

A FREE MCKENZIE GUIDE

THE COMPLETE TREADMILL WORKOUT GUIDE

Personalized routines built around your body weight, your energy level, and the time of day you train — backed by real exercise science, not guesswork.

MET-BASED CALORIE DATA

4-WEEK PLAN

BEGINNER SAFE



FOLDABLE TREADMILLS
BUILT FOR REAL LIFE

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BEFORE YOU START

This guide is designed for general healthy adults. If you're pregnant, managing a cardiovascular or joint condition, or new to exercise after a long break, check with a doctor before starting any new training program.

01 HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

Most treadmill guides give you one plan and hope it fits. It won't — because calorie burn, recovery needs, and performance capacity are different for every body and every time of day. This guide is built around three variables that actually change your results:

01

BODY WEIGHT

02

ENERGY LEVEL

03

TIME OF DAY

BODY WEIGHT

The same treadmill session burns different calories for different people — a heavier body simply does more mechanical work to move the same distance. Section 05 gives you real, MET-based numbers across three weight bands instead of a generic average.

ENERGY LEVEL

Some days you're recovering, distracted, or just short on time. Other days you're ready to push. Section 06 gives you a low-energy walking protocol and a high-energy interval protocol, so you always have a session that matches how you actually feel — instead of skipping the workout entirely.

TIME OF DAY

Your body temperature, hormone levels, and joint stiffness genuinely shift over the course of a day, and that changes what kind of session works best. Section 07 breaks down what the research says about morning versus evening training, and how to adjust accordingly.

HOW THE SECTIONS CONNECT

Start with Section 02–03 if you're new to treadmills. Then use Sections 05–07 to pick the right session for today. Section 08 ties it all together into a structured 4-week plan so your training has direction, not just a list of options.

02 TREADMILL SAFETY & SETUP BASICS

If this is your first treadmill, these fundamentals matter more than the workout itself. Get these right and everything else in this guide works better.

1 WARM UP FOR 5 MINUTES

Start every session at a slow walk (around 3 km/h) with 0% incline. This raises muscle temperature and prepares your joints and connective tissue before any faster pace or incline work — a step that's often skipped and is the single easiest way to reduce injury risk.

2 STRADDLE THE BELT BEFORE STARTING

Stand on the side rails, start the belt moving, then step onto the center of the belt once it's up to speed. Never step onto a stationary deck expecting to "catch up" — start slow and build up.

3 USE INCLINE DELIBERATELY, NOT BY ACCIDENT

Incline increases intensity fast — a 5–10% grade can roughly double the calorie cost of the same walking pace. Add incline in small increments (2–3% at a time) and only once your pace feels controlled.

4 KEEP YOUR HANDS FREE

Gripping the front rail or side handles reduces how many calories you actually burn (your arms are doing some of the work the belt should be doing) and encourages a hunched posture. Use the rails only to steady yourself when getting on or off.

5 COOL DOWN FOR 3–5 MINUTES

Drop back to a slow walk and 0% incline for the last few minutes of every session. This lets your heart rate come down gradually instead of stopping abruptly, which helps blood return from your legs to your core.

FOLDING, STORING & EVERYDAY USE

Before folding: always bring the belt to a complete stop and switch off at the console before engaging the fold mechanism. Never fold a moving treadmill.

