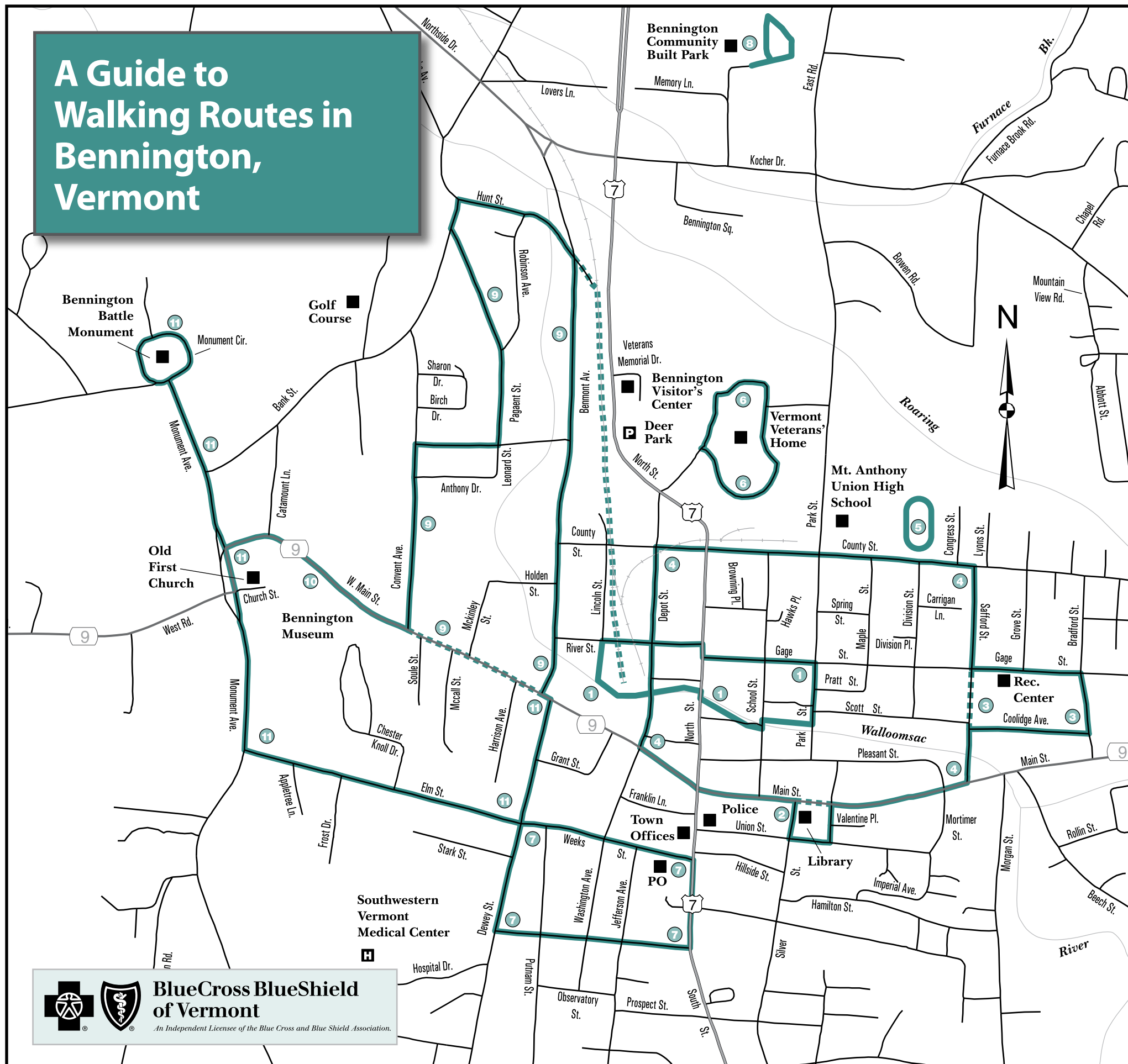


A Guide to Walking Routes in Bennington, Vermont



Walking Routes

Walk 1: River Walk/Bennington Pathway (1.4 miles)

Start at the far end of the Bennington Station parking lot and follow the pathway as you weave your way through downtown. A mostly level, paved path and sidewalks. Enjoy the river at your side.

Walk 2: Library Loop (.27 miles)

A short walk on all paved sidewalks that is plowed in the winter. Walk on the sidewalk across the street from the library in the winter.

Walk 3: Recreation Center Loop (.66 miles)

Park at the Bennington Recreation Center and enjoy this level route mostly on sidewalks and some paved streets in a quiet neighborhood.

Walk 4: Main/County Streets Loop (2.1 miles)

All sidewalks line this year-round route on level ground. Start at the Four Corners and head east toward Safford Street.

