ABOUT JANE’S WALK

Jane’s Walk is a global festival of free, citizen-led walking tours inspired by urban activist, Jane Jacobs. MAS is proud to be the host of Jane’s Walk NYC, the biggest Jane’s Walk festival anywhere in the world. What started with a handful of walks in 2011 has since grown into a three-day celebration featuring hundreds of walking tours across the five boroughs.

Jane’s Walks combine the simple act of exploring the city with personal observations, local history, and civic engagement. Anyone is welcome to lead a Jane’s Walk. Whether you are affiliated with an organization or just an impassioned individual, Jane’s Walk is an opportunity to share your knowledge with fellow urbanists.
BRAINSTORMING YOUR WALK

The first step to planning a successful Jane’s Walk is picking a topic and an area of the city that piques your interest. Below are a few examples to demonstrate the festival’s range and offer some inspiration.

Two elements that make for a great walk are incorporating interactivity in some way and getting off the beaten track. Think about engaging the group in a participatory or experiential activity (e.g. Scavenger Hunt in Tribeca) or bringing them to parts of the city that they would not normally see (e.g. Walking the Ridgewood Reservoir).

Advocacy

Example: Preserving Affordability through Community Land Trusts

Art & Architecture

Example: Lost and Found Murals in East Harlem

Food & Entertainment

Example: Tastes from Around the World: Exploring Queens International Night Market

Environment

Example: Flora, Fauna & Folk Riots: The Natural and Social History of Washington Square Park

History & Culture

Example: A Brewing History of Bushwick
PLANNING YOUR WALK

Select a Route

The average Jane’s Walk runs between 60-90 minutes. For this duration, we suggest plotting between 7-10 walk stops. Here are some considerations for selecting your route:

- Pick a precise meeting place (e.g. an exact street address or public landmark) that is easily accessible by public transit and near a restroom, if possible.
- Think about the story you are trying to tell to help map out the sequence of spots.
- Use Google maps to plot your route and factor in walking time between stops.
- Practice your route beforehand, identifying good places to gather the group that are close to the features of the streetscape or landmarks that you want to point out.

Research Your Walk

In addition to online research, information can be found by visiting MAS’s Greenacre Reference Library. The collection contains approximately 3,000 books and reports along with 2,000 archival publications and ephemera produced by MAS over the course of its 125-year history.

Please contact Erin Butler at ebutler@mas.org to learn more.

Incorporate Multiple Perspectives

You can play a curatorial role on your walk by adding different voices, recruiting subject matter experts, and posing questions to generate discussion. This can make for an even more dynamic walk!

Recruit a Volunteer

We strongly recommend recruiting a volunteer who can help attend to logistics along your walk. Volunteers can assist in managing the crowd (e.g. make sure the group stays together and does not block narrow sidewalks or entryways), documenting the walk, and helping to answer questions.

Learn from the Best

There will be the opportunity for Jane’s Walk leaders to take a mock tour with an MAS docent in advance of the festival – stay tuned for details.
SUBMITTING YOUR WALK

Pick a Start Time

To allow travel time between walks, we have staggered time slots over the course of the weekend. We suggest offering a walk at least two times during the festival to give attendees multiple opportunities to attend.

- Friday, May 4: 1pm, 3pm, 6pm, 9pm
- Saturday, May 5: 9am, 11am, 1pm, 3pm, 6pm, 9pm
- Sunday, May 6: 9am, 11am, 1pm, 3pm, 6pm, 9pm

Time Slot Considerations

- Afternoon slots (1pm and 3pm) tend to be the most crowded. Leading a morning or evening walk can mean less competition with other walks and better attendance.
- Be mindful of when there is the most foot traffic and noise. Take into account what time the streets are easiest to maneuver with a group and when participants will best be able to hear.
- Check the Jane’s Walk calendar as new walks are added to see what other walks are happening near yours—scheduling your walk right before or after (but not during!) a nearby one is a great way to boost attendance.

Make It Catchy

Coming up with an enticing title and description can help to attract the attention of potential tour-takers amid the hundreds of walks offered during Jane’s Walk weekend. Feel free to bounce ideas off the Jane’s Walk team – we’re here to help.

