

Walking Styles

Shashank V. Parulekar

Walking is something that comes naturally to everyone, sooner or later, unless something is physically wrong with him or her. It does take a bit of encouragement for some in the early stages of the learning process. What is interesting is that this reflex activity does not manifest the same way in everyone at all times. Walking styles differ from person to person, and from time to time.

Let us take a look at different walking styles, starting from childhood to adult life.

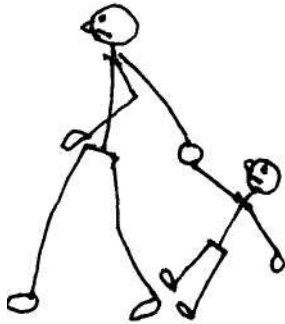
Childhood

Primary refusal



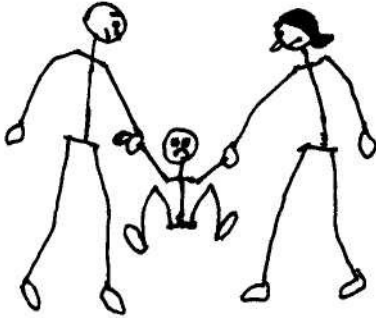
The child asks to be picked up, either because it is tired, is lazy, or wants to have a view of the surrounding from a high position. It requests, pleads, demands in that order. If successful, the adult picks it up and the child walks the adult who picks it up.

Non-cooperation To One Adult



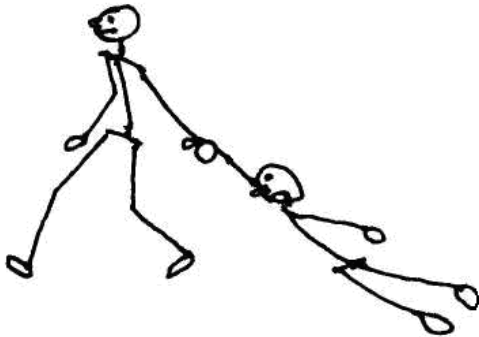
If the adult refuses to pick up the child and makes it walk, the child brakes the walk by planting its feet firmly on the ground, and throwing its weight backwards.

Non-cooperation To Two Adults



If two parents hold the child by one hand each and make it walk, it hangs by its hands and lifts its feet off the ground, making them carry it. Here the child walks two adults.

Give Way



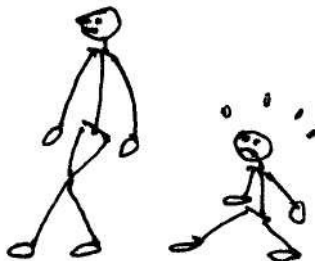
When the strength of the adult proves to be greater than the braking power of the child, the child walks by the 'Give Way' method.

War Of Nerves Walk



The child not willing to walk sits down on the road while the accompanying adult walks ahead. It is a war of nerves between the two. If the child wins, the adult goes back and picks up the child. Then the child walks the adult.

Lost War Walk



If the child loses the war of nerves with the adult, it gets up and follows the adult at a distance, crying quite loudly.

Catching Up Walk



When the child has to walk at the same speed as the adult holding its hand but cannot due to shorter legs, it runs to keep the same pace.

Fun walk



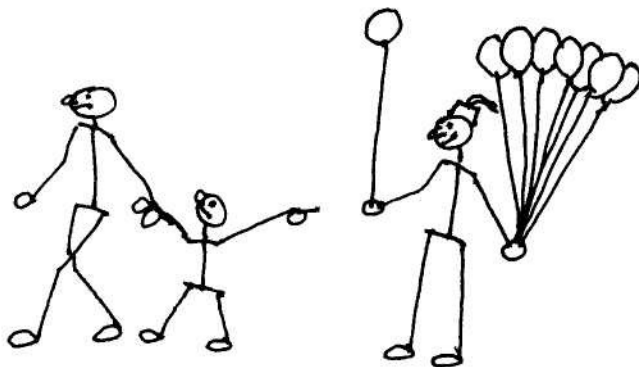
An innovative child turns a boring walk into a 'Fun walk' by doing fun things while following the parent.

Dream Walk



The child walks with the adult because its hand is held, but watches something in a direction other than that of progression, and its thoughts are in a dream world.

Window-shopping Walk



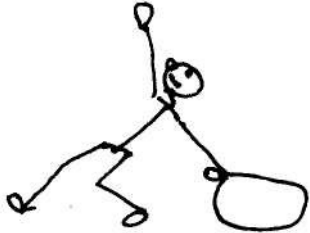
The child demands every toy from every vendor or shop on the way while it walks.

Schoolward Walk



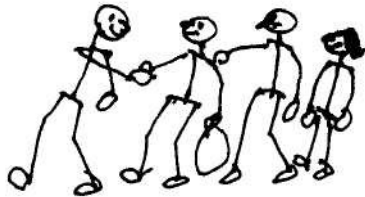
It is a slow, tired walk, the back bent under the weight of a tightly packed giant size school bag.

