



Walking With Weights

How to
Achieve
Total-Body
Fitness
Walking
With
Weights



\$4.95 USA

Rob Underhill



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Total-Body Fitness
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Before beginning this or any other exercise program, consult your physician to be sure it is appropriate for you.

The information in this book reflects the author's experience and is not intended to replace medical or professional advice. You should address any questions regarding your individual health, general or specific, with your physician and personal trainer. You, your physician, and your personal trainer should determine the frequency and intensity at which you perform the exercise program in this book. The author will not be responsible for any adverse effects resulting from the use of the information contained in this book.

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Introduction

"A wise man should consider that health is the greatest of human blessings." –Hippocrates

Walking is the most popular form of exercise today. The National Sporting Goods Association estimates that more than 70 million people currently participate in a fitness walking program. Walking improves cardiovascular health, tones muscles, and helps to manage weight. However, walking primarily benefits the heart and the lower body. Jogging provides similar benefits to walking, but jogging can cause undue wear and tear on certain parts of the body, particularly the legs, knees, and back.

To get an upper-body workout, one must supplement a fitness walking program with a weight training program. An alternative is to carry small hand-held weights while walking – this adds intensity and helps to strengthen and tone the upper body, providing both aerobic and anaerobic benefits. Aerobic exercise (walking) raises the heart rate and burns fat while anaerobic exercise (using weights for resistance) strengthens bone and builds and tones muscles. The simple instructions and recommendations in this book will provide you with the techniques necessary to carry hand-held weights safely while you walk.

If you want to lose weight, reduce the risk of heart disease, reduce stress, increase your energy level, tone muscles, strengthen bones, and feel an improved overall sense of well-being, then walking with weights can benefit you. Making a commitment to improve and/or maintain your total health and fitness level is one of the most important decisions you will ever make.

Chapter 1

Precautions

- **Warning:** Walking with weights may not be appropriate for everyone.
- *Always* consult your physician before beginning this or any exercise program.
- Walking with weights can be **too** intense for you if you:
 - have high blood pressure or a history of heart problems
 - are over age 65 and do not currently exercise
 - experience chest pain upon exertion
 - feel faint or experience dizzy spells
 - have back problems
- The old adage “no pain, no gain” does not apply to walking with weights. **If you feel pain – refrain.** If you experience shortness of breath, feel fatigue, or experience pain, especially in your lower back, joints, legs, or arms, you can modify your workout by:
 - carrying less weight
 - walking at a slower pace
 - walking a shorter distance
 - eliminating some or all of the upper-body exercises presented in Chapter 4
 - discontinuing the use of weights altogether

- Elevated blood pressure is a possible concern when using any type of hand weights. However, research has shown that carrying *small* hand-held weights is safe and effective for people in good physical condition as long as common sense and proper techniques are used.
- If you experience chest pain or pressure or tightness in the chest or left arm or neck, discontinue walking with weights immediately and seek medical attention.
- Carrying weights that are too heavy can cause tendon and/or joint damage.
- Gripping the weights too tightly can create tension in the arms, shoulders, neck, and back.
- Exaggerating the arm movements can cause damage to joints and/or muscles.
- Be easy on yourself by setting achievable goals. If you overdo it when you begin an exercise program, you are likely to incur injuries, experience burnout, and not stick with your program.
- Exercise should make you feel better. If you feel fatigued after your workouts, you might be overdoing it and need to cut back on your workout.
- Always listen to your body *and* your physician.

Chapter 2

Weights

Weights worn on the legs or ankles can lead to injuries or falls. Weight vests or weights worn around the waist can be cumbersome. Wrist weights can be awkward and uncomfortable. Weights held in the hands yield the maximum benefit for the arms and upper body. Small dumbbell-shaped weights are acceptable, but they were not specifically designed for walking; however, because they are inexpensive, they can be used initially to help establish the optimum amount of weight to carry.

Small, vinyl-coated *annealed* lead weights called WalkingWeights have been specifically designed for walking. (See Figure 2-1.) Their size and shape allow them to fit comfortably and inconspicuously in the hands. They are available in 1-, 1½-, 2-, 2½-, and 3-pound pairs. The 1½- and 2½-pound weights are offered to provide the best possible match of weight to the individual. (Refer to the order form at the back of this book to order WalkingWeights.)

