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Fitness Walking Treadmill Workout

PRINT

12-Week Treadmill Workout

Indoor fat-blasting walking routines for every body

By [Marianne McGinnis](#), Marianne McGinnis is a former *Prevention* associate editor.



Even avid exercisers find excuses to skip workouts in winter. So we asked Norma Shechtman, the American Council on Exercise's Group Fitness Instructor of the Year for 2003, to develop a lower-body fitness walking routine that burns fat, builds muscle, is at least a little fun--and can be done indoors.

She surprised us by bringing up an old standby that's probably sitting in your basement: a treadmill. "Many people think of treadmills as monotonous," she says. "I wanted to prove that you can have 3 whole months of fitness walking treadmill workouts with so much variety you'll never get bored." The treadmill is the most popular piece of home exercise equipment, and for many walkers and runners, it's the only way they can stick with their fitness

walking workouts during the cold winter months.

On the following pages you'll find a 12-week treadmill workout program for fitness walking that includes challenging power mixes, hill climbs to keep things interesting, speed intervals to crank up your calorie burn, and unique strength moves to get your legs as ready for shorts season as you probably are.

12-Week Fat-Burning Workout			
	Weeks 1 to 4	Weeks 5 to 8	Weeks 9 to 12
Monday	Cardio Walk	Cardio Walk Strength Moves	Cardio Walk Strength Moves
Tuesday	Speed Intervals	Speed Intervals	Speed Intervals
Wednesday	Cardio Walk	Cardio Walk	Cardio Walk
Thursday	Incline Intervals	Incline Intervals	Incline Intervals
Friday	Rest	Cardio Walk Strength Moves	Cardio Walk Strength Moves
Saturday	Power Mix	Power Mix	Power Mix
Sunday	Rest	Rest	Cardio Walk

Essentials

Warm up (5 minutes) Walk slowly (1.5 to 2 mph) for 1 minute. Slow your speed (to no more than 1.8 mph), and walk on your toes for 30 seconds, then switch to your heels for 30 seconds. Repeat the toe and heel walking one more time. Raise your incline to 6, and stretch your legs by taking longer strides for 1 minute. Lower the incline to 0, and speed up to 2.5 to 3 mph for 1 minute.

Cool down (5 minutes) At the end of your walk, reduce your speed to 2.5 to 3.5 mph, and walk for 3 minutes. Then slow down to 1.5 to 2.5 mph, and walk for 2 more minutes.

Stretch To avoid tight calves, try this stretch: Standing on the edge of a step, gently lower one heel. Hold for 45 to 60 seconds, then switch legs.

Cardio Walk

After warming up, walk between 3 and 4 mph. Choose a pace that has you breathing harder but still allows you to talk without gasping. Remember to cool down afterward.

Weeks 1 to 4 Walk for 20 minutes. Total workout time: 30 minutes

Weeks 5 to 8 Walk for 30 minutes. Total workout time: 40 minutes

Weeks 9 to 12 Walk for 40 minutes. Total workout time: 50 minutes

Speed Intervals

After warming up, walk at a moderate pace (3 to 3.5 mph) for 5 minutes. Now you'll begin your intervals: Increase to a fast walk (3.5 to 4.5 mph; see below for durations), followed by a 5-minute moderate pace (3 to 3.5 mph). You'll repeat the fast/moderate intervals a total of three times. Finish with the cooldown.

Weeks 1 to 4 Do 1-minute speed intervals. Total workout time: 33 minutes

Weeks 5 to 8 Do 2-minute speed intervals. Total workout time: 36 minutes

Weeks 9 to 12 Do 3-minute speed intervals. Total workout time: 39 minutes

Incline Intervals

After warming up, walk for 5 minutes at 3 to 4 mph with your treadmill at a 0 or 1 incline. Then increase the incline (see below for specifics) for 5 minutes. As you raise the incline, you may need to slow your speed to maintain good form. You'll repeat the flat/incline sequence a total of two times. Then walk for another 5 minutes at 0 or 1 incline before cooling down.

Weeks 1 to 4 Increase your incline to 4 or 5. Total workout time: 35 minutes

Weeks 5 to 8 Increase your incline to 6 or 7. Total workout time: 35 minutes

Weeks 9 to 12 Increase your incline to 8 or 9. Total workout time: 35 minutes

Power Mix

After warming up, try this sequence. Always cool down afterward.

Speed Pyramid Walk for 30 seconds at 3.5 mph; increase to 4.5 mph for 30 seconds. Walk for 45 seconds at 3.5; increase to 4.5 for 45 seconds. Walk for 1 minute at 3.5; increase to 4.5 mph for 1 minute.

Incline Pyramid Start at an incline of 4, and walk for 1 minute. Elevate to 5 for another minute. Continue to increase the incline every minute up to an incline of 8, and then decrease the incline every minute, back down to 4. Try to maintain 3 to 4 mph throughout.

Recovery Walk at 3 to 4 mph (0 incline) for 5 minutes.

Weeks 1 to 4 Do the workout one time through. Total workout time: 28.5 minutes.

Weeks 5 to 8 Do the following sequence: speed pyramid, incline pyramid, recovery, speed pyramid, recovery. Total workout time: 38 minutes

Weeks 9 to 12 Do the workout two times through. Total workout time: 47 minutes

Strength Moves

Walk at a very slow speed (about 0.5 to 1 mph) for the first two exercises, then stop the treadmill for the third. If you have time, repeat the whole 3-minute sequence. As you get fitter, you can increase the speed, but we recommend staying at or below 2 mph.

Side Stepping With the treadmill moving slowly and your right hand on the console, turn to the left so your right shoulder is facing forward. As the belt moves your feet to the left, step your right foot to the right, and then step your left foot to the right. Continue side stepping for 30 seconds. Repeat facing the right side for 30 more seconds. (Works inner and outer thighs and hips)



SIDE STEPPING

Lunge Stepping Holding the front rail, let the belt take your feet back until your arms are extended, then take a large step forward with your right leg. Bending your right knee, lower your left knee toward the belt, then press off with your left foot and stand back up. Continue by stepping forward, alternating legs, for 30 seconds. (Works thighs and butt)



LUNGE STEPPING

Squats Stop the treadmill, and straddle the belt so you're standing on the frame. With your hands lightly resting on the front rail, sit back as if in a chair, but don't extend your knees past your toes. Press into your heels, and stand back up. Repeat 12 times. (Works butt and thighs)



SQUATS

Last Update: 04/19/2007

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