

# NAMI Walks 101 Fun Ways to FUNdraise



1. **Register online at [www.namiwalks.org](http://www.namiwalks.org)** to gain access to your very own personal fundraising headquarters—your online participant dashboard.
2. **Make a self-donation to jumpstart your fundraising.** This also lets your donors see your personal commitment to NAMI Walks.
3. **Customize your personal fundraising page** with a photo and your personal story.
4. **Email your fundraising campaign to friends, family, and co-workers**, and ask them to support you. Your email will have a direct link to your website where they can make a secure donation online and automatically receive a receipt for tax purposes.
5. **Share your personal fundraising page** on social media to reach a lot of people in a little bit of time!
6. **Try Facebook Fundraisers!** Connect your fundraising page with Facebook Fundraisers by logging into your participant dashboard. Be sure to connect them first--so your Facebook donations show up on your personal fundraising page. (participating walks only)
7. **Corporate Matching Gifts:** Take advantage of corporate matching gift programs. Many of your donors may work for companies that have a matching gift program—and their donation could double simply by filling out a form and submitting it to NAMI Walks.
8. **Corporate Sponsor:** Identify one corporate sponsor that you can ask for a large donation. Offer to wear their shirt for advertising.
9. **NAMI Walks Sneaker Sales:** Ask a local coffee shop, restaurant, or convenience store to sell NAMI Walk Sneakers for a month to support the Walk.
10. **Have Lunch for Mental Health:** Ask a local restaurant to support NAMI Walks through a Have Lunch for Mental Health. Customers support NAMI Walks by adding a donation to their credit card slip. Or ask them if they will donate a portion of the day's proceeds to support NAMI Walks.
11. **Can't attend Walk Day...don't worry you can still participate as a virtual walker or team!** Virtual walkers and teams register, spread awareness and raise funds just like a traditional walker or team. The only difference is that instead of attending on Walk Day, you have the option of hosting a virtual event that you choose (a walk, bar-b-que, picnic, movie night, bowling, etc.) to celebrate all the hard work you and/or your team accomplished. For more information, contact your local Walk Manager.



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12. **Jeans/Casual Day: Ask your company to allow a Jeans Day.** For a donation of \$5, employees may dress casual on a designated day. Or, sell a year's worth of casual days.
13. **Lunch In:** Bring your lunch to work for a week and donate the savings to your NAMIWalks team. Ask friends and co-workers to join in the Lunch In challenge!
14. **Garage Sale:** Ask all of your friends and neighbors to participate by donating items for a garage sale. Make signs that advertise that all proceeds are going to support NAMIWalks. Ask your local paper to run an ad as their contribution. Add a bake sale and/or lemonade stand, and have a NAMIWalks donation jar visibly displayed. Don't forget to make checks payable to NAMIWalks.
15. **Put a recyclable water bottle at your desk.** One 16.9 ounce bottle holds \$100 worth of dimes.
16. **"Loose Change Day":** Ask your child's school to have a "Loose Change Day." Make a flyer encouraging each child to bring in loose change from their house to be donated to NAMIWalks. Encourage the school's math classes to assist with counting, predicting and rolling the change. This is a great way to involve the entire school. You can hold this event multiple times.
17. **Sell space on your Team T-shirt:** Sell small blocks of space on your Team T-shirt you plan to wear at the Walk. Suggested \$10 donation. Encourage donors to write a tribute message. Asking your donors to add a message to your Walk attire is a great way to inspire them.
18. **Car Wash:** Hold a car wash—either in your neighborhood, at your place of worship or at your place of business. Ask local businesses to donate the supplies you will need and ask your friends to help wash the cars. Add a bake sale; sell chilled bottles of water (that have been donated).
19. **Car Wash-Take 2:** Go to your local car wash and talk with the owner/manager about doing a fundraising event there. Many people go to the same car wash every week. Post flyers a week in advance, and then spend a few hours talking with people about what you are doing at the cashier stand. Distribute a NAMIWalks flyer; accept donations!
20. **Voicemail:** Change your voicemail messages to announce the fact that you are walking for NAMIWalks. This will be news to some and a reminder for all!
21. **Labels/Business Cards:** Create (or order) return address labels and/or business cards that state, "I'm participating in the NAMIWalks event. Will you sponsor me?"
22. **Fundraise on Twitter or other social media** directly through your online participant dashboard.
23. **Silent Auction:** Ask some local businesses to donate items or gift certificates and hold a silent auction at your fundraising event or on a payday at work. Examples of auction items include a book of car wash certificates, \$10 off dry-cleaning, movie passes, play tickets, restaurant gift certificates, pet grooming, or a week of free coffee. The list is endless! Set minimum donation limits and allow people to bid them up.
24. **Live Auction:** Same as above, but with an energetic auctioneer. Good for a large crowd and some big-ticket items such as a trip for two, a special bottle of wine, landscaping, pool or housecleaning services.



