

Stillness in Motion



Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta (MN 10)

"Furthermore, when walking, the monk discerns, 'I am walking.'
When standing, he discerns, 'I am standing.' When sitting, he
discerns, 'I am sitting.' When lying down, he discerns, 'I am lying
down.' Or however his body is disposed, that is how he discerns it.

“In this way he remains focused internally on the body in & of itself, or
externally on the body in & of itself, or both internally & externally on the
body in & of itself. ... And he remains independent, unsustained by [not
clinging to] anything in the world. This is how a monk remains focused on
the body in & of itself.

Walking

Meditation

- Choose a quiet, straight path 10-30 feet, indoors or outdoors
- Walk slowly and mindfully (not too slowly) – eyes lowered, hands relaxed - don't swing arms
- Keep your eyes downcast, focused on the path several steps in front of you
- Focus on the feet – feel each step, or mentally note:
 - “Stepping” “Counting”
 - “Lifting – Placing”
 - “Lifting – Moving – Placing”
- At the end of the path, pause, turn slowly with awareness - choose the same way each time
- Return in the other direction – continue mindful steps

Cankama Sutta (AN 5.29): Walking

These are the five rewards for one who practices walking meditation. Which five?

He can endure traveling by foot; he can endure exertion; he becomes free from disease; whatever he has eaten & drunk, chewed & savored, becomes well-digested; the concentration he wins while doing walking meditation lasts for a long time.

These are the five rewards for one who practices walking meditation.

Walking Meditation

Thanissaro Bhikkhu - transition seated to walking +

“It’s important that you develop this new sense of balance, this sense of being fully inside your body, fully in the breath, even while walking, even while moving, even while negotiating with the surroundings in which you walk, because eventually you want to get to the point where you can maintain that same sense of center in the midst of all your activities — talking, working, eating, whatever — wherever you are. Walking meditation is a means of connecting your sitting meditation with mindfulness throughout daily life. It’s an essential part of the meditation. It teaches you to be still in the midst of movement, to get a stronger sense of the mind as the observer that doesn’t move along with the things it observes.”

Walking Meditation -

Joseph Goldstein

“Remember to use your body as a vehicle for awakening. It can be as simple as being mindful of your posture. Be in your body as you move, as you reach for something as you turn, it’s as simple as that.

Staying present in the body is one reason that walking meditation has been so helpful to my own practice. After doing it over many years, it becomes quite natural to feel the movement of my feet and legs as I walk. That habitual presence with the sensations of walking grounds my awareness in other parts of everyday life. Do not underestimate the power that comes to you from feeling the simple movements of your body throughout the day”

Mindfulness daily life

- We can practice this in our walking and movement throughout the day
- **Walking to your car, through a doorway, or up the stairs:** Let each step be a step into presence.
- **Brushing your teeth:** Feel the contact of the brush, the movement of the hand, the taste of the toothpaste.
- **Making tea or coffee:** Let it become a ritual. Listen to the sound of pouring, feel the warmth of the cup.
- **Reaching for your phone:** Pause. Breathe. Ask yourself—why am I reaching?
- **The sound of your phone notification** → Instead of rushing to check it, pause, feel the breath, and then respond mindfully.
- **Walking through a doorway** → Let each doorway be a threshold into presence. You might pause and silently say, *“Here I am.”*
- **Red lights or stop signs** → Use them to reconnect with the body and the breath rather than resist the pause.
- **Boiling water / waiting for something to finish** → Notice your urge to fill the time. Instead, feel your feet, hands, breath.
- And we can walk outside in nature - Wakeful walk in nature

Walking Meditation

"The miracle is not to walk on water or in thin air, but to walk on Earth. Walk in such a way that you become fully alive and joy and happiness are possible. That is the miracle that everyone can perform"

— *Thích Nhất Hạnh*

Out in Nature

I take my meditation practice outdoors because being in nature organically draws forth awareness, curiosity, and an intimate connection with life. Have you ever noticed how you become naturally more present as you step outside? In being outdoors with awareness, nature begins to reveal your own nature. They are not different. The more one understands awareness, which is our own nature, the deeper one can abide in it—in nature and anywhere.

— Mark Coleman

“Nature teaches us simplicity and contentment, because in its presence we realize we need very little to be happy.”

— Mark Coleman

Walking Meditation Poem

I take refuge in Mother Earth.
Every breath, every step
manifests our love.
Every breath brings happiness.
Every step brings happiness.
I see the whole cosmos in the earth.

- Thich Nhat Hahn

Inner Freedom

Thích Nhất Hạnh recounts the story of Sister Tri Hai, a peace activist and nun who was imprisoned for her advocacy. Despite the confines of her cell, she found freedom through mindfulness

"Sister Tri Hai also practiced walking meditation in her prison cell. It was very small—after seven steps she had to turn around and come back. Sitting and walking mindfully gave her space inside. She taught other prisoners in her cell how to sit and how to breathe so they would suffer less. They were in a cold cell, but through their walking meditation, they were grounded in the solid beauty of the earth.

— *Thích Nhất Hạnh*

The Science of Walking for Well-Being

Brain & Mood

- **Lowers cortisol** and reduces **amygdala activity** (stress center)
- **Boosts serotonin & dopamine** (mood-enhancing neurotransmitters)
- Enhances **memory, learning & creativity**
- Improves **executive function** (focus, planning, problem-solving)

Sources:

- [Stanford: Nature Walks & Amygdala Activity](#)
- [The Best Brain Possible – Neurotransmitters & Walking](#)
- [Psychology Today – Executive Function & Creativity](#)
- [Cymbiotika – Cognitive Benefits](#)

The Science of Walking for Well-Being

Cognitive Health

- Increases **brain volume** in memory regions
- Strengthens **neural pathways & connectivity**
- May **reduce risk of cognitive decline**

Sources:

- [WebMD – Brain Benefits](#)
- [Cymbiotika – Neuroplasticity & Brain Health](#)

The Science of Walking for Well-Being

Emotional Balance & Sleep

- Reduces **rumination** and promotes emotional regulation
- Supports **deeper, more restful sleep**

Sources:

- [The Best Brain Possible – Walking & Rumination](#)
- [WebMD – Sleep & Walking](#)