

# BeActive

## 6-Week Starter Program



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This program is intended as a guideline only, please adjust as recommended by your healthcare professional. This guide was designed to be used ONLY in conjunction with the ACTIVATOR® or Urban Poles.

Please consult your healthcare professional before using the Urban or Activator poles or starting this program if you currently use a cane or walker, have a medical condition which affects your balance, stability, grip strength, vision, depth judgment, coordination, or if you are currently recovering from an injury or surgery.

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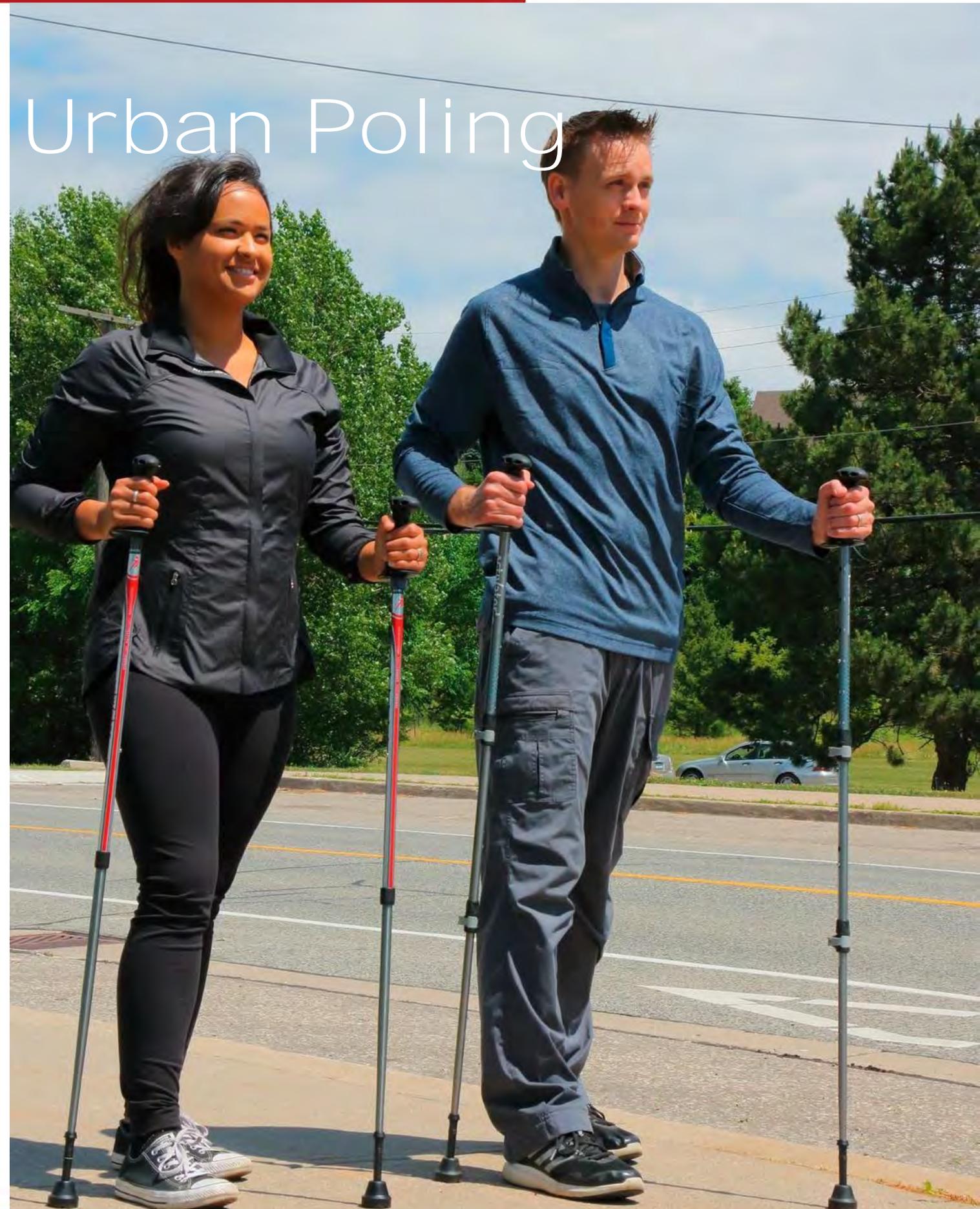
# 10 Reason to Love Urban Poling