SUBMIT YOUR WALK ONLINE AT
MAS.ORG/JANES-WALK-NYC
PROMOTING A WALK

MAS will promote Jane’s Walk through our website, social media channels, and media partners, but we ask that walk leaders also do their part to spread the word.

Here are a few ways to get the word out:

• Share the Jane’s Walk Facebook event page on your wall or invite your friends to join.
• Reach out to local outlets or organizations to ask if they will promote Jane’s Walk.
• Send an email announcement to your personal and professional networks.
• Post flyers in your local gathering places including coffee shops, libraries, or schools. These will become available on our website closer to the event.

HELP TO GET JANE’S WALK TRENDING ON SOCIAL MEDIA BY USING THE OFFICIAL HASHTAG
#JANESWALKNYC

Tag us using the MAS handle to help spread the word and get promoted!

facebook @MASNYC
twitter @MASNYC
instagram @MAS_NYC
LEADING A WALK

Start Strong

- Introduce yourself and share the goals for your walk.
- Briefly explain what MAS is, who Jane Jacobs was, and explain a little bit about the Jane’s Walk festival (suggested talking points can be found below).
- Take a moment to learn about your group. Ask participants where they are from, what they know of the area or topic, and what attracted them to your walk.

Avoid “The Walk and Talk”

- Avoid walking and talking at the same time to ensure that everyone can hear you.
- Pick a spot that is removed from foot traffic and noisy streets to gather the group.

Speak Up and Stay Visible

- Look out for a higher elevation to stand on, like a park bench or stairs, so that everyone can see you.
- Project your voice throughout your walk. MAS does not provide amplification devices. If you will need one, we encourage you to consider either renting or purchasing one.
- Use your MAS sign to help the group identify you at the meeting place and while walking. We also suggest wearing attire that is easy to spot, such as a brightly colored shirt.

Avoid “The Walk and Talk”

- Open the floor to questions or thoughts from participants at each stop.
- Brainstorm a few questions beforehand to generate conversation.

Go the Extra Mile

- Consider any supplemental materials you might want to bring on your walk to display, such as a historical photo for reference, or handout, such as a walk itinerary.

Ask Questions

- If you don’t know the answer to a question, that’s ok! You may want to use the opportunity to ask if anyone in the crowd has the answer. It’s a walking conversation, not a lecture—it’s great for walk leaders to learn something new at Jane’s Walk too.
**What is MAS?**

MAS is a 125-year-old civic advocacy organization that works to educate and inspire New Yorkers to engage in the betterment of their city. In addition to organizing Jane’s Walk, we advocate on planning, preservation, and policy issues that shape New York’s built environment, and offer walking tours throughout the year.

**Who is Jane Jacobs?**

Jane Jacobs was a famous urban activist and writer who lived from 1916-2006. She is best known for galvanizing New Yorkers to stop Robert Moses’ project that would have built an expressway through Greenwich Village. She believed in the power of individuals to influence their city. Today, her principles represent the participatory planning approaches that have been embraced in communities around the world.

**What is Jane’s Walk?**

Jane’s Walk is an annual festival of free, volunteer-led, neighborhood walking tours that generates conversation about the city and celebrates its vibrant past, present, and future.

**How can I learn about all the other walks happening this weekend?**

The full list of walks is available on our website at [www.mas.org/janes-walk-nyc](http://www.mas.org/janes-walk-nyc).

**How often is Jane's Walk?**

Jane’s Walk is an annual celebration that takes place the first weekend in May every year, to coincide with Jane Jacobs’ birthday on May 4.

**How do I stay involved with MAS year-round?**

MAS is a membership organization that offers events, programs, and tours throughout the year. Visit our website at [www.mas.org](http://www.mas.org) for more information.
GET IN TOUCH

Do you still have questions? The MAS Jane’s Walk team is here to help. Give us a call or shoot us an email for more information.

janeswalknyc@mas.org

(212) 935-3960 x1282

mas.org/janes-walk-nyc