



# 150 easy ways to sit less every day

Sitting less is easier said than done. Modern life is designed to be as easy and convenient as possible, and since sitting is easier and more convenient than standing, it has become our default.

From our jobs to our commutes to our free time, almost everything we do can be done from a seated position. In the face of this situation, how can we reverse the trend?

The solution is to attack the problem from as many angles as possible. We must seize every opportunity to reduce the amount of time we spend seated.

A good first step is to identify when you spend time sitting throughout the day and devise strategies to reduce that time. Think about why you prefer to sit than stand and perhaps rethink those priorities. Part of the solution is changing your habits, part of it is changing the way you think about sitting, and part of it is about changing the culture.

That's why this list is so long. All of these solutions won't work for you, some might not apply to your life at all. But we've tried to be as comprehensive as possible, so that anyone can look at this list and find some tips that work.

## **IN GENERAL**

1. **Keep track of your sitting** – everyone knows the first step in fixing a problem is realizing you have one. Try writing down how much you sit, even just for a day. Keep track, tally it up, and see just how many hours a day you're spending in your seat. It's good to have a starting point.
2. **Make a decision to sit less** – the second step is committing to sitting less. Set a specific goal, like reducing your time spent sitting by an hour a day, and work toward reaching it.
3. **Get an activity tracker** – while most step counters don't keep track of sedentary time, it's safe to say that generally speaking, the more time you spend stepping, the less time you spend sitting.
4. **Drink more water** – it's hard to stay seated for hours on end when you have to get up to go to the washroom.
5. **Walk at least 10,000 steps a day** – more walking means less sitting!
6. **Treat yourself like a dog** – they need to be walked a few times a day. So do you!
7. **Don't feel pressured to sit** – many times in life we sit simply because other people are sitting. In waiting rooms, on trains, during meetings. It takes time to break the habit, but try to remember that it's better for your health to stand and that it's your right to put your health first. You should never feel embarrassed about that.
8. **Take breaks whenever possible** – mastering this habit is essential to reducing your time spent sitting. It's ideal to take a 2-minute break from sitting every half hour if possible. That might sound like a lot of breaks, so build up to that goal. Start by taking a break every hour and slowly make them more frequent.
9. **Stand when given the option** – this might sound obvious at first, but we underestimate how deep the culture of convenience goes. When we see an open seat, we take it. It's a surprising hard habit to break. Start resisting. When you could just as easily stand, do so.
10. **Create opportunities to sit less** – this is a next level tip. Once you get good at resisting the temptation to sit, the next step is to actively find ways to sit less. Life is designed to get you to sit, so you have to design your life for movement, whenever and however you can.
11. **Stretch, stretch, stretch** – more time stretching means less time sitting.

12. **Set reminders of any and every kind** – use an alarm on your phone or set one on your computer for regular activity breaks. Put sticky notes on your laptop or around your house. Take every opportunity to remind yourself that you're trying to sit less and it will slowly become a regular part of your life.
13. **Make sitting less comfortable** – the less comfortable your seating options are, the less likely you are to spend time sitting in them.
14. **Take it seriously** – somehow despite the warnings, we still think of sitting less as an optional sort of thing. It's important to remember that the health dangers are real.
15. **Set high goals** – 10,000 steps are a great start, but why not shoot for 12,000? That way when you see 8,000 steps, instead of being almost there, you'll be motivated to keep going.
16. **Only sit when tired** – often we sit simply because we can. Instead, ask yourself whether your legs actually feel tired. Do your feet hurt? If they don't, keep standing.
17. **Stand up for standing up** – the world needs more people talking about the benefits of standing. Currently the sitters are winning. Be part of the change. Be part of the *movement* movement.
18. **Sign-up for the ParticipACTION newsletter on the left, or at the bottom of this page** – we'll send you more tips and regular motivation to sit less!

#### AT WORK

19. **Get a standing desk.**
20. **Build a standing desk** – they can be expensive, so if you need to, [get creative with our tips](#). Just make sure it's sturdy!
21. **Keep a change of clothes at the office** – that way if you get sweaty, you can always change and be good as new!
22. **Organize your workspace so things aren't within an arm's reach** – use the printer that's on the other side of the office. Use a headset so you aren't tied to your phone. Make movement as easy and as natural as possible. Don't facilitate sitting.
23. **Grab your morning coffee at a less convenient spot** – we tend to opt for the closest place possible, but why not try the place around the corner or down the street? I heard they have a dark roast that's amazing.
24. **Grab your lunch somewhere farther, too!** An extra walk can't hurt and could greatly expand your lunch hour options.

