Three Quick Steps to Fitness:

Start walking this week!

You don't eat the same thing for dinner every night, so why walk the same route every day? Just like different foods provide different nutrients, a varied walking program challenges your body in different ways. What's more, change prevents boredom so you are likely to stick with it! Vary your walking distances and speeds between long and slow and short and fast. On some days, walk as fast as you can ensuring that you do not sacrifice form. On other days, walk more slowly, but for a longer distance. The bottom line: ***just get walking!***

1. Walk with style!

- Stand tall, lifting your chest and shoulders.
- Gently pull in your abdominal muscles to prevent your lower back from arching.
- Don't take longer steps to walk faster. Focus on quicker steps instead.
- Let your foot roll smoothly from heel to toe, pushing off strongly with your toes.
- Don't pump your arms forcefully. Let them bend at the elbow, and trace an arc from your waistband to the center of your chest.

2. Get motivated!

- Walk every day—even if just for 10 minutes.
- Record your walking time every day.
- Listen to your body. If you're sore, back off for a day.
- Reward yourself for big and little achievements.
- Tell co-workers, family, and friends about your goals. Encourage them to encourage you!
- Inspire yourself with fitness magazines, new walking routes, walking partners, new workout clothes, or by referring to a "before" picture.
- Walk briskly and with purpose.
- Measure your success.

3. Wear comfortable, supportive shoes!

When purchasing walking shoes, look for:

- A fairly low rounded or beveled heel.
- A flexible shoe that bends through the ball (NOT the arch), of the foot.
- Look for a good fit—the shoe shouldn't slip at the heel or bind or pinch anywhere. There should be a thumbnail's width between your toes and the end of the shoe!

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Adapted from walking tips by Mark Fenton, author of The Complete Guide to Walking for Health, Weight Loss, and Fitness. *Host of "America's Walking" on PBS television.*

Walk Checklist

Check a box each time you take one of the routes.

Give yourself a healthy reward/treat when you fill the boxes.

Elm St. Triangle	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Caledonia St. and River Rd.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Four Seasons Neighborhood	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Jenny's Walk	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Historic St. Johnsbury	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Federal and Maple	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Rocky Ridge	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Mt. Pleasant Cemetary	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The Long Walk	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
St. Johnsbury Town Forest	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Three Rivers Recreation Path	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The Knigdom Challenge	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Ready, Set, Walk!

Most of us would like to lead a more physically fit and active lifestyle, but often it's difficult to find the time. Also, it's often hard to know where to go or what opportunities exist for improving our health through physical activity.

To get people walking, Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Vermont's Northeast Kingdom Community Advisory Board decided to create a resource dedicated to helping people in our communities become healthier. We hope that this guide will encourage you to take advantage of the walking and hiking opportunities available in your community.

CALEDONIA AND SOUTHERN ESSEX The Fit & Healthy Coalition

BlueCross BlueShield of Vermont

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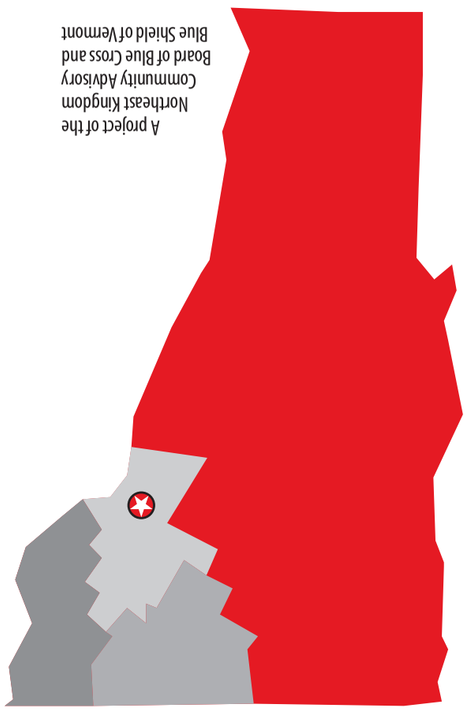
A project of the Northeast Kingdom Community Advisory Board of Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Vermont

The signs of a healthier Vermont

A walker's guide to

St. Johnsbury



Get out and walk

The most important thing is to get out and move around. The following tips are important, but don't let them slow you down. Most of us can get out for a short walk without too much extra effort.

Wear layers

Don't like the weather? Wait a few minutes. Vermont's weather can change quickly, so be prepared when you go out walking or hiking. Layered clothing is essential to comfort. Wearing white or bright colors makes you more visible.

Socks

Wear socks made of fibers such as Coolmax, polypropylene, silk, wool or a cotton synthetic blend that will wick away sweat. Cotton will hold in moisture and increase the chance of getting blisters. Look for padded socks, which cushion the bottoms of your feet, but make sure they fit well inside your shoes.

