

YOU CAN TONE YOUR BUM

'Most people underuse their glutes and overuse their quads,' says Esther Gokhale, who developed glidewalking (see below). 'The gluteus medius is a small side muscle. To feel it working, stand with your feet together and turn your right foot outwards to a 2 o'clock position. Transfer your weight onto the left foot and extend the right leg back behind you. You will feel a tightening in the upper, outer part of your bum.'

Although not the main muscle used when walking – that's the gluteus maximus – the gluteus medius still helps to create definition and stabilise your pelvis.

Walking in a healthy way tones your bottom, improves posture and can help you avoid arthritis in the hip area.

WALK WELL

A particularly healthy way of walking is known as glidewalking, developed by Esther Gokhale. One of the benefits is that it strengthens the buttock (gluteus) muscles, which in turn supports pelvic anteversion

(a slight tip forward of the hip bones). This is key to a healthy posture, especially in women. Strong gluteus muscles also help you to keep your balance.

'Most people in industrialised cultures have underdeveloped gluteus muscles. In strengthening the buttocks as well as stretching the psoas muscles, glidewalking

helps restore pelvic anteversion and allows the hip bone to rotate properly in the socket,' says Esther. 'Poor alignment in the hips and the resulting stiffness in the surrounding muscles predisposes you to arthritis in that area. Restoring normal alignment stops this from progressing further and can reverse some of the damage. Many

people tense the muscles surrounding the hips, whether walking or standing, causing stress within the joints. Glidewalking includes a relaxed 'swing phase' in each stride, thereby helping create a healthy joint space between the head of the thigh bone (femur) and the hip socket (acetabulum).'

Turn the page to learn how to glidewalk.

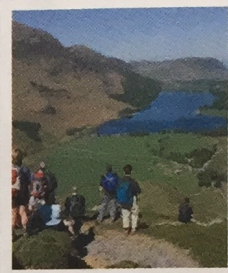
Exercise, socialise and explore!

Joining a walking group or event is the perfect way to improve fitness, meet new friends and explore the great outdoors. Here are some forthcoming group walks that promise just that.

Herefordshire Walking Festival, 13-21 June, walkingfestival.com. Stretch your legs on trails that circle market towns in Herefordshire, or follow established routes through the surrounding valleys in this week-long festival that showcases the landscape of the West Midlands.



Keswick Mountain Festival, 14-17 May, keswickmountainfestival.co.uk. The event's walking activities will make the most of the surrounding lakes and fells, taking festival goers to many of the most famous and dramatic in the Lake District, such as Skiddaw, Catbells, Blencathra and Scafell Pike.



The South Downs Way Annual Walk, 6-14 June, southdownsway.com. One of 15 national trails in England and Wales, The South Downs Way runs right through the heart of the South Downs National Park. It covers a range of diverse habitats including ancient woodlands, river valleys, chalk grassland, mixed farmland and coastal habitats.

