



**ACTIVATE**  
OMAHA

## Five Walking Warm-up Moves

The higher intensity the exercise you intend to do, the more you benefit from warm-up exercises. But even a relaxing stroll is likely to feel better after two or four minutes of gentle, dynamic warm-up moves.

Keep in mind that gradually increasing blood flow and slowly increasing your muscle and joint temperature can improve your comfort and performance, and reduce the risk of injury during any exercise. You'll feel better and walk better.

The following five simple moves before any brisk walk are recommended, as they target some muscles that do lots of the work in walking. All are done standing up, and the movements are slow, controlled, and comfortable. If you spend 30 seconds on each, the whole routine takes under three minutes. (Rest one hand on something for balance when needed.) And then you can **GET MOVIN'!!!**

### 1. Ankle Circles

Stand on one foot and lift the other off the ground. Slowly flex that ankle thru its full range of motion, making large circles with the toes, (*but only by moving the ankle joint, not the lower leg*). Do 6 to 8 in each direction, then switch feet and repeat.

### 2. Leg Swings

Stand on one leg and swing the other loosely from the hip, front to back. It should be a relaxed, unforced motion (*like the swinging of a pendulum*), and your foot should swing no higher than 12 inches or so off the ground. Do 15 to 20 swings on each leg.

### 3. Pelvic Loops

Put your hands on your hips with your knees "soft" (*slightly bent*) and feet shoulder width apart. Keep your body upright and make 10 slow continuous circles with your hips, pushing them gently forward, to the left, back and then to the right. Reverse directions and repeat.

### 4. Arm Circles

Hold both arms straight out to the sides, making yourself into a letter "T." Make 10 to 12 slow backward circles with your hands, starting small and finishing with large circles, using your entire arm. Shake your arms out, then repeat with 10 to 12 forward circles again starting small and getting larger.

### 5. Hula Hoop Jumps

Begin jumping in place on both feet. Keep your head and shoulders facing forward and twist your feet and lower body left then right, back and forth, on successive jumps. Jump 15 to 20 times, facing forward but twisting the hips and legs left and right on alternate jumps.

### **B** Up, Side, Back, Downs

*Ideal if you have shin soreness when walking.* Stand with feet hip width apart & roll feet thru 4 positions, holding each for 2 counts.

- Up—stand on toes, heels as high as possible.
- Side—roll to the outside of feet, with insides pulled up.
- Back—stand on heels, with toes held high as possible.
- Down—rest, with both feet flat on the floor.

Adapted from:  
*The Complete Guide  
to Walking for Health,  
Weight Loss,  
and Fitness*

by Mark Fenton  
(Lyons Press, 2001)