25. **Waiters:** Ask the waiter/waitress or bartender at your favorite hangout to donate a day's tips. If you have a friend who waits or bartends, ask them, too.
26. **Restaurant Spare Change Jar:** Ask your favorite restaurant or local pub to put out a jar for donations of spare change. Decorate it with quotes and pictures.
27. **Benefit Night:** Throw a fundraising party at a local establishment. Charge your guests an entrance fee (donation). Also make sure to ask the local establishment to support you with a donation of 10% (or more!) of the night's sales.
28. **Happy Hour:** Wear your team T-shirt to Happy Hour and ask people to sign it for a \$10 donation. Ask the DJ to announce that you are in the bar.
29. **Bartender:** Ask your favorite bar if you can guest bartend for a night and keep all of your tips. Make sure you invite all of your friends to come in that night!
30. **Spaghetti Dinner:** Encourage your place of worship, work, school or other organization to host a spaghetti dinner to benefit NAMIWalks. Have all of your friends help with the cooking. Or organize a potluck party where everyone brings a dish to share. The entrance fee to the party is a donation. Make sure to have plenty of donation forms on hand for the donors who want to give more.
31. **Theme Dinner:** Hold a theme dinner party for at least 10 of your friends; donation is \$50 a person. Spend just \$20 per person on food and you've raised \$300 in donations. Better yet, have all of the food donated!
32. **Karaoke Bar:** Ask your local karaoke bar to host a benefit night. Invite all of your friends; charge at the door.
33. **Rock On!** If you know musicians, ask them to perform a benefit concert at a backyard BBQ, block party or local club. The admission ticket is a check made payable to NAMIWalks.
34. **Birthday:** In lieu of a gift for your birthday, ask your friends and family to make a donation to NAMIWalks through your personal NAMIWalks website.
35. **House-Warming Party:** In lieu of a house-warming gift, ask your friends and family to make a donation to NAMIWalks.
36. **Wedding Gift and Favors:** In lieu of wedding gifts, ask your friends and family to make a donation to NAMIWalks. Or in lieu of buying wedding favors for your guests, make a donation to NAMI and make place cards at each place setting to announce your gift.
37. **Retirement Party:** In lieu of a retirement party gift, ask your office to support NAMIWalks. What an incredible way to kick off your new life!
38. **E-mail Auto signature:** Get in the habit of signing your emails with your name and a link to your personal fundraising page in your participant dashboard.
39. **Ask your travel agency** for a plane ticket to raffle off, a night in a hotel or a weekend getaway.



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40. **Ask your doctor(s) and dentist** for a donation.
41. **Ask your yoga instructor or personal trainer** for a donation or a donated class. Invite your friends to attend a special class (yoga/aerobics/step) donated by the trainer and their admission fee (\$20 or more) becomes a donation. The instructor also gets the chance to build their client base. Without a doubt, it's a win-win!
42. **Ask your lawyer and insurance agent** for a donation.
43. **Ask your auto mechanic** for a donation.
44. **Ask your veterinarian** for a donation.
45. **Ask your real estate agent and mortgage broker** for a donation.
46. **Ask your dry cleaner** for a donation, or for coupons that you can use at a fundraising party or raffle.
47. **Ask your barista** for a donation, or ask them to sell paper sneakers or donate a day's tips to NAMIWalks.
48. **Ask your hair stylist** for a donation; if not in the form of a check, then perhaps in the form of haircuts! See if he/she will host a hair-cut-a-thon, in the salon (or in your garage!) You can probably raise more donations in two hours of haircutting than you imagine—be sure to get the word out!
49. **Hair Salon:** Ask your hair salon if they will donate \$2 from each haircut on a specific day.
50. **Gym:** Ask your gym if you, or they, can teach an aerobics, yoga, or spinning class as a benefit to NAMIWalks.
51. **Spinning Class:** Ask for support from your spinning class instructor and classmates. Set a goal at the beginning of the class, and if it's met, everyone donates \$1 per mile—or \$1 per minute.
52. **Concession Sales with Your Favorite Team!** Did you know that professional sports teams often let volunteer groups run a concession stand at a home game as a fundraiser? Contact your professional home team and then get a group of friends together for a great time at the game—for a worthy cause!
53. **House Party:** Host a house party for friends, family, co-workers and neighbors. Share your experience with NAMIWalks and your reasons for walking. Ask them to support you.
54. **National Holidays:** Don't forget about Memorial Day, Fourth of July, Labor Day weekend and all of those picnics. Ask everyone in attendance for a donation.
55. **Make Christmas ornaments:** Make special Christmas ornaments and sell them for donations.
56. **Decorate a Christmas tree:** Decorate a Christmas tree for a donation.



