



# Team Captain Guide

<http://walkacrosstexas.tamu.edu>



## Walk Across Texas Overview

Walk Across Texas is a physical activity program created in 1996 by Texas AgriLife Extension Service to help people of all ages support one another to establish the habit of walking.

Someone in your organization will be appointed as the Site Manager for Walk Across Texas. The Site Manager will find Team Captains. The Team Captains then recruit seven people for their team.

Once teams of eight are formed, a “Kick-Off” event marks the beginning of the program. People walk together or individually, outside or at a mall or gym, on a treadmill—any way that fits their lifestyle. Teams compete for eight weeks to see which one walks the 830 miles across the state first and which one walks the greatest amount of miles.

Team Captains report their team members’ mileage each week, and it is posted on an on-line map or on a Texas road map somewhere in your organization. Some groups sponsor an activity after four weeks to keep everyone motivated. Everyone is recognized for their accomplishments at the “Recognition” activity at the end of the eight weeks.

We hope you and others in your organization will not only develop the habit of walking but also have a wonderful time walking across Texas!

### Contact information for your Site Manager:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Fax: \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Updated January 2008.

# Walk Across Texas

## Team Captain's Steps to Success

### Step 1

- Attend the Team Captain training that is provided by the Site Manager and/or county Extension agent. Pick up your team packet.
- Learn the Walk Across Texas process.

### Step 2

- Recruit seven people to be on the team with you.

### Step 3

Distribute team packets to yourself and your seven team members. If any of these things are missing, you can print more from our website. Packets should contain the following items:

- For the Captain: Cover/Sign-Up Letter, Team Captain Guide, Team Member Guide, Team Registration Form, Individual Registration Form, Individual Mileage Log, Team Captain's Log, Wrap-Up Form, and Mileage Equivalents handout.
- For each of the seven team members: Cover/Sign-Up Letter, Team Member Guide, Individual Registration Form, Individual Mileage Log, Wrap-Up Form, and Mileage Equivalents handout.

#### Description of items in the packet:

- The *Cover/Sign-Up Letter* provides general information for Walk Across Texas, such as dates for events like the Kick-Off, Midway/Don't Give Up Now, and Recognition events.
- The *Team Member Guide* provides information to help Walk Across Texas participants know how to be successful team members. The Team Captain can add his/her contact information before printing, or team members can fill in the information when they receive the Team Member Guide.
- The *Team Registration Form* is used by the Team Captain to sign-up team members with their contact information and to list the team name. The Captain gives this completed form to the Site Manager, who will forward it to the county Extension agent.

- The *Individual Registration Form* is completed by the Captain and seven team members, including the signature box. The form is used to make sure everyone checks with their doctor, if needed, before starting and to note everyone's starting physical activity level.
- The *Individual Mileage Log* is used by everyone on the team, including the Captain, to write down their daily mileage. At the end of the week, the mileage and/or pounds lost are noted before e-mailing, faxing, or calling the weekly totals to the Captain.
- The *Team Captain's Log* is used by the Captain to collect and record the team's total weekly miles walked and/or pounds lost. Team members e-mail, fax, or phone their weekly totals to their Captain. The Captain then enters the information each week on our website.
- The *Wrap-Up Form* is completed by everyone, including the Captain, when Walk Across Texas is over. The forms are then given to the Captain to enter on our website. Information obtained from this form helps improve Walk Across Texas each year.
- The *Mileage Equivalents* handout helps everyone have a number of ways to convert other aerobic activities, such as swimming, to mileage.

### Step 4

Complete the Team Registration Form:

- Select a team name.
- Enter everyone's name and contact information on this form before Walk Across Texas starts.
- The Captain gives the completed form to the Site Manager, who will e-mail, fax, or send it to the county Extension agent.
- No personal information is entered on the website.

## **Step 5**

Everyone, including the Captain, completes the Individual Registration Form.

- Team members turn in their completed forms to the Captain, who then enters the information on our website. Click on “Register.”
- Please note: The Captain must first enter his/her own registration information.
- Have your team name ready to enter when registering everyone.
- Enter the county where you are participating in Walk Across Texas, even if you live in another county.
- Have an easily remembered password ready, too.
- Please note: The (1) team name and (2) password must be entered exactly the same each time. For example, if your password is Road Toads, “Road Toad” will not work. Write down your password and team name, and keep it near where you will be entering information each week. You may print your completed Captain’s Registration Form to keep so you will remember your password, team name, and how you entered it.
- After the Captain enters his/her registration information, team member registration information may then be entered by the Captain. Only first names are entered on the website.

## **Step 6**

Attend the Kick-Off Event.

## **Step 7**

Everyone starts walking and logs their daily mileage and/or pounds lost onto the Individual Mileage Log. At the end of the week, everyone totals their mileage and/or pounds lost and sends it to the Team Captain by e-mail, fax, or a phone call.

## **Step 8**

The Team Captain enters everyone’s mileage and/or pounds lost on the website each week—usually by Sunday night. Remember that the team name and password must be entered exactly the same as you entered it when registering on our website for the first time.

## **Step 9**

Attend the Midway/Don’t Give Up Now event.

## **Step 10**

Everyone completes the Wrap-Up forms when Walk Across Texas is over. The Captain enters this information on our website.

## **Step 11**

Enter success stories on the website to let people know what Walk Across Texas did for you and your team members.

## **Step 12**

Make Recognition Certificates by going to the website. Certificates allow you to enter each team member’s name before printing.

## **Step 13**

Attend the Recognition Event, and distribute Recognition Certificates to your team members.

## Frequently Asked Questions about Walk Across Texas

**Q.** How far ahead should we begin planning?

**A.** Most organizations begin planning about two to three months before their Walk Across Texas starting date.

**Q.** Why have competition?

**A.** Teams from your organization compete to determine which team walks (1) the approximate 830 miles from the East to the West Texas borders, or (2) the greatest number of miles.

Competition between teams helps members keep going when they feel like quitting. “Winning” is certainly a goal, but establishing the habit of regular daily walking is the real objective. To minimize the focus on “winning,” some groups recommend putting the name of every team that finishes the 830 miles into a “hat” and then drawing one to three winning teams for special recognition.

**Q.** How far does each person need to walk every week if a team is to make it the 830 miles across Texas?

**A.** Each person needs to average about 13 miles per week. Some people walk more and others less. Gradually work to increase your mileage to avoid injury.

**Q.** Do we all have to walk at the same time?

**A.** Team members do not need to walk together unless they want to do so. Treadmills are okay. Other aerobic activities may be converted to miles using the Mileage Equivalents handout that is found on our website.

**Q.** What if we want to change a few of the rules?

**A.** Changing or adding your own special touches are okay. Just do the same for everyone in your group, and let all know about the changes.

**Q.** How can we see our team’s progress?

**A.** Members pool their mileage each week to help their team move across either a paper road map or the on-line map on our website. If a paper map is used, generally, no more than the top 10 teams can be shown each week.

**Q.** How much does it cost?

**A.** Walk Across Texas is meant to be a “free” activity. Fundraising is not a part of Walk Across Texas; however, if someone participates in a fundraising activity, such as those put on by the American Heart Association, those miles may be counted for Walk Across Texas.

**Q.** Why do we need all of these forms and records?

**A.** Each form does have an important function. The Registration Form documents your baseline activity information and lets us know you have checked with your doctor. You write down miles every time you walk because doing this helps you be successful, as well as accurate. The Wrap-up Form helps us learn ways to improve for next time and whether or not the program helps. Please let us know your comments. Entering “Success Stories” helps us know specific ways the program helped you.