Variables such as age, gender, current physical condition, and exercise goals should be considered when determining the amount of weight to carry. When you first start walking with weights, experiment by carrying varying amounts of weight. You should probably start walking with 1-pound weights and gradually increase the weight until you reach the amount that is best for you.



Figure 2-1. Two-pound WalkingWeights

If you are out of shape, you may quickly notice an increase in muscle tone using even 1-pound weights. If you are already toned and want to build more muscle, you can increase the amount of weight in $\frac{1}{2}$ -pound increments until you reach the desired muscle size and then decrease the weight by a $\frac{1}{2}$ -pound for maintenance. Your needs will change over time as well, so adjustments will be necessary. The most popular weight for men is 2 pounds in each hand; the most popular weight for women is 1 pound in each hand.

Chapter 3

Walking With Weights

When the word "walk" is used in this book, it refers to a unique type of power walk in which the walker carries small hand-held weights. Power walking has a faster pace than normal walking, which results in a more intense cardiovascular workout. It is important to find the appropriate walking pace – one that challenges but does not compromise your cardiovascular system. The average speed is probably between 3 and 5 miles per hour.

When walking with weights, keep your weighted hands close to your chest, making short strokes as if trying to punch yourself in the chin. (See Figure 3-1.) Keep your arms relaxed, but tighten your stomach and chest muscles while walking. Keep your head and neck straight and aligned with your spine, pretending that there is an invisible wire or string from the base of your spine to your head pulling you up. Walk with your feet parallel to each other and focus your gaze straight ahead. The heel of your forward foot should strike the ground first. Propel your body forward by pushing off with the toes of your rear foot. Take care not to overstride as you could tire quickly, get leg cramps, or put undue stress on your hips. To ensure that you are not developing bad habits when first walking with weights, check your walking habits and posture frequently.



Inhale and exhale through your nose.



Figure 3-1. Walking with weights



When you first begin walking with weights, your arms may tire or begin to ache. If this happens, drop your arms to your sides, keeping your elbows slightly bent. (See Figure 3-2.) Continue to walk with your arms lowered until the fatigue or aching stops. If you experience muscle fatigue or aching frequently, you could be carrying too much weight. In this case, you should reduce the weight carried in each hand by a 1/2-pound and monitor the results.

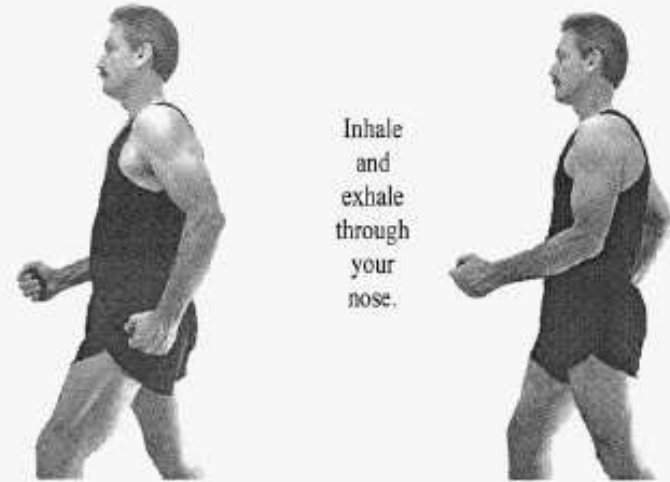


Figure 3-2. Relaxing the arms

Breathing

Breathe deeply through your nose using your diaphragm, the muscle between your chest and your abdomen. Expand your belly or abdominal muscles as you inhale and contract them as you exhale. This forces the diaphragm to expand into the abdominal area, resulting in deeper breathing. Deeper breathing results in more oxygen absorption and carbon dioxide expulsion. Shallower "chest breathing" pushes the abdominal muscles into the chest, resulting in less oxygen absorption. Shallow breathing can also cause muscle tension in the upper body, particularly the shoulders.

The Four Upper-Body Exercises

This chapter describes four upper-body exercises that can be performed using hand-held weights while walking at a power walk pace. Performing the exercises while carrying weights strengthens and tones the major muscle groups in the upper body. It takes approximately *four to five* steps to complete an exercise. Keep your arms relaxed, but tighten your stomach and chest muscles while performing the exercises.

Exercise 1: Curls

- Tighten your stomach and chest muscles.
- Drop your arms to your sides with your palms facing forward; keep your elbows locked against your sides. (See Figure 4-1.)
- Inhale through your nose while lifting your arms up toward your chest, bending them at the elbow and flexing your biceps. (See Figure 4-2.)
- Exhale through your mouth while counting and lowering your arms. Hold muscle tension while lowering your arms.



Inhale through your nose while lifting your arms.



Figure 4-1.



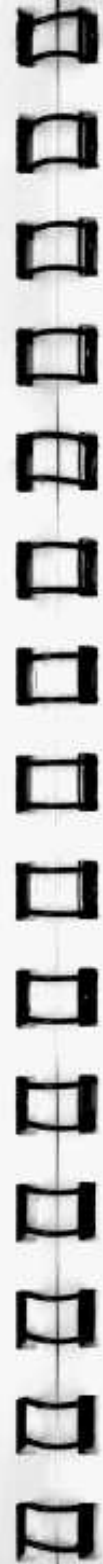
Exhale through your mouth while lowering your arms.



Figure 4-2.

Exercise 2: French Press

- Tighten your stomach and chest muscles.
- Bring your hands up and behind your head until they touch your shoulders. (See Figure 4-3.)
- Inhale through your nose while lifting your arms straight above your head. Keep your elbows close to the side of your head. (See Figure 4-4.)
- Exhale through your mouth while counting and lowering your arms until they touch your shoulders. Hold muscle tension while lowering your arms.



Inhale through your nose while lifting your arms.

Figure 4-3.



Exhale through your mouth while lowering your arms.

Figure 4-4.

Exercise 3: Shoulder Shrug

- Tighten your stomach and chest muscles.
- Drop your arms to your sides with your palms facing inward toward your sides.
- Inhale through your nose while lifting your hands slightly in front of you and bringing them up and in toward your sides. (See Figure 4-5.)
- Exhale through your mouth while counting and lowering your hands behind you. (See Figure 4-6.) Hold muscle tension while lowering your arms.



Inhale through your nose while lifting your arms.



Figure 4-5.



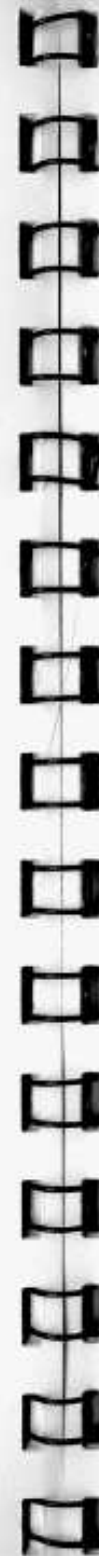
Exhale through your mouth while lowering your arms.



Figure 4-6.

Exercise 4: Butterfly

- Tighten your stomach and chest muscles.
- Raise your arms in front of you until your elbows are at shoulder level and shoulder-width apart. Your forearms should be perpendicular to your upper arms.
- Inhale through your nose while holding your arms up and moving them back toward your sides. Do not force your arms too far back during this exercise, as doing so could irritate your shoulders. (See Figure 4-7.)
- Exhale through your mouth while counting and bring your arms back in front of you until they are shoulder-width apart, holding muscle tension. Do not force your arms together in front of you during this exercise, as doing so could irritate your shoulders. (See Figure 4-8.)



Inhale through your nose while bringing your arms back.



Figure 4-7.



Exhale through your mouth while bringing your arms forward.



Figure 4-8.

Precautions:

- Your head could tend to lean forward while performing the upper-body exercises, particularly the French Press. Keep your head and neck aligned with your spine at all times while performing the exercises.
- Do not jerk or snap your arms while performing the upper-body exercises. These exercises should be performed smoothly while walking. Concentrate on both directions in which your arms are moving during the exercises, and maintain resistant muscle tension.
- Your breathing should be timed with your arm movements and be fairly rapid. If you become faint or light-headed, you could be breathing too quickly. Decrease your pace if this occurs.
- Do not grip the weights too tightly.
- All the exercises have the potential to cause injury and/or pain. The French Press is usually the hardest exercise to perform and can cause lower back and/or elbow pain, especially if performed incorrectly. Discontinue any exercise that causes you pain.

Chapter 5

The Walking Workout

This chapter describes a fitness walking program called the Walking Workout. You may wish to develop your own walking program utilizing the walking and breathing techniques described in previous chapters. You could simply walk a predetermined distance or length of time, lowering your arms only when they become tired. You may also wish to incorporate some of the upper-body exercises.

The Walking Workout consists of walking with weights, breathing, counting, and performing the four upper-body exercises. It covers approximately 3 miles and takes about 35 to 45 minutes to complete. Listening to a radio or tape is not recommended as doing so can diminish the concentration that is necessary for counting the steps and repetitions of the exercises.

The Walking Workout is presented as if you were walking outdoors using a 1½-mile-out/1½-mile-back route. The workout is composed of *four* sets of the *four* upper-body exercises. (See Figure 5-1.) Two sets of exercises cover approximately 1½ miles. Using an odometer, establish a route that is 1½ miles from your starting point. The odometer is used as an initial gauge of distance, but the number of sets of exercises is what actually determines the distance walked, i.e., two sets out and two sets back. You will begin by walking **200** steps and then performing **30** repetitions of the first exercise; this is repeated for each of the four upper-body exercises. A "set" of exercises is complete once you have performed 30 repetitions of each of the four upper-body exercises with 200 steps walked between each exercise.



Figure 5-1. Overview of the Walking Workout

To perform the Walking Workout:

- Begin by gently stretching for a few minutes.
- Start walking at a moderate pace. Keep your arms relaxed, but tighten your stomach and chest muscles. Count the steps silently to **100** twice (**200** steps). Build up to your optimum pace gradually.
- Perform the first upper-body exercise, the Curl. Inhale through your nose while lifting your arms, and exhale through your mouth while lowering them. Count silently when exhaling, and perform **30** repetitions.
- Walk **200** more steps, counting silently to **100** twice.
- Perform the second upper-body exercise, the French Press. Inhale through your nose while lifting your arms, and exhale through your mouth while lowering them. Count silently when exhaling, and perform **30** repetitions.
- Walk **200** more steps, counting silently to **100** twice.
- Perform the third upper-body exercise, the Shoulder Shrug. Inhale through your nose while lifting your arms, and exhale through your mouth while lowering them. Count silently when exhaling, and perform **30** repetitions.
- Walk **200** more steps, counting silently to **100** twice.
- Perform the fourth upper-body exercise, the Butterfly. Inhale through your nose while moving your arms back, and exhale through your mouth while bringing your arms forward. Count silently when exhaling, and perform **30** repetitions.

At this point, you will have completed the first set of exercises. Begin the second set of exercises by walking **200** steps. Continue walking away from your starting point until you have completed the second set of exercises. You should now be approximately $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles from your starting point. Turn around, head back, and begin the third set of exercises by walking **200** steps. Complete the third and fourth set of exercises. When you complete the **30** Butterfly repetitions of the fourth set, you should be back at your starting point.

Performing this program four to six times a week will provide you with a comprehensive and efficient workout. You can vary the intensity of this workout by either eliminating or adding sets of exercises, reducing or increasing the number of repetitions of each exercise, or by varying the amount of weight carried.

Where to Walk

The healthiest environment to exercise in is the outdoors, but it is not always the safest. Sidewalks, shopping malls, walking paths, and indoor or outdoor tracks are usually safe places to walk. Walking on a road can be dangerous. If you choose to walk on a road, follow local laws, be on constant alert for traffic, and never assume that the driver of a vehicle sees you. Pay attention to the surface where you walk. Avoid walking on banked surfaces, as doing so could result in foot, ankle, knee, hip, or back problems. Avoid walking in polluted environments, especially if you have a respiratory condition. Use common sense, be careful, obey all traffic laws, and always carry identification.

Outdoor Tracks

Outdoor tracks are excellent places to walk because they are usually safe. There are no vehicles to contend with, and there are usually other people around to enhance safety. Outdoor tracks are usually $\frac{1}{4}$ -mile long. Twelve laps are the equivalent of 3 miles.

Indoor Tracks

Indoor tracks vary in length, but the most common lengths are $\frac{1}{12}$ - or $\frac{1}{14}$ -mile long. It will take 36 laps to complete 3 miles on the $\frac{1}{12}$ -mile track and 42 laps to complete 3 miles on the $\frac{1}{14}$ -mile track.

Treadmills

Walking with weights on a treadmill is *not* recommended for most people. **Walk on a treadmill at your own risk.** Serious injuries could occur if you lost your balance and could not catch yourself because you were holding weights in your hands.

Weather Considerations

Cold Weather

Proper layering of clothing is the key to walking comfortably in cold weather. You may be cold when starting out on a chilly day, but you will warm up quickly as your body heat accumulates under your clothing. Excess heat can be vented by unzipping or removing articles of clothing.

A hooded, zip-up sweatshirt is a desirable accessory to a walker's wardrobe. When you become overheated, you can remove the hood, unzip the sweatshirt, pull up the sleeves, or remove it completely. Other useful articles of clothing for walking in cold weather are gloves (a thin pair for above-freezing days and an insulated pair for below-freezing days), thermal long underwear, and sweat pants.

Protecting your face from extreme cold and wind without overheating your head can be a challenge. A ski mask works great when starting out, but your head usually becomes overheated. Your head can become so warm that you have to remove the mask and expose your face to the extreme cold again. Sporting goods stores carry ski masks with open tops that protect the face from the elements while allowing excess body heat to escape through the top of the head. You can make an open-top ski mask at home by cutting the top out of a regular ski mask. (See Figure 7-1.)



Figure 7-1. *Open-Top Ski Mask*

Hot Weather

When walking outdoors in hot weather, wear light-colored and lightweight clothing and walk during the early morning hours if possible. Drink plenty of water to replace the liquids you lose when you perspire. If you live in an area that is very humid, use caution and pay attention to the heat index, which is a measure of the actual temperature with the humidity component taken into consideration. Humidity acts like a blanket and makes the air feel warmer.

Precaution:

Walking in hot weather can lead to heat exhaustion or heatstroke. Signs of heat exhaustion include excess sweating, clammy or pale skin, rapid pulse and breathing rates, weakness, dizziness, nausea, and vomiting. Cool your body immediately if any of these symptoms occur. Get out of the heat, drink cool water, and apply cold towels or ice packs to your groin, underarm, and neck areas. Lie down with your feet elevated slightly above your head.

If the symptoms of heat exhaustion go unchecked, heatstroke can occur. At this point, sweating will stop and the body temperature will increase. The skin will become hot and flushed. The blood pressure will drop, blood flow to the internal organs will cease, and the body will go into shock. Heatstroke is a life-threatening medical emergency, so medical attention should be sought immediately. Cool your body as soon as possible by submersing it in a tub of cool water.

Tips for Getting Started

Shoes and Socks

Shoes are the most important piece of a walker's equipment. Proper fit is critical for comfort and prevention of foot problems. Buy shoes that are large enough, as your feet will spread upon impact when walking and can expand a half a size in warm weather. Purchase your shoes in the afternoon or evening when your feet are at their largest. Always take your walking socks with you when trying on shoes. Shoes should be lightweight, heavily cushioned, and flexible. Good-quality shoes should last between 500 and 1,000 miles or about six months to one year. They should have removable insoles that provide additional cushion. Insoles should be replaced when they start to deteriorate. If you have chronic leg or foot problems, seek medical advice, as you may require special shoes.

Wear thick, cushioned socks in both summer and winter. They will provide additional shock absorption, absorb foot perspiration in the summer, and provide warmth in the winter. Cotton socks can hold moisture in and cause skin irritation and blisters. Synthetic socks are better at absorbing perspiration and keeping your feet dry.

Warming Up and Cooling Down

Any exercise program should consist of a warm-up period, a target heart-rate period, and a cool-down period. A warm-up period is essential to prepare your body for the demands of the upcoming workout by preventing

muscle or cardiovascular strain. You can easily warm up by starting at a slower pace and gradually increasing your speed; this will prepare your leg joints and muscles as well as your heart.

Your workout should also contain a cool-down period that helps to transition your body back to a resting state. Plan your workout so that you spend the last five minutes slowing your pace down. This will allow your muscles to cool down and your heart to adjust back to a pre-workout level.

Stretching should be a part of any exercise program, as it helps to increase the range of motion in your joints and muscles. Stretching should be performed slowly. If you are interested in increasing and maintaining flexibility, consider taking a hatha yoga class.

Intensity

To gain the benefits of any aerobic exercise, you should exercise within your target heart-rate zone in which your heart beats at roughly 60 to 85 percent of its maximum capacity. Your maximum heart rate can be calculated by subtracting your age from 220. If you exercise below your target zone, you will experience minimal health and fitness benefits. If you exercise above your target zone, you could put your heart at risk of heart attack or heart-rate abnormalities. To determine if you are walking hard enough and fast enough, take your pulse after exercising for 10 minutes, count the beats for 10 seconds, and then consult the table below.

Age	Target Zone (beats/minute) ¹	Beats per 10 seconds
Up to 20 years	130-160	22-27
21-30 years	123-152	21-25
31-40 years	117-144	20-24
41-50 years	110-136	18-23
51-60 years	104-128	17-21
61 and over	Consult your physician	Consult your physician

If you are just starting out or have not been exercising on a regular basis, start at the lower end of your target zone by walking at a slower pace. Increase your level of intensity by gradually stepping up your pace. Exercise for at least 20 to 30 minutes in your target zone for maximum muscle tone, fat burning, and cardiovascular conditioning.

Consistency and Frequency

Consistency is the key to the success of any workout program, but you can risk burnout if you walk every day. Try different schedules until you find one that works for you. Possible schedules are:

- Walk every other day – with this schedule, you will walk on a different day of the week every week. This schedule is less monotonous and provides a day of rest after each day of working out.
- Walk Saturday, Sunday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday; take Monday and Friday off.
- Walk Monday through Friday and take the weekends off.
- Walk six days per week – this strenuous schedule is for the advanced fitness walker.

Maximum benefits are achieved by walking in the morning between 6 a.m. and 10 a.m. The next best time of day to exercise is after 6 p.m. Exercising too close to bedtime can adversely affect sleep patterns and is not recommended.

Diet and Nutrition

Proper diet and nutrition are necessary for the success of any exercise program. Keep your diet simple – eat whole, natural (unprocessed) foods, eliminate animal products, cut down on unhealthy fats and sugars, and limit portions. Eat five servings of fruits and/or fiber-rich vegetables daily, consume plenty of whole grains and complex carbohydrates, eat enough protein, and eat organic foods when possible. Become a label reader and

watch out for high levels of fat, sodium, sugar, and preservatives. Avoid artificial sweeteners.

A healthy diet includes fat, but it is important to pay attention to what type of fats you consume. Avoid foods containing partially hydrogenated oils, which are polyunsaturated oils to which hydrogen has been added to produce a longer shelf life. These oils are found in margarine, vegetable shortenings, and most commercially processed foods and snacks. The body does not easily digest these oils. Use extra-virgin olive oil for salad dressings and cooking. Several research studies have linked a low incidence of cardiovascular disease with the use of olive oil in Mediterranean regions. Flaxseeds, sunflower seeds, avocados, almonds and other nuts provide essential fatty acids important for good health.

Drinking water is also critical to good health. Avoid unfiltered tap water. Drink at least six to eight 8-ounce glasses of pure water a day – juices, coffee, milk, and tea with caffeine do not count. Always drink 8 ounces of water after every 20 minutes of aerobic activity. Avoid coffee, alcohol, sodas, and fruit juices. Limit your intake of liquids with your meals, as too much liquid inhibits proper digestion.

Don't forget – you are what you eat and drink. Keep your diet simple, and consume whole, natural foods. A proper diet, along with proper supplementation with necessary vitamins and minerals, will go a long way toward increasing your energy and making your workouts and your life more enjoyable.

Hitting the Road

Now that you're familiar with the walking with weights program, get out and give it a try. Getting started with any exercise program is often the most difficult step. There is no time like the present, so get started on your walk to total fitness today, and stick with it! Good luck!

Walking Products, Inc., Order Form

(Please print clearly.)

Ship to:

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____ Zip _____

Daytime Phone (____) _____

I would like to order:

Walking With Weights book at \$5.95 each, including shipping and handling (S&H)

Weights

____ pair(s) of 1-lb. weights @ \$14.95/pair (includes S&H)

____ pair(s) of 1½-lb. weights @ \$16.95/pair (includes S&H)

____ pair(s) of 2-lb. weights @ \$18.95/pair (includes S&H)

____ pair(s) of 2½-lb. weights @ \$20.95/pair (includes S&H)

____ pair(s) of 3-lb. weights @ \$22.95/pair (includes S&H)

Questions?

Visit our Web site at <http://www.walkingwithweights.com/>.

Send check or money order with completed order form to:

Walking Products, Inc.

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Norfolk, VA 23507