

Walking meditation

Find a peaceful place where you can comfortably focus on walking 5–10 steps back and forth. You can be outdoors or indoors.

Stand at one end of your route with your feet 10 or 15 centimetres apart. Keep your knees soft and flexible. Let your arms hang gently to the sides or hold your hands gently together in front of your body. Look slightly downwards.

Focus on the soles of your feet. Feel the soles of your feet on the floor and observe how the weight of your body passes through your legs and feet to the floor. You can try to bend your knees a few times and move a little weight forward and back to get a feel for the sensation.

When you are ready, shift your weight onto your right foot. Notice the changes in the physical sensations in your legs when the weight is off your left leg and your whole weight rests on your right leg.

When your left leg feels light, let your left heel slowly lift from the floor. Notice the sensations in your calf muscles. Continue until you have lifted your entire left foot off the floor so that only your toes touch the floor. Observe the physical sensations in your legs.

Slowly lift the toes of your left leg from the floor. Notice which muscles work to maintain balance. Slowly extend your left knee, feel your foot and leg as they move in the air. Lower your heel to the floor. Let the rest of your sole touch the floor and shift your weight onto your left foot at the same time. Notice the increased sensations in your left foot as the weight is shifted from your right foot and your right heel is lifted from the floor.

When your entire weight is on your left foot, allow your right foot to rise and extend your leg slowly forward. Notice the changes in the physical sensations in your legs as you do this. Focus your attention on your right heel when it touches the floor. Shift your weight onto your right foot, the sole touches the floor gently again. Observe the physical changes in both feet.

Move slowly like this from one end of your route to the other, notice in particular the sensations in the soles of your feet and heels when they touch the floor and the sensations in your muscles as your foot swings forward.

When you reach the end of your route, turn slowly and notice the range of movements that your body goes through when you change direction. Keep walking.

Walk back and forth like this, be as aware as possible of the physical sensations in your feet and the way they touch the floor. Look ahead softly.

When you notice your mind wandering away from the conscious walk, gently focus back on the sensation in your feet, use the sensation of your foot touching the floor as an anchor to the present.



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At first, walk slower than usual, give yourself a better chance to be fully aware of the sensation of conscious walking. When you feel comfortable walking slowly and consciously, you can try increasing the speed up to normal walking speed or even faster. If you feel particularly restless, it can help you to deliberately start walking at a fast pace and slow down as you calm down.

Transfer the same awareness you have during walking meditation to normal, everyday walking as often as you can.

YouTube video of the exercise

<https://youtu.be/gfzC6PDIO4g>



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