25. **Incorporate active tasks throughout your day** – don't do all your printing and photocopying at one time.  
Spread it out throughout the day.
26. **Schedule walking meetings** – they're trendy right now. You'll seem hip and active and impressive.
27. **Walk to a colleague, don't email** – this obviously isn't always possible and some information is best sent in an email, but other times if you need something sorted out urgently, it's easier to just walk to a coworker's desk.
28. **Use your to-do list as a reminder** – every time you cross something off your list, stretch for a minute or two.  
Or walk around the office.
29. **Corporate discount?** See if there's a way to get a discount for your office at a nearby gym or fitness center. It's always worth a try!
30. **Lift weights at lunch** – it splits your day into two nice halves, and energizes you for the afternoon.
31. **Make it a game** – whenever you get an email from – *insert name of someone you get frequent emails from* – stand up and stretch.
32. **Figure out when you sit for the longest uninterrupted time and schedule a break in your calendar** – for many people it's after lunch from 2 to 5. 3:30 walk anyone?
33. **Drink all the liquids** – don't just grab a cup of coffee in the morning, grab a glass of water too. The more liquid you drink, the more often you'll have to get up to use the washroom.
34. **Beat the afternoon slump with a walk** – contrary to tiring you out, getting active is actually a great way to get your blood flowing and perk you up to tackle your afternoon tasks.
35. **Get a harder chair** – what do you do when your butt hurts from sitting too much? Stand up!
36. **Leave your lunch in your car** – that way you have to walk to get it and will likely spend less time sitting while eating it!
37. **Sign-up for a class** – spin, Zumba, power yoga. Whatever is available nearby and works with your lunch schedule.
38. **Make your breaks walking breaks** – every break you get is an opportunity to get on your feet. Don't waste 'em!
39. **Schedule a standing meeting** – instead of awkwardly standing while everyone else is sitting during a meeting, take the initiative and call it a standing meeting. That way the sitters will be the odd ones out!
40. **Pace!**
41. **Create a culture** – this one is tough to do on your own, but [who you are surrounded by matters](#). You should attempt to get people on board with what you're doing – everyone can benefit from sitting less.

42. **Make it a competition** – a good way to get people excited about sitting less is to appeal to their competitive side. See who can reach the most steps, or sit for the shortest amount of time each day.
43. **Suggest an active gathering** – beers are great, but why can't you go canoeing together or rock-climbing? It's all about making physical activity a normal part of office life.
44. **Activity appointments** – if you feel you're too busy to find time to be active, make it a priority by putting it in your calendar like you would any other important meeting.
45. **Make time for yoga** – schedule a quick 10-minute session in an available meeting room. Relieve stress, focus your mind, and then back to work!
46. **Use a small glass** – instead of bringing a giant water bottle, use a small glass instead. That way you have to get up to grab refills!
47. **Start a walking club** – sitting less doesn't have to be a lonely endeavour. Get more people involved and your lunch time will soon involve a lot less sitting.
48. **Give your body a break** – your eyes, your wrist, your back, everything can use a break from sitting and staring at a computer. So take one every 30 minutes. You might even find that you're more productive this way!
49. **Do a plank challenge** – get everyone on board and see who can plank the longest. Or try to increase your time every week by 30 seconds.
50. **Don't sit during coffee meetings** – chatting over coffee just makes sense, but why must you sit? Grab a coffee and walk together!
51. **Stand while on the phone** – who said that you have to take all calls while seated? Use your phone as a reminder to get up. *Ring! Ring!* Stand up and answer that phone. As a bonus, it's been suggested that standing will make your voice more audible and may even make you sound more confident!
52. **Get an office tournament going** – the ParticipACTION team is almost always in the middle of a heated tournament of some sort or another. See what everyone in the office is into and organize a friendly tournament with matches before work, during lunch or after, depending on people's availability.
53. **Use the 33% Rule** – for every forty minutes of sitting, do twenty minutes of standing, so you spend 33% of your time on your feet.
54. **Keep your snacks in the fridge** – that way when you get snacky, you have to get up to get them!
55. **Schedule errands** – whether it's picking up something for dinner or your dry-cleaning, schedule in errands during your lunch or breaks that you'll have to walk to complete.
56. **Take a fit break!** Do some squats or lunges. Do a quick dance routine.

