

What you can do



Cycling or walking to work is great for your health: here's why



Only 66% of men and 56% of women in England claim to meet the recommended amount of physical activity per week. As this is self-reported the actual figure may be even lower.

That's a lot of us who know we should be doing more to look after our health. Keeping active can set you up for good health now and later in life.

The current government recommendation is for adults to do 150 minutes of moderate activity per week. Moderate activity can include walking fast, cycling on the flat or playing volleyball, doubles tennis or basketball. It can be hard to find the time (or the motivation) to head to the gym after a long day at work or get up at 6am for a run. An active commute is an easy, convenient way to fit exercise into your daily life. By switching to walking or cycling to work you can do a little exercise every day and barely even notice it.

Cycling to work

If you cycle three miles by bike to work every weekday (for a total daily journey of six miles) you'll achieve your recommended amount of activity each week without ever having to set foot in a gym.

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Commuting two miles by bike



10 minutes

Total journey time (one way)



100 minutes

Time spent cycling over a week



10 years

Regular cyclists are as fit as an average person 10 years younger.



2kg

Around 2kg of carbon is saved for every short journey that is made using a bike instead of a car.

 Share



Commuting three miles by bike



150 minutes

Time spent cycling over a week.



2 years

On average, cyclists live two years longer than non-cyclists.

Walking to work

Walking burns as many calories as jogging over the same distance and, because it is a low-impact exercise, it won't stress your knees. It's good for your heart and lungs, and great for strengthening your muscles, bones and joints.

Walking one mile to work



20 minutes

Journey time (one way)



164 calories

Total calories burned (there and back)

With a spare 20 minutes to yourself as you walk to work you could listen to Radio 4's Book of the Week and enjoy serialised readings of great works of non-fiction, biography, travel, history and more. Or why not tune into your favourite podcast and arrive at work energised, alert and entertained?

Combined commute

Even if you only walk half a mile to get the train or bus to work it's still good for your physical and mental health. According to the Mental Health Foundation, physical activity can be as effective as medication and counselling.

The time you spend walking half a mile to the station will add up to 100 minutes over the course of a week. Why not take advantage of this time to practise a skill that you struggle to find time for. You could use this time to learn a new language. If you start listening to language tapes in January then by your holiday in July you could have listened to a good 43 hours of your chosen language. That's plenty of time to be able to master the basics like saying hello, ordering food or drinks or asking to hire a bike.