

Why Walk

You can go almost anywhere on foot. Many destinations in Milford are no more than a 10-minute walk away – and many are even closer than that. You'll be surprised how short the walks are – from homes, schools, downtown businesses and shopping centers to all parts of town.

It's an easy and fun exercise. A walk can be a social – bring your spouse, your dog, a friend or a coworker along. A walk can help you clear your head and reduce stress. It can be long or short; spontaneous, or planned in advance.

Walking is a part of virtually every trip – alone or combined with driving or cycling. It can also build stronger communities. Pedestrian activity makes residential areas more neighborly and commercial areas more vibrant.

With minute-increment markers, this map makes it easy to time your walks. Find two destinations that are 10 minutes apart. Vary the route to keep it interesting. Then try walking out 10 minutes and back 10 minutes for a 20-minute walk.

Health

Walking is life-extending. The more you walk the better it is for you. Every hour of brisk walking can add two hours to your life. [Harvard Alumni Study, 1986].

Walking is the simplest positive change Americans can make to improve their health, and it's an exercise that people stick with. It has the lowest dropout rate of any physical activity.

Walking just 30 minutes a day can:

- Reduce the risk of heart disease
- Help keep weight under control
- Improve blood cholesterol levels
- Prevent and manage high blood pressure
- Boost energy levels
- Increase muscle strength
- Reduce depression
- Maintain good cognitive health

New research suggests that better cardiovascular health gained by regular exercise might benefit your brain as well. The Journal of the American Medical Association reports that walking regularly may help preserve mental sharpness.

Safety and walkability

Residents and merchants can help make our town safer and more walkable every day. Here's how:

Keep sidewalks unobstructed. Where possible, place garbage receptacles and recycling bins awaiting pickup in area between the sidewalk and the street. Put them away after pick-up in a reasonable and timely manner.

Clear snow and ice from sidewalks and crosswalks. It's important to shovel as soon as possible before a storm. Maintain traction on your sidewalk by spreading salt, sand, cat litter, or a commercial ice-melting product.

Pick up after your dog. It's not just common courtesy; it's also the law.

Do not block sidewalks or pathways. Keep tree branches and other vegetation trimmed and avoid parking vehicles in a way that blocks or impedes walking.

Be an advocate. If something makes it difficult to walk around town, report it! Call the Highway Department for sidewalk issues at 508-473-1274 and for issues in parks and paths call the Parks Department at 508-478-1110 (ext. 2650).

Getting started

Determine how active you want to be. Start slowly and extend your walking gradually.

Set achievable goals. 30 minutes a day of moderate to vigorous physical activity can be divided into 15- or 10-minute sections.

Find a buddy. Ask your spouse, children, friend or coworker to be your walking partner. It's more fun and you can encourage one another to stay active.

Do your errands on foot, or park once and walk. Many of Milford's commercial areas are within a easy walk of one another. Find a parking spot somewhere in between where you intend to go, and before you know it, you'll have covered quite a distance!

Have fun! Plan a scavenger hunt, or use the map for geocaching or letterboxing. For ideas, go to letterboxing.org

Walks in Milford

Milford has fantastic attributes that make it an ideal community for walking. Main Street offers commercial areas with a wide variety of shops and restaurants, while the Upper Charles Trail and nearby parks provide many opportunities for running or recreational walking.

“Little Engine that Could” Historic Walk Mabel Bragg wrote this story of perseverance in Milford. This walk features some of Milford's most historic structures. Do you “think you can” complete it? From Congress St and Spruce St, head south on Congress, L on Main St, L on Winter St, L on Granite St, L on Pearl, R on Main, R on Spruce (1.5 miles, 30 minutes).

Two Miles Before Breakfast President Harry Truman was known to take a vigorous two-mile walk loop each morning before breakfast. Try the two-mile loop formed by Fountain St, Purchase St, School St, Spruce St and Congress St (2 miles, 40 minutes).

