

## DDMO Because...I Can't Walk in High Heels

You know how fashion models and actresses can strut around in high heels all day, looking graceful and empowered? That's not me. Or at least, it never used to be.

For years, I admired high heels from afar, but could never stand to wear them for more than five minutes. If I had to walk in them, I wibbled and wobbled everywhere, projecting the opposite of a sexy, confident attitude.

This probably has a lot to do with the fact that I was a very active tomboy all through my adolescence, and still am, to an extent. If it's not a special occasion, I am much more likely to sport sneakers than high heels. Despite this, just like almost every other woman in the world, I adore high heels. Why? It's hard to say for sure. Many articles, books, studies and at least one documentary have been produced to discuss the reason why women love shoes in general and high heels in particular. I may delve into that a bit more in the future, but that's not really the point of this post.

**Walking in high heels.** Funny as this may sound to girls who've been doing it for most of their lives, wearing high heels is very much an acquired skill. One that some women will pay money--beside the cost of their shoes--to learn. [LEGWORK](#) is an instructional DVD full of exercises for strengthening and toning the "legs and core...for stability, control and endurance in heels of all heights." Now, I haven't tried LEGWORK and I'm not endorsing it or anything, but its existence does point out a very interesting fact; I am not the only woman who sometimes struggles with walking in high heels. My own prowess has improved drastically in the last few years, due mostly to the tutelage of a couple of my friends, and my stint as a fashion designer's assistant.



If you're going to borrow fabulous heels from your boss, you'd better be able to walk in them.

But I digress. If you are always poised, elegant and sexy while wearing high heels, congratulations. If not, read on for some fantastic--and free--tips to help you achieve the grace and confidence of a runway model, or at least not fall down the next time you try to cross a street or climb stairs in high heels.

The average height of stiletto heels keeps going up, so the challenge is now to maintain balance in 5" heels, rather than a more conservative 3" or so. Fine. We can do it. But if you are a beginner, it is

best to start with a low, fairly wide heel, such as a kitten heel, and work your way up. In fact, you can start to practice before putting on any shoes at all.

**1.** You'll need a little room to walk, even if you have to go in circles. If you are barefoot or wearing flats, stand up on your tip toes, so all your weight rests on the ball of your feet. Your toes should be facing straight forward. No turning your feet to either side.



**2.** Lift your head, tighten your lower abs and straighten your shoulders. It may help to pretend the top of your head is connected to the ceiling by a string. Posture is very important here. If you pitch forward when you walk in high heels, it won't look very pretty, which of course spoils the effect of wearing them in the first place. So, chin up, back straight, stomach in, shoulders back. Oh, look. Now your chest is out, too. Winning!



**3.** Now step out to what feels like a comfortable distance, placing your forward foot directly in line with the back foot. Good, now do it again. And again.

**4.** Pay attention to your knees. Are they stiff? Relax them. How about your hips and thighs? Are they clenching? Relax those, too. Use your abs to stabilize yourself, just like they tell you in a yoga or Pilates class.



**5.** With each step, you're going to place nearly your entire weight on the forward leg. This is what creates that hip sway men find so alluring.



**So far, so good.** Now, put on a pair of actual high heels. You know, the pair you're dying to wear, but are afraid to because they just might kill you. You're in a safe place, right? No coffee tables at shin height, no big cracks in the floor? Great. *Put on those bad girls and repeat steps 1 through 5.* Et voila! You, dear reader, are walking in heels.



**6. Bonus move: stairs.** Going up them in heels isn't so hard. Just remember to plant only the balls of your feet when you go up them, not your entire foot. And *always* hold onto the rail, or an attractive man, if one is available.



**7.** Going down seems a little trickier, but it's not, once you know how. On the way down the stairs, plant your entire shoe on the stair, angled slightly away from the side with the hand rail. If you're just getting started, it's best to go one foot at a time, so both are on the same stair. Step down, plant both feet on the same stair again, and so on until you gain more confidence. There you go! Now you're ready to rock those heels on a hot date, or a girls' night out.