- 1. It tones your waist** - Your abs tighten each time you push off with your poles. That's the equivalent of 1,800 abdominal contractions every mile!
- 2. Your knees and hips will thank you** - The poles let you offload weight from your hips and knees into your upper body. You can walk further, faster or even pain-free.
- 3. It revs up the calorie burning** - Research proves it over and over again: urban poling burns up to 20 to 46% more calories than standard walking. Wow!
- 4. It sculpts your arms and shoulders** - Urban poling uses 75 percent of your muscles—especially those underused upper body muscles. Hello short sleeves!
- 5. It helps balance your blood sugar** - The full-body urban poling workout helps keep blood sugars in a healthy range.



# 10 Reason to Love Urban Poling

6. **You'll straighten up and feel more confident** - Your upper back muscles (the ones that pull your shoulders back) tighten each time you plant your poles and press down on the ergonomic handles.
7. **It's a fun social workout** - Invite your friends, your parents & your kids to enjoy all the health benefits with you.
8. **It's an amazing stress buster** - The smooth rhythmic action provides a distraction from everyday concerns and lifts your mood.
9. **You can adjust the intensity** - Urban poling is an energizing activity that can be enjoyed by people of any age and athletic ability. Just press on the ergonomic handles with more or less intensity to modify your pace.
10. **It's a great running alternative** - Hit the trails or your neighborhood sidewalks on your own or with a gang of friends. Urban poling offers the same year-round fresh-air experience as running—but without jarring and jostling your joints.



# Urban Poling Technique

## **STEP 1** - Notice how you walk naturally



**Before beginning, be sure to adjust the pole length to your correct height.**

- Take a few steps forward without your poles (or while holding your poles in the mid-section) and swing your arms as you would normally when walking. Notice that your arm naturally moves forward at the same time as the opposite leg.



VIDEOS: Go to [urbanpoling.com](https://urbanpoling.com)  
- Getting Started  
- Urban Poling Instructions or click

<https://urbanpoling.com/getting-started/#whichpolesareforyou>

# Urban Poling Technique

## **STEP 2** - Drag your poles



- Take hold of your poles, making sure that the CoreGrip with the letter “R” is in your right hand and the CoreGrip with the letter “L” is in your left hand.
- Grip the pole handles loosely, with your arms hanging completely relaxed by your side.
- With your arms at your side and dragging the poles behind you, simply begin to walk. Feel your arms naturally swing slightly in front and then behind your body with each stride.

# Urban Poling Technique

## **STEP 2** - Swing your arm into the handshake position



- As you continue walking and dragging your poles, start swinging your arms further forward until they are at the same level as if you were offering a high handshake. If you are finding this difficult, shorten the length of your poles. At this point, you should feel the tips of the poles catching the ground behind you with each step.

# Urban Poling Technique

**STEP 4 - Press down on Ledge of CoreGrip and push off**



- As you plant your poles, apply downward pressure on the ledge of the CoreGrip and feel your body being propelled forward by the poles.

# Urban Poling Technique

## **STEP 5** – Slight Lift your poles off the ground



- Finally, as your arm swings forward to the high handshake position, lift slightly so your poles can clear the ground

# Activator® Technique

## STEP 1 - Take hold of your poles



- Make sure that the CoreGrip (handle) with the letter “R” is in your right hand and the pole CoreGrip with the letter “L” is in your left hand. Hold onto your poles with an easy grip, making sure your hands go all the way around the CoreGrip.