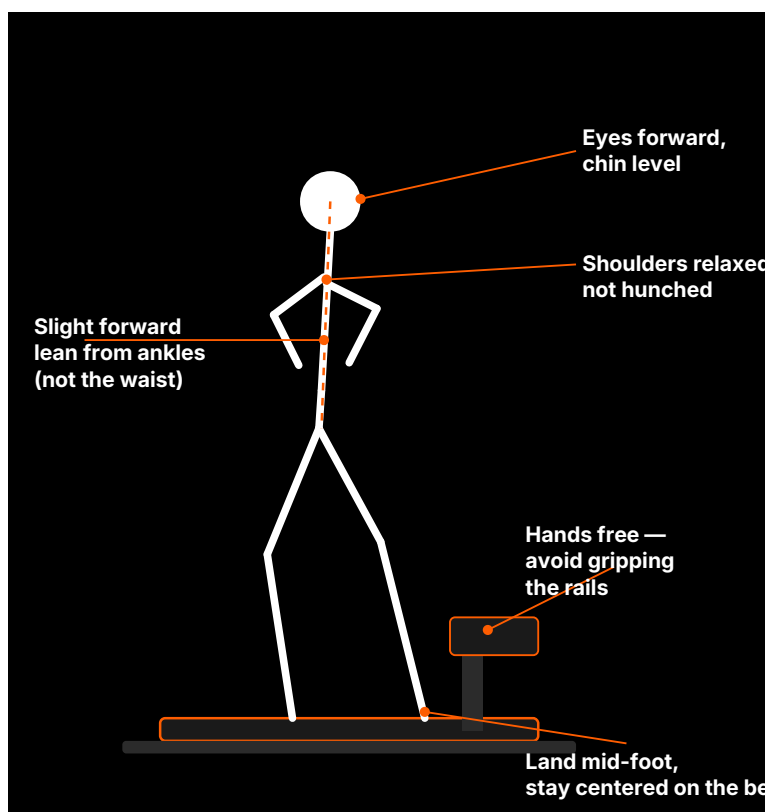
Placement: position on a flat, level surface with clearance behind and to the sides. Avoid thick carpet that can affect belt tension over time.

QUICK BEGINNER MISTAKES TO AVOID

- × Starting at full pace instead of warming up gradually
- × Looking down at your feet instead of ahead (throws off posture and balance)
- × Increasing incline and speed at the same time on your first sessions
- × Stopping abruptly instead of cooling down

03 GETTING YOUR POSTURE RIGHT

Good treadmill form isn't about looking a certain way — it's about protecting your joints and making sure the calorie numbers in this guide actually apply to you. Poor posture changes your effective effort level.



DO

- ✓ Keep your gaze forward, not down at your feet or the console
- ✓ Let your arms swing naturally at roughly a 90° bend
- ✓ Land mid-foot, not heavily on your heel
- ✓ Keep a slight forward lean from the ankles on inclines
- ✓ Stay centered on the belt, front to back

DON'T

- ✗ Grip the front or side handrails while walking or running
- ✗ Lean forward from the waist, especially on incline
- ✗ Overstride — reaching your foot too far in front of you
- ✗ Look down at your feet for long stretches
- ✗ Hunch your shoulders toward your ears

PRODUCT / LIFESTYLE PHOTO PLACEHOLDER — DROP IN YOUR OWN MCKENZIE TREADMILL POSTURE SHOT HERE

04 THE SCIENCE BEHIND YOUR CALORIE NUMBERS

Every calorie figure in this guide is calculated the same way exercise scientists do it — using MET values, not a rough guess or a generic "500 calories an hour" claim.

WHAT IS A MET?

MET stands for Metabolic Equivalent of Task. One MET represents the energy your body uses at rest. An activity rated at 5 METs burns roughly five times more energy than sitting still. Every walking and running speed on a treadmill has a standardized MET value, published in the **Compendium of Physical Activities** — a reference database of energy costs for hundreds of activities, originally developed by Ainsworth et al. (2011) and maintained through subsequent updates.

THE FORMULA WE USED

CALORIES BURNED = MET × BODY WEIGHT (KG) × TIME (HOURS)

This is the standard formula used in exercise physiology research and by certified fitness professionals. It's the same underlying method behind most heart-rate-free calorie estimates on treadmill consoles and fitness trackers.

For example: brisk walking at 5.6 km/h has a MET value of 3.8. For someone weighing 75 kg walking for 30 minutes (0.5 hours):

$$3.8 \text{ MET} \times 75 \text{ kg} \times 0.5 \text{ hours} = \mathbf{142.5 \text{ kcal}}$$

WHY YOUR ACTUAL NUMBER MAY DIFFER SLIGHTLY

MET-based estimates are population averages, not lab measurements of you specifically. Individual factors — fitness level, muscle mass, stride efficiency, and even ambient temperature — can shift real-world energy expenditure by roughly 10–20% in either direction. Treat every number in this guide as a well-founded estimate for planning and progress tracking, not a precise clinical figure.

