



# Why walk?

**You can go anywhere on foot.** Many destinations in Franklin are no more than a 10-minute walk apart – 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 activity – 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. An ongoing study of Harvard alumni suggests that each hour of brisk walking can add two hours to your life expectancy.

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.



**MAKING MASSACHUSETTS MORE WALKABLE**

# Safety & 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. After pickup, put them away in a timely manner.

**Clear snow and ice from sidewalks and crosswalks.** A town bylaw requires Franklin business owners to clear snow and ice from sidewalks adjacent to their property within 12 hours after a storm. Maintain traction on your sidewalk by spreading 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 Department of Public Works at 508.553.5500.

# 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 10- and 15-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 Franklin’s commercial areas are within an 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 [geocaching.com](http://geocaching.com) or [letterboxing.org](http://letterboxing.org).



# What to look for

**1 Franklin Town Common** Established in 1787, the Common is one of the oldest parts of Franklin. Originally known as Cow Commons, it was owned by the Congregational Church and sold to the Town of Franklin in 1868. The Common features seven war memorials, and it is surrounded by historic homes and buildings on Main, High, Union and Pleasant Streets.

**2 Red Brick School** This 1833 red brick schoolhouse was once one of the longest operating one-room school houses in the United States and is one of the town’s most treasured buildings.

**3 DelCarte Conservation Area** This open space was donated to the Franklin Conservation Commission by Ernest DelCarte upon his death in 2001 under the condition that it remain undeveloped and open to the public. Formerly known as the Franklin Reservoirs, the area is ideal for a walk in the woods.

**4 Dean College** This private coed college was founded as Dean Academy in 1865 by textile magnate Dr. Oliver Dean on 9 acres of farmland near the center of town. It changed its name to Dean Junior College in 1957 and then Dean College in 1994. Today it offers associate’s degrees in 15 majors and bachelor’s degrees in 5 majors.

**5 Franklin Public Library** Benjamin Franklin donated 116 books to the Town in 1790, and after a disagreement over who should be allowed to use them, town meeting attendees voted to lend the books to all Franklin residents free of charge, thereby establishing the collection as the United States’ first public library. The building itself, formerly known as Ray Memorial Library, was built by Italian craftsmen in 1904 and expanded in 1989.

**6 Benjamin Franklin Monument and Memorial Walkway** This larger than life-sized statue of Franklin’s namesake and walkway, located in front of Franklin Public Library, was dedicated in 2000. The walkway is paved with memorial bricks donated by residents and friends of the community.

**7 American Woolen and H.J. Hayward Mills** These two mills were engines of Franklin’s prosperity in the early 1900s. The American Woolen Mill has since been converted to upscale apartments and the Hayward Mill is home to a variety of businesses.

**8 Franklin Historical Museum** The Greek Revival building, originally Franklin’s town hall and then a senior center, was refurbished and reopened in 2010. Free and open to the public, the museum houses documents, photographs and historical artifacts from Franklin’s industrial past.

**9 Downtown Franklin** The historic town center has a mix of shops and restaurants along Main Street and an MBTA Commuter Rail station.

**10 Franklin Center Commons** This mixed-use, transit-oriented development in the heart of downtown is the first of its kind in Franklin. The development replaced older buildings that had out-lived their usefulness and brought new office, retail and housing options to the center of town.

# Walks in Franklin

Franklin is a great community for walking, with fantastic amenities including Dean College, the DelCarte Conservation Area, Franklin Town Common, and a walkable downtown with a variety of shops and restaurants.

**30 Minutes a Day** The Centers for Disease Control recommends 30 minutes of moderate physical activity each day. Try the triangular loop comprised of W Central St, Beaver St and Union St [1.5 miles, 30 minutes].

**High School to Downtown** This walk takes you from the area near Franklin High, Horace Mann Middle and Oak Street Elementary Schools through the Franklin Town Common historic district and by Dean College to the town’s central business district [1 mile, 20 minutes].

**Heart of Franklin Loop** This walk showcases the best of what central Franklin has to offer, including a lively Main Street, the charming Town Common, Dean College’s picturesque New England campus. From Downtown, head north on Main St, R on Pleasant St, R on Dean Ave back to Main St [1.5 miles, 30 minutes].

**Reach Places Unknown** Benjamin Franklin said, “The man that walks with crowd, will get no farther than the crowd. The man that walks alone, will reach places unknown.” Try this walk and discover places unknown. From Downtown, head southwest on Cottage Street toward Union Street, then L on Union, L on Arlington, R on Wachusett past Parmenter Elementary, L on King, and L on Central [2.5 miles, 50 minutes].

**Easy as [Pizza] Pie** Franklin’s Italian heritage is reflected today by its many pizza offerings. Start downtown where you’ll find at least three pizza shops, and head down Cottage Street to find three more only 15 minutes away on Union Street. Walking aids digestion, helps prevent heartburn, and, according to an Indiana University study, walking after a meal reverses arterial dysfunction caused by high-fat foods.

# About WalkBoston

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](http://walkboston.org).

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