57. **Get a stool** – using a stool makes the transition from seated to standing a lot easier, and you know what happens when we make something easy.
58. **Walking brainstorm** – walking while brainstorming will make the ideas rain.
59. **Create a stair-climbing challenge.**
60. **Get off two floors early** – work on the 30<sup>th</sup>? That’s fine, just get in the habit of pressing 28. Maybe slowly work your way toward 20.
61. **Stay fresh** – have some dry shampoo, some perfume or deodorant, and maybe a quick dry towel on hand at all times so you’re not afraid to break a sweat.
62. **Stretch during meetings** – you might get weird looks at first and obviously will not be able to do this in meetings with important clients, but sitting for two hours in a meeting just isn’t natural. It’s normal and good to stand up to stretch regularly and there’s no reason to be scared or embarrassed about it.
63. **Try a stability ball chair** – they’re tricky to get used to at first, but even just switching back and forth between your regular chair and a ball will mean that you’re standing up more regularly.
64. **Office treadmill?** This might be a stretch but some offices now have treadmills so that sitting and standing aren’t your only two options. Being able to walk during a meeting is pretty awesome!
65. **Learn a chair stretching routine** – there’s a lot of different routines out there to help keep your shoulders in the right place and your back pain-free. If you learn a specific routine, you’ll be more likely to try it and less likely to feel silly.

## **IN YOUR CAR**

66. **Don’t use drive-thrus** – if you’re stopping for a coffee or a quick bite to eat, take the opportunity to stretch your legs.
67. **Schedule stops** – on longer car rides, make sure you plan stops along the way to break up all the hours of sitting.
68. **Park farther away** – try the other end of the parking lot. Then the parking lot on the other side of the street or the lower level. Keep getting farther away.
69. **Walk, run, bike, or wheel instead** – obviously this will depend on how far you work from home, but commuting to work is always a great way to avoid sitting.
70. **Drive halfway** – if it’s too far to walk or bike the entire way, drive half or three quarters of the way instead and bike or run the rest.

71. **Make it a last resort** – too often we drive simply because we have a car. Make walking or biking your default instead and you'll end up sitting in your car a lot less often. Even if the walk would take an hour, hour-long walks are fantastic! Highly recommend.
72. **Dress for activity** – if you're already in your dress clothes and shoes, you're less likely to park far away or fit in activity of any kind. So instead, dress with the intention of sneaking in 10-minutes before work, or wherever you're headed. You won't regret it!
73. **Keep active stuff in your car** – keep a Frisbee in your backseat, or a soccer ball, or your rollerblades. The more convenient you make it, the more likely you are to do it.
74. **Don't use drive-thru, seated car washes** – get on your feet and wash your car by hand!

### **ON THE BUS, SUBWAY OR TRAIN**

75. **Don't sit!** It's surprisingly hard to break the habit, but get in the habit of resisting the urge to run to the nearest empty seat. You'll know you've got the hang of it when you find yourself standing even when all the seats are empty.
76. **Get up after 5 minutes** – maybe you've been walking around all day or feel exhausted and need to take a break. That's understandable. But that doesn't mean you need to spend the whole journey sitting. Usually a 5-minute break is really all your legs need.
77. **Get off a stop early** – or two stops! The less time you spend on the bus, the less likely you are to sit.
78. **Get on a stop late** – why not walk to the next bus stop? Or down to the next subway station? It's a great way to start your day and a good pick-me-up after work.
79. **Try some subtle exercise** – stand up on your tip toes, step side-to-side, you don't have to be doing chin ups or jumping jacks to fit in some activity.
80. **Try invisible exercises** – if you embarrass easily and don't want to be caught on your tip-toes, try doing exercises that no one can see, like Kegels or sucking in your stomach, holding for a couple seconds and releasing. It may sound silly, but try doing that thirty times in a row.
81. **Walk a little up and down** – if it's rush hour this is impossible of course, but if the subway train or streetcar is relatively empty, why not walk a little?
82. **Dance a little** – don't be that obnoxious person playing their music too loud and belting out the chorus, but if you have your favourite jam on, why not dance? Just a little.

