LISTEN WHILE YOU WALK

If you feel as if there aren’t enough hours in the day for the things you love and for keeping fit and healthy, why not combine exercise with learning, listening to literature or a having a good laugh?
It’s no secret that walking is a fantastic form of exercise. But while you can simply step outside and soak up the sounds around you, a walk can be a great opportunity to learn a language, listen to positive mantras, or master skills to start a new career, all while improving your health.

‘Our modern lifestyle is very screen based and that fatigues our eyes,’ says psychologist Hope Bastine (freshperception.com) who champions walking for getting us away from laptops and TVs. ‘Our bodies aren’t meant to sit for too long, so if you’re at your desk feeling stuck, going for a walk can get good ideas flowing.’

Listening to a book, especially if it’s fiction, can also unleash your creativity in a way that sitting in front of a screen never will. ‘When you watch a film or a documentary, it tells you what you should see and feel, but when you read or listen, it stimulates your imagination and your creativity,’ says Hope.

Walking while listening might also help you learn better. ‘You’re using a different sense to learn, and that might be very effective, especially for people who struggle with reading,’ says Hope.

Listening to a fiction book on an evening walk might also help you relax and unwind ready for bed. ‘Focusing on an audiobook helps you hone in on your sense of listening, which is the last sense to switch off at night. It quiets down the other senses and better prepares you for sleep,’ says Hope.

‘What’s more, research shows that taking a walk in nature in the evening improves sleep quality, so doing this while listening to a book or a podcast will give you double the benefit.’

(NOTE: Make sure you stay safe by telling someone where you are going, not using headphones that cancel out all surrounding noise, and getting back home before it gets too dark.)