

An outdoor plan for walking and running

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(HealthDay)—Sweating it out on a treadmill is great, especially when the weather is bad. You might even be motivated by watching exciting vistas on an interactive panel. But to keep a walking or running routine from

becoming stale, kick it up a notch by taking your workout outside.

Running or walking in the great outdoors can burn more [calories](#), because you have to [work](#) against the wind and you don't have a moving tread to keep you going.

If you're used to monitoring the length of your treadmill workouts on a built-in screen, stay motivated by finding other ways to track your output. If you already have a smartwatch, there's a good chance it has a step counter app already installed. If not, you can download any number of fitness apps that count time and distance, calorie expenditure and more.

If you don't have a smartwatch and are on a tight gadget budget, you can buy an inexpensive pedometer to count your steps. Remember that it takes about 2,000 to 2,500 steps to make a mile, depending on the length of your stride.

Now you're ready to rev up your walking/running. Here are four ideas you can mix and match.

- To add intensity to your outdoor [workout](#) and increase your cardio effort, choose a route with some hills.
- Pick up the pace with [interval training](#). Alternate two-minute intervals of brisk walking with two minutes of moderate walking. Runners can jog for two minutes and then sprint for 30 seconds. Repeat the pattern for 20 to 30 minutes.
- Switch up your stride. Alternate between 30 seconds of easy steps and 30 seconds of "monster-sized" steps.
- Work in some skipping, hopping or jumping at regular intervals.

No matter how hard you're working, take some time to appreciate the scenery and the fresh air. This will give you plenty of motivation to

continue.

More information: The American Council on Exercise has more [fun facts about walking](#).

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