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**-Activator Instructions or click**

**<https://urbanpoling.com/getting-started/#whichpolesareforyou>**

*Important: This technique was developed in conjunction with the specific features of the ACTIVATOR® poles. A study by Bechard (2015 unpublished) at UWO found significant off-loading for the knee joint when using the Activator technique.*

# Activator<sup>®</sup> Technique

## STEP 1 - Take hold of your poles



- Stand tall and place your elbows at your sides at a 90-degree angle.
- Ensure the poles are always completely vertical. Keep your elbows bent the entire time you are walking

*Important: This technique was developed in conjunction with the specific features of the ACTIVATOR<sup>®</sup> poles. A study by Bechard (2015 unpublished) at UWO found significant off-loading for the knee joint when using the Activator technique.*

# Activator® Technique

## STEP 2 - Begin walking



- Step forward with the poles and walk in the same manner as regular walking: swing your right arm forward (with your elbow bent at 90 degrees) as your left footsteps forward.
- Keep the poles vertical and in front of your body at all times.
- Be sure that your upper arms swing forward and backward from the shoulders (not elbows) like pendulums.

*Important: This technique was developed in conjunction with the specific features of the ACTIVATOR® poles. A study by Bechard (2015 unpublished) at UWO found significant off-loading for the knee joint when using the Activator technique.*

# Activator® Technique

## **STEP 3** - Loose grip and press down on the Ledge of the CoreGrip



- Don't grip the handles too tightly. Instead, press down on the Ledge with the outside edge of your hand to engage your upper body and core muscles and to increase your stability and balance.
- Significant off-loading of weight into the poles will only occur if you are applying a downward force to the Ledge. Also, pressing down on the Ledge promotes core strengthening and better posture.

*Important: This technique was developed in conjunction with the specific features of the ACTIVATOR® poles. A study by Bechard (2015 unpublished) at UWO found significant off-loading for the knee joint when using the Activator technique.*

# BeActive

## 6-Week Starter Program



## **Getting Ready – 6 Week Program for Adults – Guidelines from Instructor Manual**

### **Suitability of Program**

Participants should be able to walk comfortably (without poles) for 45 minutes. Participants should complete a physical activity readiness questionnaire upon registration. These forms should be given to the instructor prior to the start of the course.

This is guidelines for classes for adults, if you are designing a program for less active elder/older adults or those with issues with balance, please refer to your Instructor manual for guidelines for Less Active Adults.

### **Location of Walks**

Make sure you know the route well for obstacles, traffic and rest spots. Start off with level terrain.

### **Instructor(s)**

The recommended ratio is one instructor for every 10 participants. This may change depending on the group's fitness level and other factors. More instructors will be necessary if the group is less-active older adults. Classes can be increased to 15-20 people when instructors are experienced and when participants are healthy and active.

### **Test Session**

At the first class, observe the abilities of your participants.

There are several options if your class has individuals who have difficulty keeping up with the rest of the group:

1. See if the individual can spend time between classes improving his/her fitness level.
2. Keep the route in a circle format so group members don't get too far apart from each other.
3. Ask if the more proficient polers can take turns walking with slower polers.
4. Use looping. Fast walker pole to the back of the class several times during the class.
5. Ask fast walkers to do 10 sets of exercises while waiting for the slower walkers.
6. Split the class into fast and slow walkers if you have two instructors.

### **Safety Issues**

Ensure participants always walk in single file and with adequate space between themselves so that their poles don't create a tripping hazard.

### **Clothing**

Instructors should wear bright or reflective clothing during early morning and evening hours for high visibility when crossing streets.

### **Water & Snack**

Always carry more water than you would for regular walking and snacks particularly if people in your group have diabetes..

### **Weather**

You may decide to run the program rain or shine. (Keep in mind that many people will not want to walk in the rain because of the slippery surface.) You could make this decision based on your group and simply ask them if they prefer to walk only in good weather.