SOURCES USED IN THIS GUIDE

Ainsworth BE, Haskell WL, Herrmann SD, et al. (2011). Compendium of Physical Activities: a second update of codes and MET values. *Medicine & Science in Sports & Exercise*. Full source list on the final page.

05 WORKOUTS BY BODY WEIGHT

Find your weight band, then pick a session based on the time and intensity you're looking for. Figures below are for a 30-minute session at each pace and incline.

WORKOUT	PACE & INCLINE	UNDER 65 KG (143 lb)	65–85 KG (143–187 lb)	OVER 85 KG (187+ lb)
Recovery Walk LOW ENERGY	3.2 km/h · 0% incline 2.8 MET	84 kcal	105 kcal	133 kcal
Steady Walk LOW-MID ENERGY	4.8 km/h · 0% incline 3.3 MET	99 kcal	124 kcal	157 kcal
Brisk Walk MID ENERGY	5.6 km/h · 0% incline 3.8 MET	114 kcal	142 kcal	180 kcal
Incline Power Walk MID-HIGH ENERGY	5.6 km/h · 8% incline 6.3 MET	189 kcal	236 kcal	299 kcal
Jog HIGH ENERGY	8.0 km/h · 0% incline 8.3 MET	249 kcal	311 kcal	394 kcal
Run Intervals HIGH ENERGY	9.7 km/h peak · 0% incline 9.8 MET	294 kcal	368 kcal	466 kcal

Calculated using $\text{Calories} = \text{MET} \times \text{weight (kg)} \times \text{time (hours)}$, based on Compendium of Physical Activities MET values (Ainsworth et al., 2011). Representative weights of 60 / 75 / 95 kg used per band. Individual results vary $\pm 10\text{--}20\%$.

READING THIS TABLE

Want a 45-minute session instead of 30? Multiply the figure by 1.5. For 20 minutes, multiply by roughly 0.67. The relationship between calories and time is linear at a constant pace.

06 WORKOUTS BY ENERGY LEVEL

Training consistently matters more than training hard every time. Match the session to how you actually feel today.

LOW-ENERGY DAY — RECOVERY WALK PROTOCOL

For days when you're tired, sore, short on time, or simply not feeling it. This keeps the habit alive without adding fatigue.

PHASE	DURATION	DETAILS
Warm-up	3 min	2.5–3.0 km/h, 0% incline
Main set	20–25 min	3.2 km/h steady, 0% incline — conversational pace throughout
Cool-down	2 min	2.0 km/h, easing heart rate down

~2.8 MET throughout. See Section 05 for calorie figures by body weight.

HIGH-ENERGY DAY — INTERVAL PROTOCOL

For days you feel strong and want to push intensity. Intervals let you accumulate more total work in less time than steady-state training.

PHASE	DURATION	DETAILS
Warm-up	5 min	4.0 km/h building to 6.0 km/h, 0% incline
Work interval	60 sec × 8	8.0–9.7 km/h, 0% incline — hard effort
Recovery interval	90 sec × 8	4.5 km/h between each work interval
Cool-down	5 min	3.0 km/h, easing back down

Work intervals ~8.3–9.8 MET; recovery intervals ~3.5 MET. Total session ~35 minutes.

NOT SURE WHICH ONE TO PICK?

As a simple gut check: if you'd rather skip the workout entirely than do something intense, that's a recovery-walk day. If you're mentally ready to push and just need direction, go with intervals.

07 WORKOUTS BY TIME OF DAY

Your body isn't in the same state at 7am as it is at 6pm. Core body temperature, hormone levels, and joint stiffness all follow a daily rhythm — and research shows this genuinely affects performance, not just perception.