Hats

A hat keeps you warm in cold weather and shades your head and face from the sun throughout the year. In warm weather, try a visor which will let the heat escape while shading your eyes.

Packs

On short walks, pockets will probably suffice for carrying the minimum essentials. For longer walks and hikes, however, it's important to evenly distribute the weight of water, keys, wallet, etc. Backpacks, waist-packs, or wrist/shoe wallets are great for this purpose.

Water

Drink water before, during and after walking. You need to drink every half-hour while walking at a moderate pace and more often if you are sweating.

Sun protection

Never leave home without sunscreen, even on cloudy days. Your skin needs protection against skin cancer, wrinkles and sunburn. A waterproof sunscreen with an SPF of 15 or higher is key. Don't forget your ears and that bald spot!

Bug Protection

Enjoy getting outside but hate those pesky mosquitoes and black flies? To keep yourself comfortable while walking and safe from the West Nile Virus, use insect repellent that contains DEET, Picaridin or oil of lemon eucalyptus. Follow directions carefully and consult your doctor when using insect repellent on children under 3 years of age.

Identification

Don't leave home without carrying some type of identification. If you have any significant allergies or a serious medical condition, be sure to wear your medical bracelet or necklace on your walks. These things can save you a lot of grief in case of an emergency.

LOCAL RESOURCES FOR WALKING, HIKING, BIKING, SNOWSHOEING, AND CROSS-COUNTRY SKIING

- **St. Johnsbury Academy Community Recreation**
  www.stjrec.com
- **Northeastern Vermont Regional Hospital**
  www.nvrh.org
- **St. Johnsbury Country Club**
  www.golfstjcc.com
- **Kingdom Trails**
  www.kingdomtrails.org

OTHER HELPFUL RESOURCES

- **Town of St. Johnsbury**
  www.town.st-johnsbury.vt.us
- **St. Johnsbury Chamber of Commerce**
  www.discoverstjvt.com
- **Northeast Kingdom Chamber of Commerce**
  www.nekchamber.com

A guide to walking routes in St. Johnsbury, Vermont

Walking route

Overlapping routes

Bench

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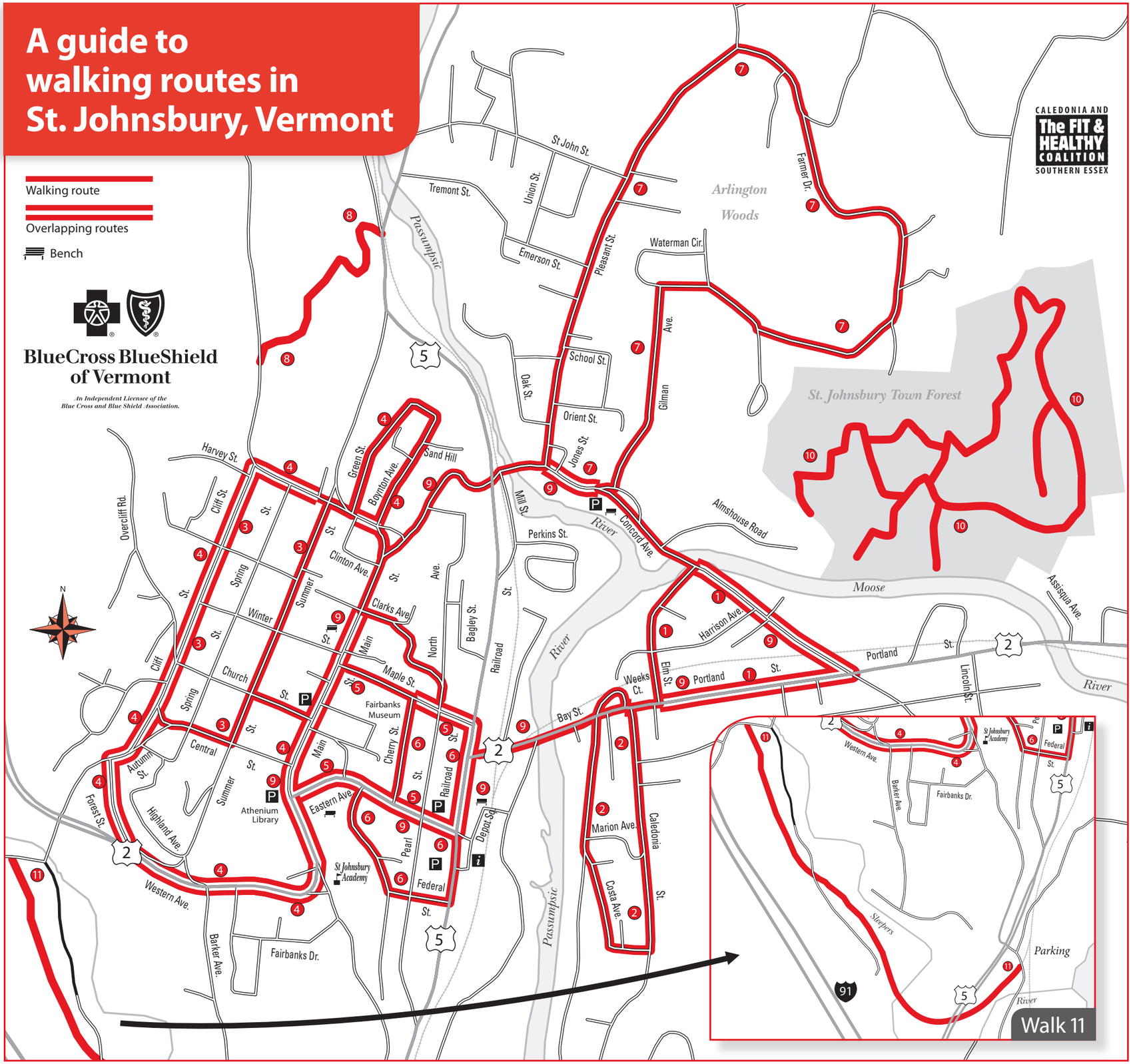


