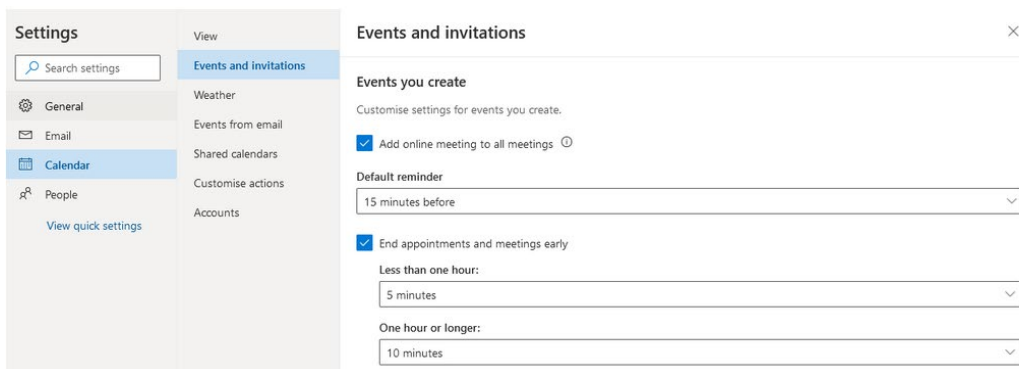


Active meetings, active breaks: from good intentions to good habits

Many people's daily routines have been turned upside down due to covid. This can often result in getting less exercise than before because of travelling less for both commuting and work journeys. Keeping physically and mentally well is one of the most important things we can do for our working lives so here are a few tips to build more physical activity into the working day and break up long periods of inactivity, wherever you're working. Everyone's circumstances and surroundings are different, though – these are just suggestions. Try out a few ideas and just go with whatever works for you.

- Top tip: **Start a meeting** with a 5-minute activity, even just standing up and having a quick stretch. Imagine if every meeting started this way – what a positive message for staff wellbeing;
- Top tip: **block time** for active breaks in your diary and meetings, and discuss this with colleagues and your manager so that you can support each other;
- Formally add active breaks to your **meeting agendas**. Just 5 minutes makes a difference. See the 5-minute suggestions below: screen-sharing a video to follow formalises that it's a valuable part of the agenda;
- Block a "**meet-free**" **hour or half hour** at lunchtime in your diary so that you have time for a proper break and don't end up with back-to-back meetings;
- **Shorten your meetings** by 5 minutes, to create space between them to get up and move: go to Outlook / Calendar / Settings / Events & Invitations and tick the box to send appointments and meetings early;



- For a 1:1 with a colleague, make all or part of it on the phone as a **walking meeting**;
- **Encourage each other to be active** by scheduling time for active breaks and microbreaks, sharing photos of a daily walk, doing a step count challenge together – whatever suits the team;
- **Stand up** for the duration of the meeting, or for say every second agenda item, or just as it suits you. Try standing on one leg, and then swap over. If you can, close your eyes too. Great for improving your balance;
- Download those useful **podcasts** that there's never time for, and listen to them on a walk;
- Really pressed for time? Eat lunch while watching an essential presentation / webinar and then **use your lunchtime** to get some exercise;
- Visit [Think Health Think Nature](#) to help you explore and enjoy your local green space;
- **Increasing your heartrate** has significant benefits. Run up and down the stairs 10 times, or try the [NHS Active 10 App](#) - it logs brisk walking, not just a step count. When you see your day report as "11 minutes walking of which 2 were brisk" it can be quite motivating!
- Remember eye health too: focus really far away and really close up a few times, throughout the day.
- Check out the great **information and resources** on the [Way to Work](#) site.

Active break 5 minute options

More energetic / fun, great if you're at home (switch the camera off if you prefer)

- Gentle [full body workout](#)
- [Higher energy workout](#) (try this holding a tin of beans in each hand)
- [Chair dancing #1](#)
- [Chair dancing #2](#)
- Simple Bollywood [dance workout](#)

Less energetic, great if you're in the office (you'll need headphones)

- 5 minutes of [breathing space](#) with life coach Anna Bell
- Quick [stress fix](#) for the end of the working day
- [Chair yoga](#): 5 minutes of simple stretches
- [Sitting stretches](#) to protect and relax your back
- A [VisitScotland film](#) - so many beautiful places to remember! Stand up while watching it
- Standing up, listen to a favourite song – keep the tab open on your browser and just click to boost your mood. Dancing is optional...

And finally, if you're working from home then see if the ideas here might support you:

