Want to lose pounds, 5 do-it-all plans you'll love

We've got your number: When SELF surveyed women earlier this year, walking earned the nod for cardio favorite. To make a good thing even better—couldn't you use a few ways to speed up results?—we consulted the pros and created five plans to match your mood and your goals. Try any of these walks three to five days a week and see improvement wherever you most want it: your weight, your measurements, your mood—or all three!

By Margit Feury Photographs by Jorg Badura

Burn calories and shed inches all over

Thanks to evolution, the way we stride is too efficient. Our feet stay in contact with the ground as long as possible, conserving energy, says Peter Weyand, Ph. D., assistant professor of kinesiology at Rice University in Houston. The fix Reduce foot-to-ground time by walking as if you're on hot sand. You'll use your muscles more, torching calories. This walk works indoors or out. On the treadmill, increase speedy steps by ½ to ½ mph every two weeks.

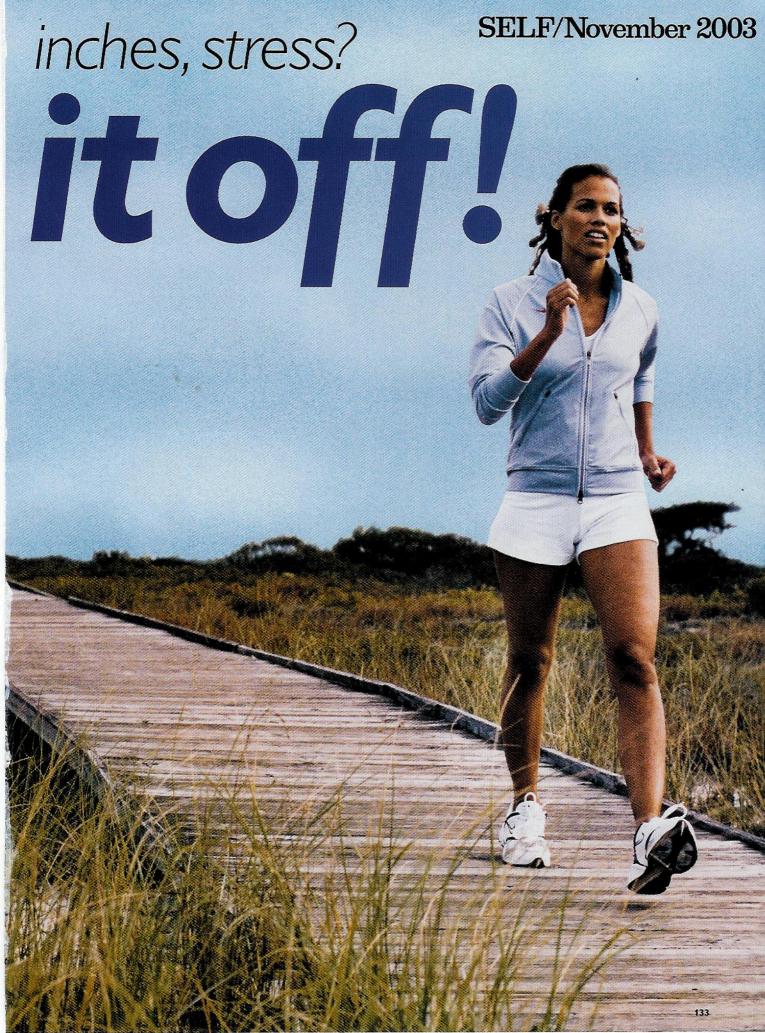
TOTAL FIME 30 minutes

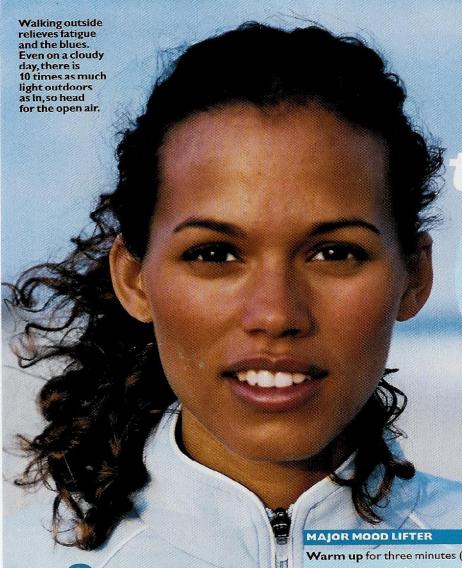
CALORIES BURNED About 140*

BODY BENEFITS Extra fat does a disappearing act.