St. Johnsbury Walk Index

Walk 1—Elm Street Triangle

Length—0.8 mile

Relatively flat walk along residential Elm Street and Concord Avenue, then follow along commercial Portland Street past the old Portland Street School. *(Elm, Portland, Concord)*

Walk 2—Caledonia Street and River Road

Length—0.9 mile

Nice slope up Caledonia Street to get your heart pumping, while River Road is flat and soothing as you stroll along the Passumpsic River. *(Caledonia, Weeks Court, River, Costa)*

Walk 3—Four Seasons Neighborhood

Length—0.94 mile

Flat "walk around the block" of the Four Seasons neighborhood. For variety, take the optional short loop through the Mt. Pleasant Cemetery. *(Summer, Mt. Pleasant, Cliff, Central)*

Walk 4—Jenny's Walk

Length—2.2 miles

Variety of flats and steeps through less traveled neighborhoods and Main Street. Caution crossing over busy Western Avenue. *(Green, Boynton, Main, Western, Forest, Cliff)*

Walk 5—Historic St. Johnsbury

Length—1.01 miles

Stroll or power walk past some of St. Johnsbury's most architecturally significant buildings, including the Fairbanks Museum, Emerson Hall House, the Athenaeum and several uniquely beautiful churches. The walk also works your cardiovascular system as you climb "the hill." *(Main, Eastern, Railroad, Maple, Clarks)*

Walk 6—Federal and Maple

Length—1 mile

Walk through the downtown shopping district, past the Welcome Center and then up moderate hills on Maple Street and Federal Street, as you wind through some residential neighborhoods past the Caledonian Record, the Old Post Office/Catamount Arts and other historical buildings. *(Federal, Railroad, Maple, Cherry, Eastern)*

Walk 7—Rocky Ridge

Length—2.1 miles

Gradual ups and downs throughout this residential walk. Sidewalks on part of Pleasant Street only. *(Pleasant, Rocky Ridge, Farmer, Waterman, Gilman, Concord)*

Walk 8—Mt. Pleasant Cemetery

Length—0.32 mile

Quiet, hilly walk through this historic St. Johnsbury cemetery. You can access these trails by snowshoes or cross-country skis during the winter.

Walk 9—The Long Walk

Length—2.24 miles

A long walk for experienced walkers. Varied terrain with two steep sections, including the infamous "Sand Hill." The best part—sidewalks run the entire route. *(Main, Eastern, Railroad, Portland, Concord, Sand Hill)*

Walk 10—St. Johnsbury Town Forest

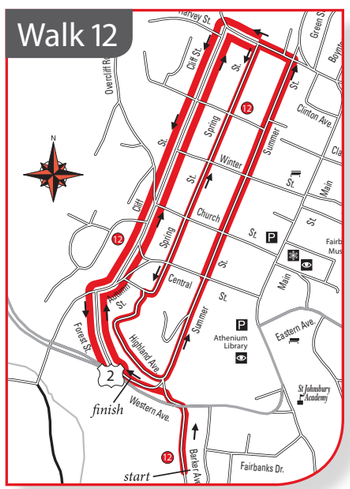
Access the St. Johnsbury Town Forest by turning off of Concord Avenue onto Almshouse Road. The Town Forest offers a variety of nature hikes for all ages and abilities. Enjoy a picnic lunch or snack under cover at the Rotary Pavilion.

Walk 11—Three Rivers Recreational Path

Length—1 mile

Park at the Trail Head on South Main Street. Walk, run or bike over a packed surface on this easy trail. This path serves as the east end trail head for the Lamoille Valley Rail Trail that will eventually span 93 miles across Vermont to Swanton in the west.

Walk 12—The Kingdom Challenge

Length—5k

This certified 5k route is wheel-measured, and perfect for training or to improve your personal best time.