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Steps Australia

Coordinators Resource

Avoiding Pedometer Pitfalls

How to choose a pedometer that will count every step – because every step counts!

When running a workplace pedometer challenge, it's imperative you're informed which pedometer – including its features – will provide your employees with the greatest accuracy, and ensure their hard work goes rewarded.

However, pedometers come in all shapes and sizes, and with different mechanisms and accessories. Some come out of cereal boxes – the Fruit Loops of the pedometer world. Others focus on corporate logo customization – high on branding, low on accuracy. Some cut corners when it comes to durable casing and user-friendliness, whilst others, such as pendulum pedometers (the ones that click with movement) are still on the market, but the technology has been surpassed.

So how can the untrained eye sort the star performers from the 'cereal box' variety?

Director of Pedometers Australia and 10,000 Steps Australia Pedometer Specialist, Kate Crosby says, "Don't sacrifice your workplace initiatives by buying cereal packet-quality pedometers. If you're buying your pedometers from the same place you're buying your water bottles, pens and caps, ask for a sample of the pedometer first, and then ask questions."

Here, she lends her expert knowledge to you, and reveals the questions you should be asking when purchasing a pedometer.

- **Is the pedometer promotional or walking grade?** When you see next to the description 'ideal for trade shows or give-aways' it's a fair indication that you're dealing with a 'cereal packet' or promotional product. "I've seen it time and time again," says Crosby. "Workplaces think logo first and pedometer second. Having your logo displayed means absolutely nothing if your walking program is sent off the rails due to poor pedometer choice. Ask yourself if you're prepared to put logo customization first."
- **Does the pedometer come with any protective features?** "Walking Grade pedometers should come with a pedometer safety strap included in the price. This safety strap (lanyard) saves the pedometer from falling into toilets and onto floors and getting knocked off the waist. This is particularly important for employees working outside of an office environment," says Crosby. Other features she recommends are spring-coiled waist clips for greater grip, and quality clam shell housing to avoid accidental resets and damage to the LCD screen.

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- **Does the pedometer accommodate for differing employees' girths?** If you have staff with larger stomachs, you should consider a dual sensor accelerometer pedometer. Two-dimensional (2D) Accelerometers can handle up to 30% tilt on the waistband, so larger staff members don't suffer from the old-style pendulum problems, such as undercounting steps, when not placed perfectly horizontal or on the hip inline with the knee. "2D and 3D accelerometers are now used worldwide and are recognised for their ability to maintain accuracy on larger body types," says Crosby. "Ask your pedometer supplier for a 2D accelerometer – and your staff will love you for it."

Once you've found a pedometer that ticks all these boxes, Crosby adds there are just a few things to keep in mind:

- **Pedometers are experts – in their field** "Pedometers are designed for walking," she says. "While you can wear them during aerobics, running, cycling or fighting bulls and they may record the movement, their accuracy is specific to walking."
- **Appreciate your staff members will do strange things** "Staff will place them in their pockets, or drop them a few times and wonder why they're not counting steps accurately. So you need to trouble shoot the problem before assuming the pedometer is faulty."
- **Go with a pedometer company that keeps their doors open to you** With so many options, choosing the right pedometer can be overwhelming. Companies can capitalise on your inexperience, promote an inferior product and make themselves unavailable to you after sale. "Choose a pedometer retailer that is always on hand to offer advice, and give you up-to-date information," Crosby says.

Pedometers Australia has over 8 years in the business. Their friendly team of specialists live and breathe pedometers and walking. Based on their latest pedometer research and advice, 10,000 Steps Australia chooses to use the G-Sensor 2026 Accelerometer Pedometer for all its workplace challenges.

If you would like to explore pedometer options or require trouble shooting in the real world, contact [Pedometers Australia](http://www.10000StepsAustralia.com) directly.

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About

10,000 Steps Australia is a pedometer workplace challenge that is uniquely on demand and customizable. Our walking experts have combined intelligent design with up-to-the-minute technology to create an interactive step challenge that inspires employees to be active, and provides coordinators with a turnkey solution to running a successful corporate wellness program. If your organisation is interested in taking up the challenge, contact us for a [live demo](#).

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