83. **Only sit when your hands are full** – this is a good general rule. Usually the only time I ever sit on the subway is if I'm carrying something heavy.
84. **Don't be peer-pressured** – often even if you're in the habit of standing, when you're with a friend it can be easy to feel pressured to sit. Take the opportunity to stand, and if they ask you why, explain your reasoning. There's no need to be pushy or uppity about it. Just say that you're trying to sit less for your health.
85. **Make commercial breaks active** – every commercial get up and do some jumping jacks or squats or step back and forth or run on the spot. Anything but sit.

### WATCHING TELEVISION

86. **When Netflix asks you “Are you still watching \_\_\_\_\_?”** – stand up and move!
87. **Play an active game!** It obviously depends on what you're watching, but try to find something that happens regularly and say you'll stand every time it happens. So every time they go into surgery on *Grey's Anatomy* or every time someone dies in *Narcos*.
88. **Leave your snacks in the kitchen** – grab handfuls at a time, or pour them into a small bowl, that way you have to keep getting up to grab more. You also might eat less!
89. **Foam roll** – if your body is sore, use your TV time to get out the knots and relieve some pain with a foam roller.
90. **Watch standing up.** Easy enough, right?
91. **Leave a medicine ball by your couch** – you'll be more likely to play with it!
92. **Be aware!** It's easy to lose track of time when binge-watching your favourite show, so this will require some diligence. Take note of when you first sat down and do your best to look back at the time periodically. If more than half an hour has passed, it's time to get up.
93. **Watch less** – the less you watch, the less time you can possibly spend sitting!
94. **Do yoga** – nothing goes together quite like warrior stance and *Game of Thrones*.
95. **Put a treadmill or exercise bike in front of the TV.**
96. **At a minimum, get up between episodes.** It's surprisingly easy to sink into your couch for hours on end, but resist the temptation and at least get up between each episode while binge-watching a season of your new favourite show.
97. **Drink water** – just like at work, drinking more water will make you get up regardless of how good the show is that you're watching. Tea also works. And when your glass is empty, be sure to refill it!

98. **Move every time you see a food commercial** – sooner or later you’re probably going to cave and get whatever it is that’s being advertised constantly, so you might as well make yourself work for it!
99. **Multi-task!** Combine watching TV with folding laundry or doing the dishes – any activity that you do while standing up.

### **ON SOCIAL MEDIA**

100. **Only use social media while standing** – this would obviously be the most ideal situation, but see the tips below for how to work up to it. Also, be careful about your neck position when using your phone. Tilting your head forward all day puts a lot of extra strain on your body.
101. **Stand up every time you see a cute dog** – and don’t be tempted to all of a sudden unfollow all those corgi Instagram accounts.
102. **Follow ParticipACTION on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#)!**
103. **Stand up every time you switch between platforms** – switching from Facebook to Instagram, or from Twitter to Snapchat? Get on your feet!
104. **Every time your post gets a tonne of likes take a 10-minute fit break!** It’s the best way to congratulate yourself on your awesome social media presence.
105. **Try to be aware** – the biggest danger with social media is losing track of time. Most of us underestimate how long we spend swiping through feeds, so get an app that tracks it – you might be startled by the findings.
106. **Stand up every time you get a Facebook notification.**
107. **Every time you fall for clickbait, go for a walk** – you’ll start asking yourself, is it really worth finding out?
108. **Never post while seated.** Whether it’s an Instagram pic, a Facebook link or a Snapchat video, you can post it standing.

### **EATING**

109. **Eat standing up** – simple right? Busy moms everywhere have been doing it for years.
110. **Do pick-up, not delivery** – why sit and wait for food, when you can walk and get it? As an added bonus you won’t feel so guilty about ordering food in the first place.
111. **Cook more** – you don’t really think about it, but cooking is a standing activity!
112. **Drink your morning smoothie while standing** – same goes for your morning coffee. There’s no reason to sit!

113. **Suggest a walk afterwards** – often we finish eating quite quickly but end up sitting for far longer because we want to chat. So be aware and once you've finished eating, why not suggest going for a stroll?
114. **Don't eat in your car** – you tend to be sitting when you're in there.
115. **Don't eat while watching TV** – again, this tends to be a seated position, some studies have suggested that you might eat more because you are distracted, and you often end up sitting and watching TV for quite some time.

