

## The Special Olympics Step Challenge

A step challenge can be great fun while boosting fitness for both athletes and volunteers in a club. You can take part in the challenge individually or break into teams.

Many people now own a smartphone or tracking device such as a Fitbit which will count daily steps easily.

Alternatively low cost pedometers can be purchased by individuals or the club to track steps taken. You may even have a local sponsor who would like to fund this for you.

### Why take on the challenge?

Walking is a super exercise for many different ages and abilities, it is free to do, can be done almost anywhere and requires no expensive equipment.

Walking:

- Helps us build muscle.

- Is great for our heart.
- Can help us control our weight.
- Makes us feel happy.

### How many steps should we be taking?

The aim is to work towards taking 10,000 steps each day (this is about 5 miles or 8km). It does sound like a lot but remember you may already be doing quite a lot of steps without realising it. It's important you wear your tracker all day so all of your steps are counted.

STEPS	PROGRESS
1,999 or less	Good start, let's keep going.
2000-3999	Well done, keep at it.
4000-5999	Great job! You are getting there.
6000-7999	You're doing brilliantly, almost there.
8000-9999	Super stepping, only a little more to go.
10,000 +	Excellent work- you've hit your daily goal!

## Preparing for a walk

Before going on a walk have a route planned that you are going to take. Routes should have a footpath and be well lit. You may want to ask a friend or family member to join you. If walking alone, make sure to tell a friend or family member where you are going and when you expect to be back.

Make sure you dress for the weather!

- If it's sunny cover up and use sun cream, bring a bottle of water to keep hydrated.
- If it's raining or rain is forecast wear a waterproof coat with a hood, sensible shoes and bring an umbrella.
- In winter layer your clothes to keep warm, plan your walks earlier so it is still daylight by the time you will be finishing your walk.

## Challenge yourself

There are lots of ways you can challenge yourself when out walking.

- Use the walk checklist to see how many items you can tick off during your walk.
- Time yourself doing the same route a few days in a row and see if you can complete it faster.
- Go a little bit farther than you usually would and see how many more steps you have taken.
- Use the daily step log to record your steps taken each day, week and month, see if you can walk a little more than the day, week or month before.