### **Poles**

Regularly check to ensure that your poles have not been damaged and replace tips regularly.

### **Waiver**

Determine if you want to use waiver forms

### **Exercises**

Determine which warm up and cool down exercises will be suitable to the abilities of our participants. Refer to your Instructor manual for ideas.

### **First Aid**

Instructors should carry a first aid kit, money for a taxi and a cell phone in case of emergency. They should also carry emergency contact information

**Recommended Program:**

<b>Poling:</b>	<b>50 minutes*</b>	<p>Introduction: Everyone does the urban poling handshake and introduces themselves</p> <p>Get the group excited by explaining the benefits of poling. Show how them to adjust the poles</p> <p>Focus on teaching the first few steps of the technique. Keep the group together and practise by poling in a circle in a park, field, parking lot or indoors in a large gym.</p>
<b>Cool Down:</b>	<b>10 minutes*</b>	<p>Check out the back of your manual for simple cool down exercises (pg 42-44)</p>

Focus on steps 1 to 3 as indicated under Urban Poling Technique (refer to pg 5-7). Intro step 4 in Week 2

If a few participants are using the ACTIVATOR Technique teach them how to do this separately while the rest of the group is practising the urban poling technique. This will help to prevent any confusion among the participants.

**Urban Poling Tips for Weeks 1 & 2**

- Apply a downward pressure on the ledge of the CoreGrip handle to engage your core muscles and reduce stress on lower joints.
- Try not to hold the CoreGrip handles too tightly

**Recommended Program:**

<b>Warm-Up:</b>	<b>15 - 20 minutes</b>	<p>Introduction</p> <p>Warm Up Ideas: Proper posture, deep breathing, marching in place or poling slowly</p> <p><b>Teaching: Review steps 1 to 4.</b></p>
<b>Poling:</b>	<b>15 - 25 minutes</b>	<p>When the group is ready, go poling on a route outside. Try to find a short route that is in the form of a circle or figure 8 so that you can keep the group together. The route should be flat and free of traffic, and obstacles with rest spots along the way. Keep everyone in single file if you are poling on sidewalks. Include a short 5 to 7 minute rest break as needed.</p>
<b>Cool Down:</b>	<b>10 - 15 minutes</b>	<p>Do some cool down exercises from the back of your manual (pg 42 -44).</p>

Teach Step 4 as indicated under Urban Poling Technique (refer to pg 8). If you have fast and slow walkers, refer to the accompanying slide

**Urban Poling Tip of the Week:**

- Don't forget the importance of deep breathing
- Pay attention to your breathing and focus on breathing deeply from your abdominal area

**Recommended Program:**

<b>Warm-Up:</b>	<b>5 to 15 minutes</b>	<p>Introduction</p> <p>Warm Up Ideas: Proper posture, deep breathing, marching in place or poling slowly</p> <p>Teaching: <b>Review steps 1 to 4. Explain step 5 in Week 5 or 6.</b></p>
<b>Poling:</b>	<b>20 to 40 minutes</b>	<p>Try a longer route but ensure that there are still rest spots along the way. You could also increase the intensity by including some hills or include intermittent 2-5 minutes of fast walking.</p>
<b>Cool Down:</b>	<b>10 to 15 minutes</b>	<p>To add some variety, try practising your cool down exercises (poling slowly and breathing deeply), half way through your route. <b>Refer to the back of your manual for cool down exercises (pg. 42-44)</b></p>

If your program is going to last longer than 6 weeks, add on 5 minutes of poling each week or every other week as tolerated by your group.

**Urban Poling Tips for Weeks 5 & 6**

Keep your group socially engaged by encouraging participants to go for coffee after the session.

# Congratulations You Did It!

Sh@re your journey with us

**BeActive**  
6-Week Starter Program



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Walk your way **to better health**