After-school Walk



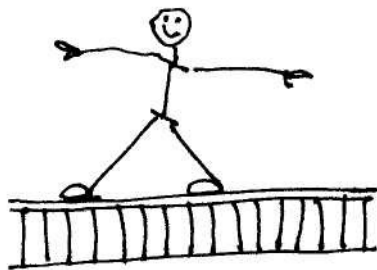
The after-school homeward walk is with a spring in the feet and a song in the heart.

Group Walk



A number of children walking in a group have the effect of a mini-tornado on the passers by unless they keep a safe distance. Their movements are unpredictable and often violent.

Vacation Walk



In a buoyant mood, the child walks on things like a fence, balancing like a tight-rope walker in a circus.

**Youth
Beauty Queen Walk**



It is the walking style of every pretty girl, or one who thinks she is pretty. The head is held high, nose up, chest forward, and eyes not noticing anyone apparently.

Ugly Duckling Walk



It is the walk of a girl who thinks she is ugly. The head is held down, chest in, gaze towards the ground, and feet shuffling.

Cat Walk



It is the famous walk of participants or aspirants of a beauty contest. The chest and bottom are out in an exaggerated manner, the latter swinging seductively. The upper limbs are held delicately as if they are fragile and may break off on slightest contact with any object. The feet move as if treading on water. The gaze is like arrows shot from a bow.

Body Builder Walk



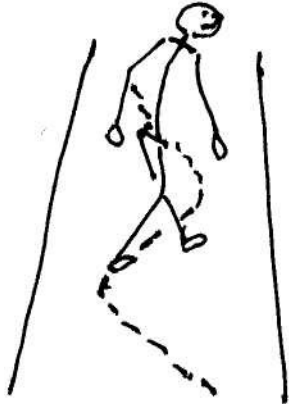
It is the style of a man who has superb muscles, or who believes so. The shoulders are held elevated, chest out, the arms away from the body. The arms move very little while the legs carry the torso majestically forwards.

Roadside Romeo Walk



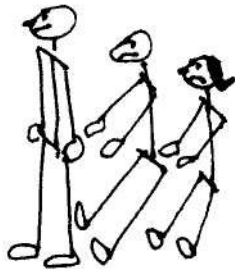
The shoulders are hunched, the hands are in the trouser pockets, the lips whistle when the gaze settles on a pretty girl.

Zig-zag Walk



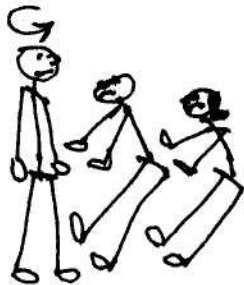
This style is exhibited by some people whose forward movement is zig-zag instead of linear, even if the road ahead is straight. Its purpose is unclear, but its result is to irritate those whose attempts to overtake are frustrated by coming in the way as they try to pass by first on one side and then on the other.

Braking Walk



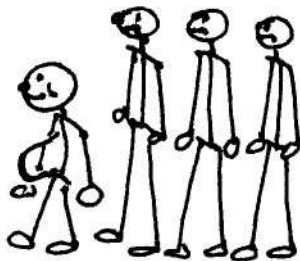
The 'Braking' style is of those who think as they walk. When they get an arresting thought, they stop suddenly in their tracks. All those behind them have to put on emergency brakes to avoid collision with the person in front.

Brake And Turn Around Walk



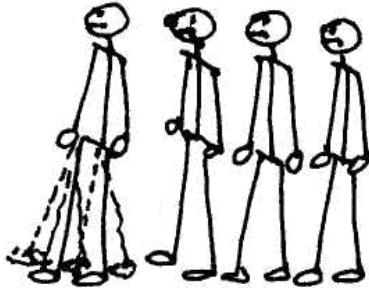
This is an advanced version of the 'Braking Walk'. The walker stops suddenly and turns around through 180 degrees to come face to face with the person immediately behind him/her. The latter has to put on emergency brakes to avoid embracing him/her.

Slow In The fast Lane Walk



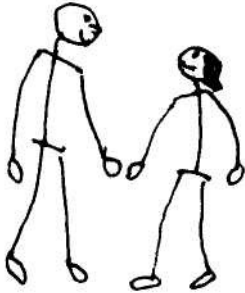
This style is adopted by some obese walkers on a busy, narrow path or lane. The walker walks slowly, blocking the path by his/her bulk, thereby preventing others from overtaking him/her. The road ahead remains clear, all people there having walked away.