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Time	Walk this way	Speed
5 min.	Warm up, stepping at a moderate pace.	3.5 mph
1 min.	Speed up, as if you're trying to catch a bus.	4.7 mph
4 min.	Slow down to a bit faster than your typical pace.	4 mph
2 min.	Pick it up again, as if you were 20 minutes late.	4.7 mph
3 min.	Slow down, but still move slightly faster than normal.	4 mph
3 min.	Think: Move it, move it.	5 mph
2 min.	Slow down, but stride a little faster than normal.	4 mph
4 min.	Really pick it up, as if you're hoping to avoid someone.	5 mph
6 min.	Gradually slow to cool-down pace.	3.5 mph
*Calori	es are calculated for a 135-pound woman.	





Get going!
A 15-minute
walk ups energy
and creativity,
improves mood
and deep-sixes
stress.

2. The express track to less stress

Exercise is just the ticket to relieve tension, says Daniel Landers, Ph.D., regents professor in the department of kinesiology at Arizona State University at Tempe: "It enhances positive mood and self-esteem." And for mild anxiety and depression, it's equally as effective as drugs. If you're feeling overwhelmed, take a moderately paced walk and maximize its mood-lifting benefits by pairing it with yoga, suggests Sarah Robertson, a recreational fitness specialist at Green Mountain at Fox Run in Ludlow, Vermont. These moves focus on the most tension-prone spots. **TOTAL TIME 35 minutes CALORIES BURNED About 150 BODY BENEFITS Burns fat,** makes you feel happier

Warm up for three minutes (3.5 mph on a treadmill). Then start walking at an aerobic pace (4.0 to 4.5 mph on a treadmill). Every five minutes, stop (step off the treadmill) and do one of these yoga moves. Then continue your walk.

STANDING CAMEL To undo all those hours of at-your-desk and behind-the-wheel slumping, lace your palms at the base of your spine and lean back as far as is comfortable without straining. Take 5 to 15 deep breaths.

FORWARD FOLD Stand with knees bent slightly. Hinge forward from your hips, clasping hands and stretching toward your toes. Take 5 to 15 deep breaths.

CHEST EXPANDER Stand with feet comfortably apart. Clasp both hands behind your back and gently lift up as far as you can, keeping shoulders down. Take 5 to 15 deep breaths.

SUPPORTED REACH Stand with legs shoulder-width apart and gently hold a tree or wall with your left hand for support. Breathe in as you lift your right hand overhead in a fist, rising on your toes at the same time. Look up at your right hand, Take 5 to 15 deep breaths. Switch sides; repeat.

TREE Stand on your left leg and press right foot into left inner thigh. Extend arms overhead, palms together. Take 5 to 15 deep breaths. Switch legs; repeat.

Cool down by walking slowly for two minutes (3.0 to 3.5 mph on a treadmill).

Stop and close your eyes. Tune in to your senses one at a time. When you open your eyes, you'll feel more calm and centered.



When you're feeling too time-crunched to exercise, don't bail. Walk a mile as quickly as you can. Don't fret about not doing enough. Research shows that exercising too hard can add to stress and irritability, says Marie-Annette Brown, Ph.D., nurse-practitioner at the University of Washington at Seattle. In this shortbut-sweet workout, you will (a) fulfill your cardio heart-health requirements and (b) assess your fitness, says Susan Johnson, of The Cooper Institute in Dallas (see "How Fit Are You?" below). Chances are, it will either motivate you to rev up your routine or let you pat yourself on the back for a job well done. **TOTAL TIME About 21 minutes CALORIES BURNED About 95 BODY BENEFITS Maintenance**

ONE-MILE TEST

Walk this way

Warm up Walk casually or march in place for five minutes, about ¼ mile.