MORNING

What's happening physiologically: core body temperature is at or near its daily low point, muscles and connective tissue are stiffer, and reaction speed is typically slower than later in the day. On the upside, insulin sensitivity tends to be higher in the morning, which can support more efficient use of available fuel.

What this means for your session: extend your warm-up to a full 6–8 minutes rather than 5, keep intensity slightly more conservative for the first 10 minutes, and favor steady pace over maximal-effort intervals if you're training first thing after waking.

BEST FIT

Steady Walk or Brisk Walk sessions (Section 05), with a longer warm-up

EVENING

What's happening physiologically: core body temperature typically peaks in the late afternoon to early evening, which is associated with better muscle function and faster neuromuscular response. Several studies report peak strength and power output in this window.

What this means for your session: this is generally the window where your body is best prepared for higher-intensity work, including interval training. A shorter warm-up (5 minutes) is usually sufficient since your baseline temperature is already elevated.

BEST FIT

Incline Power Walk or Interval Protocol (Section 06)

ONE CAVEAT WORTH KNOWING

These are population-level patterns, not universal rules. Your own "chronotype" (natural morning or evening preference) and sleep schedule also shape how you respond to training at a given time. The best time to train consistently is still the time you'll actually show up for.

Based on findings summarized in circadian exercise physiology research, including Reilly (1990, Ergonomics) and subsequent narrative reviews on circadian rhythm and sports performance. Full references on the final page.

08 YOUR 4-WEEK PROGRESSION PLAN

A simple structure that ties together everything in this guide. Swap any session for its equivalent from Sections 05–07 based on your weight band, energy, and time of day — the plan below just tells you what type of session goes where.

WEEK 1						FOUNDATION
MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN
Steady Walk 25 min	Rest	Recovery Walk 20 min	Rest	Steady Walk 25 min	Recovery Walk 20 min	Rest

WEEK 2						BUILD
MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN
Brisk Walk 30 min	Rest	Incline Power Walk 20 min	Rest	Brisk Walk 30 min	Recovery Walk 25 min	Rest

WEEK 3						INTENSITY
MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN
Interval Protocol 35 min	Rest	Incline Power Walk 25 min	Rest	Brisk Walk 30 min	Recovery Walk 25 min	Rest

WEEK 4						CONSOLIDATE
MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN
Interval Protocol 35 min	Rest	Incline Power Walk 30 min	Rest	Jog 25 min	Recovery Walk 25 min	Rest

PROGRESSION PRINCIPLE

Each week nudges either duration or intensity up slightly — never both at once by a large margin. If a session in Week 3 or 4 feels excessive, repeat the previous week rather than pushing through. Consistency across four weeks beats intensity in any single session.

09 REFERENCES & FINAL NOTES

SOURCES

Ainsworth BE, Haskell WL, Herrmann SD, Meckes N, Bassett DR Jr, Tudor-Locke C, Greer JL, Vezina J, Whitt-Glover MC, Leon AS. (2011). Compendium of Physical Activities: a second update of codes and MET values. *Medicine & Science in Sports & Exercise*, 43(8), 1575–1581.

Reilly T. (1990). Human circadian rhythms and exercise. *Critical Reviews in Biomedical Engineering*, 18(3), 165–180.

Additional circadian rhythm and exercise performance findings referenced from peer-reviewed narrative reviews on time-of-day effects on core body temperature, hormonal regulation, and athletic performance (2023–2025).

A NOTE ON INDIVIDUAL RESULTS

This guide provides evidence-based estimates and general training structure — it is not personalized medical or clinical advice. Calorie figures are estimates derived from population-level MET data and will vary based on individual fitness level, body composition, and effort. If you have a pre-existing health condition, are pregnant, or are returning to exercise after a significant break, consult a physician before starting this or any new training program.



BUILT FOR REAL LIFE. BUILT TO LAST.

Thank you for downloading the Mckenzie Treadmill Workout Guide.
However you choose to use it — consistently is what matters most.