

AVOID THESE TREADMILL WALKING MISTAKES

THERE'S MORE TO WALKING ON A TREADMILL THAN, WELL, WALKING. TO STAY SAFE AND GET THE MOST FROM YOUR WORKOUT, AVOID THESE COMMON TREADMILL WALKING MISTAKES.



SKIPPING YOUR WARMUP

Like any other activity, walking requires a solid warmup to avoid injury and get ready for the increased intensity of your workout.

You might think about warming up more when walking on the road or trail, but on the treadmill you're much more likely to jump on and crank up the speed right away. Instead, make sure you begin your walk with a 5–10-minute warmup that slowly builds your speed and loosens your muscles properly.

GLUEING YOUR EYES TO THE MONITOR



One of the good things about walking on a treadmill is you have all your metrics — like speed, distance, incline and calories burned — on a big monitor in front of you at all times. But just like you wouldn't want to walk staring at a fitness tracker, you'll want to avoid walking with your head down staring at the treadmill monitor, too.

Doing so promotes bad posture and makes it more likely you'll hold on to the handrails. Since the arm swing is an important part of the walking motion and looking down can cause problems with your shoulders, lower back and neck, it's a good idea to keep your head up and your eyes forward just as you would if you were walking outdoors. This helps you burn more calories and avoid unnecessary aches and pains following your workout.

CHANGING YOUR STRIDE

On the treadmill, one common bad habit that's easy to fall into is changing your stride. For some this means walking too close to the front end of the treadmill and shrinking your stride. For others, it can mean overstriding with an excessive heel strike in an attempt to walk at a faster-than-normal pace.

Instead of falling into these traps, do your best to concentrate on the basics of good walking form. Your forward foot should strike with the heel first close to the body while the back foot stays on the ground longer to get strong push off when rolling onto the ball of the foot. Since the back foot is where you'll get power and speed, concentrate on this portion of your stride.

HANGING ONTO THE TREADMILL.

This is one of the most common mistakes people make. Walking on an incline burns more calories than walking on level ground because you have to pull your body weight up the hill. When you hang on, the machine supports your body weight and reduces the total amount of weight you have to carry.



LOOKING DOWN AT YOUR FEET.

Looking down can not only cause you to lose balance and fall, but can also strain your neck and misalign the rest of your body. This may also place stress on your spine, hips, and knees.

Look straight ahead when on your treadmill, and keep your shoulders level and chest open. This will help your spine create a straight line from your head to your feet. Form is key!

Every few minutes throughout your workout, give your shoulders a backward roll to check that you aren't hunching them forward.

LEANING FORWARD

Proper walking posture is upright, not leaning forward or backward.

1. Keep the abdominals engaged but maintain a neutral spine.
2. Now pretend you have a string attached to the top of your head. Pull it upwards so your upper body is lifted straight up off your hips.
3. Give your shoulders a backward roll so you know they aren't hunched up.
4. When you feel you have a straight posture, get on the treadmill, and walk.
5. Remind yourself as you walk to keep this upright posture. Every time you change pace or incline, check your posture again.

WEARING THE WRONG SHOES

Walking in the wrong shoes can be miserable and it can lead to a number of health problems, such as hip and knee pain, Achilles tendinitis, and plantar fasciitis. This is because many sports shoes use pointy toe boxes that squeeze your toes out of their natural position as you walk or run.

Wearing the right shoes on the treadmill can prevent pain and optimize your results. High quality shoes feature a special design to keep your toes in place as you move.

STOMPING YOUR FEET

Not only will stomping your feet damage and shorten the life of your treadmill, but it can also inflict long-term injury to your feet and legs. Run and walk softly – think of yourself as “fleet-footed” rather than “pounding down the k's”. No foot slapping.

NOT UTILIZING THE TREADMILL TO YOUR BENEFIT

While walking on the treadmill might not be your thing, there are some benefits you should utilize when you're forced indoors. This includes choosing one of the pre-programmed workouts that have set interval sessions, backwards walking and inclined workouts to simulate hills.

These functions can help you to mix up your routine and work different muscle groups from your usual walk around the neighborhood.

NOT KEEPING SAFETY IN MIND

On the treadmill, there are some different things you'll need to keep in mind to stay safe and avoid injury. Here are a few tips you should always put into practice:

Mounting and dismounting: Straddle the sides of the treadmill and set the speed low before you step on. This helps prevent an unwanted jolt. Once you're walking you can increase the speed. When you're ready to stop, hit the stop button. Hold onto the handrails and place your feet to the sides of the belt. Once treadmill stops and you've regained your bearings, turn and dismount.

Loose towels: While it's OK to bring along a towel to wipe away sweat, make sure it isn't hanging loosely from one of the handrails. If it falls off while you're walking it could cause you to trip and fall.

Talking on the phone: Just like driving a vehicle, if you you're distracted by your mobile phone on the treadmill it could cause an accident that could've been easily avoided.

Looking around: When you walk, your body will naturally go in the direction you point your head. If you look to the side, you will naturally veer to the side. Keep your head up and look forward to avoid a misstep.



STICKING TO THE SAME ROUTINE

When you're working out, it's important to mix things up and not get stuck in the same routine. To challenge yourself, avoid mental burnout and keep your workouts from getting stale, don't do the same routine every time you get on the treadmill. This is particularly important if treadmill walking is part of your weekly routine.

Instead, vary your workouts whenever possible. If you do intervals one day that focus on speed, try a hill workout the next time you get on the treadmill. This helps improve your strength, speed and stamina and avoid the boredom sometimes associated with treadmill walking.

REMEMBER TO SET GOALS

The treadmill is one of the most popular ways to get cardio exercise because it is convenient and it eliminates excuses about walking outdoors in hot, cold, or wet weather.

Whether it is walking outdoors, on a treadmill or a combination of both, it is good to set goals and get into the habit of exercising regularly to receive all of the fitness and health benefits. By avoiding common treadmill mistakes, you'll stay safe and make the most out of your walking and running workouts indoors.

We have some [walking](#) and [running](#) downloadable logs that can help you keep track of your progress.

For the live excel versions click the image below.





If you are experiencing any difficulties or need a professional to check your walking style, speak to our Physios who can do a walking or running analysis in our Hindmarsh Gym.

We can show you particular elements of your running and walking assessment that may explain why you may have pain or be predisposed to developing an issue.

Particular things we gain information on are stride length; cadence (steps per minute); whether you are a heel/midfoot/forefoot striker; and the position of the rest of your body such as pelvis and upper body.

These things can all influence the way energy and load are transferred through your body.

Lastly -dont forget to stretch - click below for our patient resource on best stretches.

[Best running and walking stretches](#)

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We are committed to supporting you and your familys' physiotherapy needs. Please reach out to our team if there is anything we can do.

As Physios, we provide extensive education as part of our management and prevention programs, but realize not everyone can find the time or have the confidence to make an appointment. You are welcome to download these informative E-books that you may find useful to get you on your way.

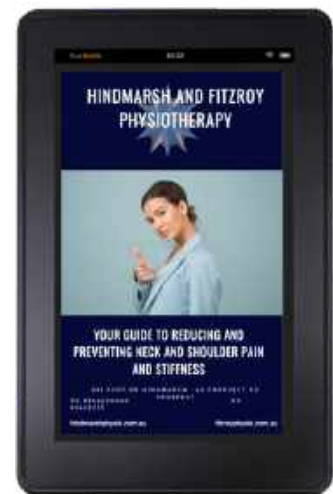
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WHAT INJURY IS THIS



MANAGING KNEE PAIN



NECK PAIN GUIDE

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