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57. **Christmas lights:** Offer to put up your neighbors outdoor Christmas lights. It's a job no one wants to do, and they might be delighted to have it done for them, especially if it's a donation to NAMIWalks.
58. **Mow-a-thon:** Hold a neighborhood mow-a-thon weekend where you and your family will mow everyone's lawn for a minimum donation.
59. **Neighbors:** Write a note to all of the neighbors on your block or in your apartment building. Include an update on your fundraising progress.
60. **Free Rent:** Get your apartment complex to donate one month's rent to sponsor you.
61. **Runner:** Offer to be a friend's errand runner or personal assistant for a day, in exchange for a substantial donation.
62. **Talent:** Utilize and sell any talent or skill that you have: graphic design, computer skills, sewing, baking, cake decorating, etc.
63. **Makeovers:** If you are a make-up artist, hair stylist, or work in a salon, do makeovers for a set donation. If you're not, but know someone who is, ask them to donate their services to support you. Tie this in with a holiday, celebration or for a friend's wedding party.
64. **Relaxation Day:** Ask your massage therapist to donate their time and offer massages for a minimum donation. This can be done at your company or at the massage therapist's studio.
65. **Photographer:** If you are an artist or photographer, do portraits for a donation. Family portraits, especially, are always in demand.
66. **Garden Tour:** Hold a garden tour at your home or at a local historical home. Have the tour promoted through your local newspaper.
67. **Meet the Press:** Contact the editor of your local paper or your company newsletter—or both! Ask them to interview you about what you've undertaken and why, and include a request for support. Be sure they include instructions in the story for how readers can make donations to you.
68. **Babysit, pet sit or house sit** for a donation.
69. **Water the Garden:** Or walk the dog, feed the cat, bring in the newspaper and mail. In return for your services, ask that a donation be made to NAMIWalks.
70. **Gala Night:** Host an elegant or formal party. Have food and beverages donated.
71. **Musician:** Ask a friend—or the friend of a friend—to play the piano, violin or other musical instrument for a fundraising event.



**72. Wine-Tasting Party:** Have a wine-tasting and cheese-tasting party. If you know anyone (who knows anyone!) who owns, manages, or works in a winery, ask if they will host it. Charge at the door and ask if a portion of proceeds of all bottles sold can benefit NAMIWalks. Blind tastings are fun. Think about dressing up the event with some very special vintages.

**73. Set up a table in front of your local grocery store:** get permission first, and then ask everyone who enters to support you. While this doesn't sound very glamorous, it's very effective. Remember that in addition to raising much-needed funds, you are also playing an important role in raising awareness.

**74. Sweets Party:** Have a dessert auction at work! Ask local restaurants, bakeries and groceries to donate yummy desserts. Post signs at work well in advance and then bring all of the desserts in to work on Friday.

**75. Movie Party:** Host a movie party at your house. Every time the word "walk" is said in the movie, everyone antes up \$1 in a donation bowl. Have pizza donated and charge at the door.

**76. Play Tickets:** Ask your local playhouse to donate tickets and then auction them off. Better yet, ask them to donate season passes!

**77. New Job:** Celebrate landing a new job with a party! Invite everyone you know and ask them to come prepared to support you and NAMIWalks as well.

**78. Creative Friends:** Ask a local artist or creative friend to donate a piece or art or jewelry that you can auction off.

**79. Tea Party:** Host a traditional "High Tea" or ask a local hotel to do so on your behalf. Charge at the door.

**80. Host a coffee get-together at your home or at a local coffee shop.** Ask your favorite coffee shop to donate the coffee (and maybe even some goodies!). Invite your neighbors and friends.