High School Promenade For an easy-to-measure, off-street loop, the high school has a track (4 laps = 1 mile, 20 minutes) and a walking loop (1 lap = .5 mile, 10 minutes).

High School Heights For an hour-long walk, try the large loop that encompasses Milford High School and Brookside Elementary School. From Milford High School, turn L on Fountain St., L on Highland St., L on West St, L on Congress St past Brookside Elementary School, and L on Fountain St to the High School (3 miles, 60 minutes).

Loops Below Main For a shorter walk, start at the Senior Center and follow Central St to Bow St to Main St (.75 miles, 15 minutes); for a longer walk, try the loop formed by Central St, Claflin St, Forest St, South Main St and Main St (1.25 miles, 25 minutes).

Medical Center to Downtown From the medical center, it's only a 15-minute walk to the shops and eateries in Downtown Milford (.75 mile, 15 minutes).

Hospital Rounds Under the weather? Walk it off! Try the triangular loop near the Milford Regional Medical Center formed by Prospect St, Water St and Main St (1.5 miles, 30 minutes) or head towards scenic Hopedale on the Adin Ballou historic walk (adinballou.org).

Upper Charles Trail A scenic, off-road walk from the trailhead on Main St to Louisa Lake Park. The trail also connects with paths to Clark's Island and to athletic facilities on Sumner Street (1 mile, 20 minutes).

Upper Charles Connector This route connects Milford's two trailheads of the Upper Charles Trail by way of the lively East Main Street commercial district (1 mile, 20 minutes).

Parks, Paths and Stones From Main St and Cedar St, head north to Rosenfeld Park, which is connected to Plains Park by a pedestrian path. From there, cross Cedar St and walk along the stone wall into St. Mary's Cemetery where you'll find the only Irish Round Tower in North America and lots of tombstones made of Milford's unique pink granite (.75 miles, 15 minutes).

What to look for

- 1. Louisa Lake** A scenic location along the Upper Charles Trail for walking, running, cycling, non-motor boating, fishing, horseback riding and ice skating.
- 2. Clark's Island Bicentennial Park** Not actually an island, this wooded peninsula connects to the Upper Charles Trail and is a popular location for dog walkers. Milford's popular Independence Day fireworks are launched from the island.
- 3. Upper Charles Trail** - Approximately 6.8 miles long, this multi-use path runs through Milford from the center of town east to Holliston and north to Hopkinton. Planning is underway for the third and final phase, which will connect the trailheads at Main Street and Medway Road.

4. Irish Round Tower Built by Father Patrick Cuddihy in 1895, the 74-foot pink Milford Granite tower in St. Mary's Cemetery was inspired by the lookout towers seen throughout Ireland and meant to be a tribute to Milford's Irish immigrants.

5. Downtown Milford The walkable town center features a variety of locally-owned shops and restaurants

6. Armory Also constructed of Milford granite, the Armory, with its twin towers, is reminiscent of a medieval castle. It is now used by the National Guard and the Milford Youth Center.

7. Memorial Hall Built in 1884 as a living memorial to Civil War veterans, the building was home of the town library for over 100 years, underwent a restoration in 2002, and today is home to the Milford Historical Commission, whose museum is open Thursdays from 1-4 p.m. or by appointment.

8. Draper Park This small, triangular park was donated to the town by Susan Preston Draper, wife of General William F. Draper. The statue of General Draper was crafted by Daniel Chester French, who also created the Lincoln Memorial.

9. Milford Regional Medical Center A full-service, community and regional teaching hospital and adjacent, state-of-the-art Dana Farber Cancer Center. Founded in 1903 as Milford Hospital, the Medical Center serves more than 20 surrounding communities.

WalkBoston & Milford

WalkBoston makes walking safer and easier in Massachusetts to encourage better health, a cleaner environment and vibrant communities. Our education and advocacy programs give voice to citizens to make their communities more walkable. A non-profit organization, WalkBoston has worked in over 65 communities across the Commonwealth. Our maps are created in conjunction with local organizations and people with expert knowledge of the area. To learn more or support us, visit walkboston.org.

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