

FC's All-New

Walk-Off-

By Maureen Connolly

the-Weight Plan

**DROP
A SIZE IN
3
WEEKS!**



ROAD WARRIORS who log 20-25 miles a week in La Habra, Calif. (from left) Bonna Piper, 64; Claire Crookly, 68; Sophia Martinez, 54. "We walk more if we have a lot to talk about!" says Sophia.

When it comes to the country's top exercise, we're voting with our feet: Nearly 22 million Americans walk at least twice a week. No surprise, says Gary Yaniker, author of *Walkshaping* (Hearst Books, 1995): "It's easy, accessible and versatile." Why not join the crowd? Novice or steady stroller, you'll find lots of ways to walk to a fitter, slimmer body. We give you a walking workout from Steve Lischin, fitness director at NYC's World Gym. It consists of three Walk-Offs, each of which is a walk (from 15 to 60 minutes long, based on your level) interspersed with exercise breaks to rev up fat-burning. You also get pointers from the pros to reap the most from every walk. And there's an eating plan to trigger weight loss safely and enjoyably, from FC's

nutritionist, Regina Ragone. So lace up your sneakers and get going!
Maureen Connolly, a freelance health/fitness writer, lives in New Jersey.

The Top 10 Reasons to Exercise-Walk

- 10 **It's easy.** You already know how to walk!
- 9 **It's free (almost).** All you really need is a sturdy pair of well-padded shoes.
- 8 **It's fun.** Make it a date with a friend or your mate.
- 7 **It improves posture.** As you stride, chest and head are up, shoulders are back. This will carry over so you naturally sit, stand and stroll more erectly.
- 6 **It helps you sleep better.** "Walking helps relax and tire you, so sleep comes faster and lasts longer," says walking expert Gary Yaniker. Insomnia? Up mileage by ¼ or ½ next day.
- 5 **It boosts energy and mood** because the brain produces more feel-good chemicals, says exercise pro Richard Cotton.
- 4 **It strengthens heart, lungs and bones.** You gain in stamina, power and vitality.
- 3 **It tones entire body.** As you add lean muscle, you look better and decrease your chance of age-related injury.
- 2 **It helps you lose weight,** which can lower blood pressure and cholesterol.
- 1 **It can help you live longer.** Studies show active people outlive inactive people.

The Walk-Off Workout

Check the chart for your program.* "Keep a brisk yet comfortable pace," says Steve Lischin. "When it's time for an exercise, go right into it with no downtime. Focus on form, the working muscle and breathing." Walk-Offs 2 and 3, coming up.

Your Level	Walking Time	Your Personal Walk-Off Workout
Stepping Out (beginner)	15 to 25 minutes, 3 days a week	• Walk-Offs 1 and 2 on alternate days; walk 5 to 7 minutes between exercises. • Skip Walk-Off 3 for now.
Hitting Your Stride (intermediate)	25 to 40 minutes, 3 to 5 days a week	• Walk-Offs 1 and 2 on alternate days, 2 to 4 days a week. Add 5 reps per exercise. Walk 7 to 10 minutes between exercises. • Walk-Off 3 one day a week; walk 8 to 10 minutes between intervals or exercises.
Setting the Pace (advanced)	40 to 60 minutes, 5 or 6 days a week	• Walk-Offs 1 and 2 on alternate days, 3 to 5 days a week. Do 2 to 3 sets of each exercise. Walk 10 to 15 minutes between exercises. • Walk-Off 3 one or two days a week; walk 10 to 12 minutes between intervals or exercises.

Walk-Off

push-offs (Not shown) Stand, arms straight, hands on wall or tree at chest height, head up. • Inhale, slowly bring chest toward wall; exhale, push off. 10x.

arm toners

- Stand, knees bent, fists at sides. Bend arms up; contract biceps for count of 2.
- On return, contract triceps for count of 2. 10x-15x.

shoulder raises

- Stand, feet apart, knees bent, back straight, hands in fists.
- Lift arms slowly to 90°, contract shoulders for 2 counts; lower. 10x-15x.