet.)

Having your walks starting and finishing in the same place is much simpler to organise.

Staying close to where you live makes it much easier for people to get to the walk, more likely they will make it regularly and there is no transport to arrange.

The Walk Ready Questionnaire needs to be completed by new members. It will save you and them having to discuss any medical or other issues in public. You can get the forms from

www.getirelandwalking.ie.

If anybody is concerned about starting walking because they have health issues, you can suggest they talk to their doctor about getting more active.

Have a walk sign-in sheet or Register to record numbers of those attending each walk. It helps you see how your group develops as well as feeding into overall research (see Walk Register in the Forms for Group factsheet).

You need people to lead the walks. It is best to have at least two so they can support each other. For Walk Leader training contact your Local Sports Partnership or the Irish Heart Foundation.

If you want to find out more about insurance for the group walks (see Insurance factsheet).

In the event somebody hurts themselves have your plan ready to deal with an accident (see Accident/Incident in the Forms for Group factsheet).

Good planning and preparation make the experience more enjoyable for everybody





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WHEN WALKING THE WALK

Set a regular day and time so that everybody gets the habit and knows when they can turn up. Choose morning, afternoon or evening depending on what suits most of the people.

Be there ahead of the agreed time so that nobody shows up and is left wondering if they are in the right place.

All the gear that's needed is comfortable footwear, like runners, and a rain jacket. In winter a hat, scarf and gloves will help to keep warm.

Wearing high visibility clothing or armbands makes your group more visible, especially if walking in the dark or bad light. They can be organized for the group through the Road Safety Authority.

Remind people that even though they are walking in a group everyone is responsible for him/herself.

When walking take your time and set a pace that suits the group, look around and enjoy the surroundings. Even if you've been there before there is bound to be something different.

It is always better for the group to stay together - if people fall behind they can get discouraged and if they go too far ahead they can go astray.

As more people join, it may be better to organise more than one walk - maybe a shorter and a longer one or walks to different places.

Finishing with somewhere you can get a cup of tea and have a chat rounds off the outing nicely!

**MOST IMPORTANT OF ALL IS
EVERYBODY ENJOYS THEIR
WALKING AND COMES BACK FOR
MORE!**

