

Safety Tips for Walking

Be safe when walking outside



Walking is good for your health, and it is good for the environment too. But before you head out on foot for a stroll, power walk, or errand, there are important safety tips to remember. Below are tips helpful reminders to make your walks both fun and safe.

Walking Tips

- **Leave word.** Tell somebody or leave a note at home about where you plan to go and how long you plan to be out. That way your loved ones will know to look for you if needed. Carry a cell phone with emergency contacts visible.
- **Do not wear headphones.** Avoid using earbuds or wearing headphones—you need to be able to hear approaching vehicles and be aware of your surroundings.
- **Use the sidewalk.** Walk on sidewalks whenever they are available.
- **Face traffic.** It is easier to see and react to oncoming cars. And cars will see you more clearly too. Walk as far from traffic as possible.
- **Make room.** If traffic gets heavy, or the road narrows, be prepared to move onto the shoulder of the road.
- **Be seen.** Wear high-visibility, brightly colored clothing. When out near or after sunset, reflective materials are a must.
- **Pretend you are invisible.** Do not assume a driver sees you. In fact, imagine that a driver cannot see you, and behave accordingly.

- **Watch the hills.** When they crest hills, drivers' vision can suddenly be impaired by factors like sun glare or backdrops.
- **Beware of high-risk drivers.** Avoid potential problem areas like entrances to parking lots, bars, and restaurants, where there may be heavy traffic.

When walking, we often share the road with motor vehicles, bicycles, and other walkers. To keep yourself and others safe, it is important to follow the rules of the road.

For more information, visit the Family Fun on the Run website at <http://go.unl.edu/familyrun>

This publication has been peer reviewed.

Sources:

1. Pedestrian Safety, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration: <https://www.nhtsa.gov/road-safety/pedestrian-safety>
2. Be Safe When Exercising Outdoors, National Institute on Aging: <https://www.nia.nih.gov/health/exercising-outdoors>