Walk 5: Track at MAUHS (.25 miles)

For walkers who like a very flat surface, the Mount Anthony Union High School (MAUHS) track is for you. Enter the track from the MAUHS parking lot by the gates near the ticket booths. Walkers and joggers are asked to use the outside lane of the track. The track is open to the public when it is not in use for school activities and weather permitting.

Walk 6: Veterans Loop (.72 miles)

A quiet, mostly level route around the Veterans home on a paved road and some sidewalks that are open, as weather permits, year-round. Please park at the Deer Park on Route 7. Enjoy the surrounding mountain views.

Walk 7: Weeks/Elm Streets Loop (1 mile)

Start at the beautiful stone Downtown Visitor's Center on South Street for this route of some moderate inclines and straight-aways. All sidewalks and paved roads that are plowed year-round.

Walk 8: Community Built Park Loop (.5 miles)

The Park offers a wide paved route with a moderate hill, perfect for strollers. A playground is in the center of the loop. Take time to enjoy the view. If you have time, walk up toward East Street and test out the new sidewalks leading to the MAU Middle School for another approximate mile.

Walk 9: Convent/Benmont and Future Rail Trail (2 miles)

Enjoy this longer route on all paved surfaces or sidewalks. Convent Avenue is quiet. Enjoy the view of the Monument as you reach Bank Street. It is estimated by Spring 2007 you will be able to pickup the new Rail Trail from Benmont Avenue and then finish this walk on the trail to the Bennington Station. (The trail will be the dotted line at the southern end of Hunt Street.) This route will be a little longer once the Rail Trail is open. Until then you can continue on Benmont to West Main Street.

Walk 10: The Hadwen Pavilion and Trails

Owned by the Bennington Museum, these trails are open to the public free-of-charge. A wonderful nature trail covers three very different environments, with places to rest and picnic along the way. Maps are available at the Hadwen Pavilion that borders the parking lot on the Museum grounds.

Walk 11: Monument Challenge (2.06 miles)

Start this historical walk-with-a-view at St. Francis de Sales Sacred Heart church up West Main Street on sidewalks. This walk has a moderate gradual hill challenge. Pass the Bennington Museum, the Battle Monument, and the Old First Church. Part of the route on Monument Avenue is paved road as is part of Elm Street.

We hope this will be the first map of many walking maps to come. If you find any corrections to this map, please contact us at (802) 447-5076. If you have a favorite walking route you would like to share, please fax a detailed map, with your contact information, to SVHC's Community Health Improvement and Wellness Office at (802) 442-8331.



Smart choices. Powerful tools.

3 Quick Steps to Fitness!

Start Walking This Week!

You don't eat the same thing for dinner every night, so why do the same walk 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 walks between long and slow and short and fast. Also vary your speed. 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.

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.

- Wear comfortable, supportive shoes.

- 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 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.

Bennington Walk 1

Bennington Walk 2

Bennington Walk 3

Bennington Walk 4

Bennington Walk 5

Bennington Walk 6

Bennington Walk 7

Bennington Walk 8

Bennington Walk 9

Bennington Walk 10

Bennington Walk 11

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Ready. Set. Walk.

Most of us would like to be more physically fit and active, but often it's difficult to find the time. Additionally, it's often hard to know where to go or what opportunities are out there to improve our health through physical activity.

To help with this problem, Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Vermont—in partnership with Southwestern Vermont Health Care's Community Health Improvement and Wellness Department, Green Mountain Club's Bennington Chapter and Vermont Blueprint for Health—created this 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.

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 and 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 that will let the heat escape while shading your eyes.

Packs

On short walks, pockets will probably suffice for carrying the minimum essentials. However, for longer walks and hikes, it's important to distribute the weight of water, keys, wallet, etc. evenly. 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!

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 the case of an emergency.

Statewide and Local Resources

Bennington Chamber of Commerce

(802) 447-3311
<http://www.bennington.com>*

www.benningtonvt.net/chamber/walking*

Green Mountain Club

Local Chapter (802) 244-7037
E-mail: gmc@greenmountainclub.org
www.greenmountainclub.org

Nature's Closet Hike Events Calendar

(802) 442-0476
www.naturescloset.net

Southwestern Vermont Health Care

For a complete list of fitness resources
(802) 447-5076
www.svhealthcare.org*

Town of Bennington Recreation Center

(802) 442-1053

Vermont Governor's Council

on Physical Fitness & Sports programs:

- Get Moving Vermont Program

(802) 657-4202

www.vermontfitness.org

* Have additional detailed maps on line

Indoor Walking Year-round:

Bennington Firehouse

Mon/Wed/Fri 8:15 am

Call first (802) 442-6886

A Walker's Guide to Bennington, Vermont