Work out On a track, treadmill or 1-mile loop you've mapped in your neighborhood, time yourself as you walk a mile as fast as possible. You'll walk faster if you're properly aligned: Keep your cheekbones over your collarbones as you move. Bend arms to 90 degrees and rock them forward, not side to side. The faster they move, the faster your feet will.

Cool down Walk at an easy pace for about three minutes so your heart rate slows.

HOW FIT ARE YOU?

YOUR MILE TIME 13:30 min. or less 13:31 to 16:00 min. 16:01 to 18:30 min. 18:31 to 20:00 min.

20:01 min, or more

GOOD

AVERAGE
BELOW AVERAGE

YOUR FITNESS LEVEL

LOW

Feel like you can't walk quickly? It's not a matter of leg length but of proper form: Lean forward slightly, bend your arms and lead with your feet, not your head.





4. Get legs like a Rockette

For great-looking legs, you need one thing: variety. "Your glutes and hamstrings are accustomed only to walking forward, so you have to shake things up," says fitness specialist Robertson. "Stride sideways and backward to shape muscles fast." (If time is tight, you can cut the workout in half and still get plenty

of results.) Because you'll be doing some out-ofthe-ordinary moves, it's best to try this routine on a track (use stairs for uphills) or treadmill. TOTAL TIME 50 minutes CALORIES BURNED About 340 BODY BENEFITS Tighter, sleeker, curvier legs

DOING THE LEGWORK					
Time	Pace	Walk this way	Speed	Incline	
5 min.	Warm-up	Speed up gradually.	3.3-3.8 mph	1–2%	
4 min.	Fast-forward	Move like you've gotta get to a rest roomnow!	4.5 mph	1–2%	
1 min.	Recovery	Faster than your normal walking pace	4 mph	1–2%	
4 min.	Backward steps	Roll from ball of foot to heel to work quads.	1.0–1.5 mph	0-2%	
1 min.	Recovery	Faster than your normal walking pace	4 mph	1-2%	
4 min.	Uphill strides	Use butt and calves to pull you up.	3.3-3.8 mph	8–15%	
1 min.	Recovery	Faster than your normal walking pace	4 mph	1–2%	
4 min.	Side-to-side shuffles	Start with right foot; switch lead foot after 2 minutes.	1 mph	1–2%	
1 min.	Recovery	Faster than your normal walking pace	4 mph	1–2%	

Repeat: Walk through these workout steps in reverse order.

o. Cuter glutes, please!

Cuter = toned + tighter - excess flab. The secret to a better bottom line is climbing stairs or hills (natural or treadmill). The combo of lifting your body upward (fighting gravity every second) while propelling it forward is what firms and deflabs your butt, according to Patti Finke, an exercise physiologist with Team Oregon Running, Walking TOTAL TIME 35 minutes CALORIES BURNED About 200 BODY BENEFITS Toned buttocks and thighs

BETTER-BUTT WORKOUT

11m	e Walk this way	
5 mil	Warm up at	
5-8	min. Steady upword in Steady upword in	
	nin. Steady upward climb for three flights (or a	
	10 to 15 percent incline on the treadmill). Push off with toes and keep buttocks tucked under At the top of the third for the	A STATE OF THE PERSON NAMED IN
	At the top of the third flight, walk down slowly (lower treadmill to flats all	
	(lower treadmill to flat), allowing quads to	
	can, gradually increasing flights and repeats until you can climb for 25 minutes.	
5 min.	Cool down at a madame	
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Push off with the toes of your rear oot with each step you take to give ur walk a little extra punch and those utt muscles more toning in the bargain.

ried all these walks and ready for more? Go to ww.self.com weekdays from November 17 to 28