Going Nowhere Walk



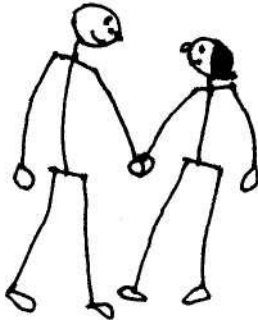
This is the style of a person who does not know where he/she wants to go. On a busy street, in a crowd, he/she moves his/her feet as in walking, but actually remains stationary. The result is a pedestrian traffic jam behind him/her.

Just Friends Walk



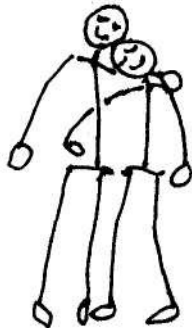
This style is typical of a boy and a girl in love, who tell the world they are just friends. They look at each other while taking short and slow steps forwards, their hands close but never touching.

Just In Love Walk



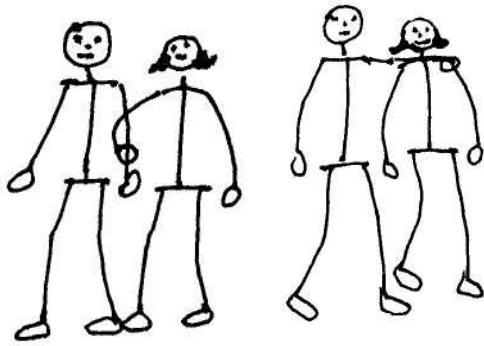
This style is adopted by a boy and a girl whose love has been declared to the respective parents and has been approved. It is similar to the 'Just Friends' walk, except that they hold hands.

Head Over Heels In Love Walk



The walking style is typical of newly weds, and those who are deeply in love but not yet married, and don't care who sees them. It is like 'Just In Love' walk, but much more advanced. Their adjacent sides touch each other, her head resting over his shoulder and his head over her head, her hand around his waist and his around her shoulders.

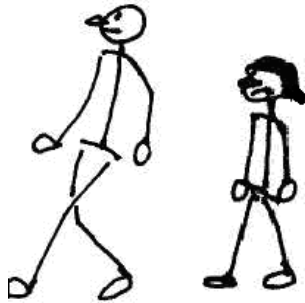
Holding Walk



The girl holds the boy by his arm while they walk. He believes she does so because she needs the support of his strong arm. The reality is that she does it to establish ownership of the boy to other girls, or to prevent him from running away.

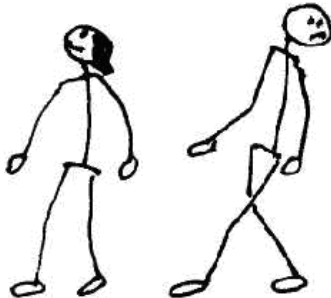
In a reverse situation, the boy places his hand over the girl's opposite shoulder for similar reasons.

Single File Group Walk: Husband-Wife



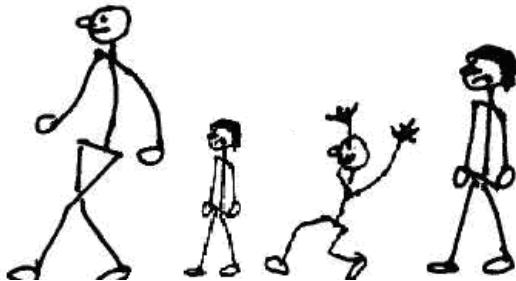
The husband walks ahead. The wife follows two-three feet behind. This shows who is the leader of the pack. The husband watches birds ahead without the knowledge of the wife.

Single File Group Walk: Wife-Husband



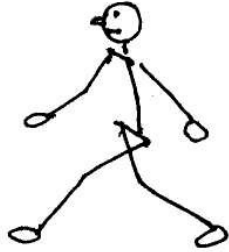
The wife walks ahead, apparently the head of the pack. The husband follows two-three feet behind. He is better off than in the 'Husband-Wife' style, being able to watch birds in all directions without the knowledge of the wife.

Single File Group Walk: Family



In the Husband-Wife or Wife-Husband 'Single File' walk, the children fill in between the two. This has nothing to do with narrow lanes or crowded streets. It is the culture. The children pick it up for use in adult life.

Nine-fifty Walk



It is a brisk walking style, classically adopted by someone late for catching the nine-fifty local train to work. It is also used by obese people trying to lose weight, health freaks who want to live forever, and doctors at workplace to show how busy they are.

Retrovision Walk



It is the style of a person whose heart is left behind while the legs force the body forwards. Collision accidents or falling in different holes is a likely outcome.

Mobile Walk



It is the style of a person who speaks on a mobile phone as he/she stands. His/her one hand is held against the ear holding the phone there. He/she walks to and fro like a lion in a cage, because he/she believes that he/she must be mobile while speaking on a mobile phone.

These walking styles can be modified by the walkers if they so wish. I have not included any styles associated with old age, illnesses, or addictions like alcohol or drug abuse, partly because they cannot be changed, and partly because I have no intention of making fun of something one cannot help.