**81. Pet Birthday Party:** Have a fun birthday party for your pet—or a friend's pet. Serve dog biscuits and ask everyone to wear ears! Charge at the door. Take photos of your guests with the guest of honor.

**82. TV Show Party:** Host a party in celebration of the premiere or finale of a favorite TV show. Serve donated hors d'oeuvres and drinks. Charge at the door.



- 83. Netflix Marathon:** Host a Netflix Night with a favorite show. Choose a theme (The Office) and make popcorn. Ask for a \$1 donation each time something specific happens, like every time Jim pulls a prank on the show. Be creative!
- 84. Themed Music/Dance Party:** Host a music/dance night—50's, 60's, 70's, 80's style. Play all of the old favorites. Ask people to come dressed in costume and dance the night away. Serve donated drinks and food. Charge at the door. You can even ask a DJ if they'd donate an evening for you, so you can have a complete selection of tunes!
- 85. Scrapbooking Party:** Host a scrapbooking party at your house or at the local store. Ask a professional to lead an inspirational idea exchange and have some great samples on display, some special supplies and/or discounts for attendees. Serve donated food and drinks and charge at the door.
- 86. Game Night:** Host a game night: Monopoly, Trivial Pursuit, Scrabble, Poker, Bunko, Cards for Humanity, Bingo. Serve donated food and drinks. Charge at the door.
- 87. Host a Kid's Game Day:** Invite your kid's friends, nieces and nephews, the neighborhood kids, the soccer team, to a game day at a local park. Like a drop-off party, you coordinate a couple of hours of fun activities and ask the parents for a donation in exchange. Tetherball, Four Square, Jump Rope, Potato Sack races, Yo-Yo contests, you name it! Have donated snack food and juice boxes available to round out the fun.
- 88. Bowling:** Ask your local bowling alley to donate some lanes for a fundraising party. Invite your co-workers, your neighbors, your family or a group of old friends. Charge at the door.
- 89. Used Book/DVD/CD Sale:** A more focused and versatile version of a garage sale. Ask everyone you know (co-workers, neighbors, family and friends) to donate any books, DVDs, and CDs that they no longer need. Choose a time and place to have a used book sale – maybe your local farmer's market, school carnival or workplace. Or take the books to a used book store and use the proceeds to support NAMIWalks.
- 90. Swim Party:** Ask a local public pool to donate (or rent at a reduced rate) a couple of hours for a private party. This is a great way to get teenagers involved in the fundraising effort. Have donated snacks on hand and be sure to include a lifeguard. Turn on fun music and charge at the door.
- 91. Banner:** Have a group of friends, your child's classmates a local business, help to design a banner that you can use at the Walk. Suggest a donation minimum.
- 92. Special Screening:** Ask your local movie theatre to donate a special screening of a new release. Invite everyone you know and post flyers. Charge at the door. Ask if the theatre will also donate a percentage of the concession sales for your event!





- 93. Baseball Game or other local sporting event:** Buy a section of tickets at a group rate and charge your family and friends twice the price. Get food donated and host a tailgate party.
- 94. Coins:** Go to your local mall or shopping center and ask what they do with the coins in the fountain.
- 95. Lunch Room:** Put up a display in the lunch room at work (a sign with your picture and a note about what you are doing); be sure to include a jar for donations.
- 96. Bottle Drive:** If you are in a state that requires bottle deposits, start a bottle drive. Put flyers around your neighborhood telling people to put their bottles out on a certain day and you'll come by to collect and return them. Let your local school, pool or gym know that you will do the same for them.
- 97. 50/50 Raffle:** Sell tickets to a 50/50 raffle at a large event or gathering, like a high school football game or at work. The prize is half the "pot." The winner splits the "pot" with you – you get 50% of the proceeds and they get the other 50%.
- 98. Speak at a place of worship:** Ask your place of worship if you can speak to your congregation about NAMIWalks and your commitment following a service and set up a table to collect donations afterwards.
- 99. Oscar Party:** Host a party to watch the Academy Awards and charge an entrance fee. Ask a local bar that has a big-screen television to allow you to have the party there and donate a portion of the food and beverage sales.
- 100. Golf Outing/Tournament:** Work with a local golf course to plan a charity golf outing. Charge a fee to participate and see if you can get prizes donated for the winner of each hole or the whole course.
- 101. Web-based auction:** Get friends and family to donate things for you to sell on an internet auction site. Make sure to let bidders know that the items selling price is going towards your fundraising for NAMIWalks.