### **ON YOUR HOME COMPUTER**

116. **Standing desk!**
117. **Set your laptop up on your kitchen counter** – or somewhere high. Stack some books (as long as they're sturdy and won't topple over) and put your laptop on top. If you get tired, you can always move to a chair!
118. **Leave free weights by your desk** – if they're there, maybe you'll be tempted to pick them up once in a while.
119. **Stand up and stretch every time you switch tasks** – done responding to emails? Time to touch your toes!
120. **Sit on a harder chair** – if you grab your computer and plop down in your coziest spot, you're not getting up. Sit on a hard kitchen chair and you'll be up in no time.
121. **Watch out for Wikipedia and YouTube holes!** One link leads to another, one video to one more. We've all been there. So try to be on top of it. Know when you started. If you've watched 5 videos, it's probably time for a standing break.

### **RANDOM TIPS!**

122. **Leave your car in the driveway** – you can walk there, it's not that far! Regardless of where you are going, make sure driving isn't your default mode of transportation. It's a bad, sitting-promoting habit.
123. **Power shop** – it's like regular shopping, only more active!
124. **While reading** – try walking while listening to an audiobook instead.
125. **Make taking brisk 10-minute walks a habit** – it's better than all those sitting habits!
126. **Dance to your music** – it's a lot more fun than sitting and listening to your favourite jam.
127. **Opt for the standing room** – instead of taking a seat wherever you may be, try to stand up at the back whenever possible.
128. **Value activity** – we do things that we value.
129. **Wear comfortable shoes** – you're always more likely to stand if you're wearing comfy shoes.

130. **Keep athletic shoes handy** – wherever you are, wherever you're going, you're more likely to walk or run if you have running shoes around.
131. **Read the newspaper standing up.**
132. **Same goes for magazines!**
133. **Walk around the house while texting** – there's no reason to be seated.
134. **Get your whole family involved** – plan fun activities. Go for walks after dinner instead of watching television. Having the support of your entire family can be extremely helpful.
135. **Always ask “Could I be doing this while standing?”**
136. **Go for a quick walk when you get home** – often we just want to collapse on the couch, but start resisting that urge and instead go for a walk. It will help you find a second wind to get through your evening.
137. **Take the long way** – we often try to find the most direct, quickest way possible. Instead, get into the habit of taking the long way or detours.
138. **Try an egg timer** – instead of getting fancy with new-fangled apps and digital alarms, just set a timer. Set it for thirty minutes and when it goes off, it's time to get up. Of course this can get annoying, but is great for tasks that suck you in, like checking Facebook.
139. **Be okay with lines!** Often we get frustrated when we have to wait, but it also likely means that you're going to spend more time standing and less time sitting.
140. **Use a footrest** – standing on both feet can get tiring, but a footrest can definitely make it more comfortable. Put one under your desk at work and at home!
141. **Try an active desk** – beyond just standing, there are also different ways to get active while doing work, like walking on a treadmill or pedaling under your desk. Both are slightly more expensive options and might only be possibilities at home, but are definitely worth considering.
142. **Sit at the bar** – because the bar has stools and it's easy to transition from sitting in a stool to standing. People probably won't even notice if you casually switch between the two.
143. **Go in person** – we are pretty obsessed with calling, texting and emailing, but sometimes an old-fashioned drop-in is a good way to go. It gets you up and moving, and is often a much better way to make a personal connection with someone.
144. **Dictate instead of type** – often people don't like typing while standing up, or texting while walking, so instead use the latest dictation software to talk instead of type. It makes moving easier!

145. **Don't sit at the gym** – it's great that you're there in the first place, but often people spend a surprising amount of the time sitting down. Make sure between sets that you're not sitting down, or take it to the next level and make all your rests active!
146. **Focus on one habit at a time** – this list can be a bit overwhelming, but the key is to pick one strategy at a time and implement it consistently.
147. **Don't sit on the sidelines** – if your daughter or son is playing a sport, why not get active by walking up and down the sidelines, or at least standing, instead of sitting down the whole time?
148. **Make your grocery store trip longer** – walk up and down all the aisles even if you don't need to. Just try not to be tempted by the snack food deals.
149. **Plan active chill time** – when we hang out with friends often we end up sitting. Flip the script and start planning more active outings. Your friends will thank you.
150. [Register for the ParticipACTION 150 Play List! It's the ultimate way to sit less!](#)