



## Step Wider, Move Better

An evidence-informed guide from Strength With Purpose

One of the simplest ways to feel steadier when you walk is to take slightly wider steps.

Many people gradually begin walking with their feet almost in a straight line — like they're on a tightrope. It often happens without realising. It can feel neat and controlled, but it actually makes balance harder.

### Why Narrow Walking Feels Unstable

When your feet land very close together, your base of support is smaller, your body has less room to make small corrections, and any wobble is harder to recover from.

That's why tightrope walking is a circus skill — not a great everyday movement strategy.

### A Simple Shift That Helps

Instead of thinking about stepping wide, think about not stepping narrow.

Imagine your feet moving along train tracks rather than a tightrope, allowing a little side-to-side space so your weight can shift naturally from one foot to the other.

### Where the Hips and Glutes Come In

Every step briefly places your body on one leg. In that moment, the hips and glutes help keep the pelvis level and control weight transfer.

A slightly wider step places these muscles in a better mechanical position, making each step feel stronger and more controlled.

### How This Is Trained

When squats are performed well, they train the same muscles that support stable walking: the hips, glutes, thighs, and trunk.

This strength carries over into walking, stairs, getting up from chairs, and staying upright when life throws little surprises your way.

### What the Research Tells Us

Moderate step width improves side-to-side stability and balance control (Bauby & Kuo, *Journal of Biomechanics*).

Slightly wider steps increase activation of the gluteus medius, supporting pelvic control during single-leg stance (Perry & Burnfield, Gait Analysis).

Poor lateral hip activation has been linked to less stable walking and increased fall risk (Arvin et al., Gait & Posture).

### Try This Today

As you walk today, allow a little more space between your feet and notice what feels steadier.

**Important:** This information is general in nature and not a substitute for personalised advice. If you experience pain or discomfort, stop and seek guidance from a qualified health or exercise professional.