



# JANE'S WALK 2020

WALK LEADER TRAINING GUIDE

# ABOUT JANE'S WALK

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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.



Photo: Giles Ashford

# BRAINSTORMING YOUR WALK

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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. You can also view the full roster from 2019 and 2018 at the following links:

<https://www.mas.org/janes-walk-nyc-2019>

<https://www.mas.org/janes-walk-nyc-2018>

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. Design and Nature at the Naval Cemetery Landscape).

## **Advocacy**

Example: Preserving Affordability through Community Land Trusts

## **Art & Architecture**

Example: Street Art from Behind the Lens

## **Environment**

Example: Ecology Hike at Freshkills Park

## **Food & Entertainment**

Example: Bukharan Kosher in Rego Park

## **History & Culture**

Example: Jane's Dog Walk

# PLANNING YOUR WALK

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## 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 your walk's 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. We recommend inviting a friend to join you as you practice your route to offer feedback. Look, listen, smell, feel, and observe your surroundings. Talk with people during your practice walk and hear what they have to say. Be present in the city around you.
- Consider accessibility. Everyone experiences space differently, so think broadly and empathetically about how others might feel along your route. You can indicate walk accessibility in your submission.
- Be mindful of areas that are not accessible to the public and seek permission before leading your walk onto any private property.

## 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 MAS's Information Resources Manager Erin Butler at [ebutler@mas.org](mailto:ebutler@mas.org) to learn more about Greenacre Reference Library and to schedule your visit.

## Other Helpful Resources

Your local library and community archives are other useful tools for researching your walk. Another great resource at your fingertips is Urban Archive. The Urban Archive iOS app features archival photos and content from cultural institutions in New York City (including MAS!). The app maps the city's history, block by block, making it easy to plan a walk route and develop walk content.

MAS has also developed an audio-based walk leader training tour, accessible on the MAS page in the Urban Archive app under Audio Guide. It provides walk leader tips and tricks at your fingertips.

# PLANNING YOUR WALK

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## **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 and highlight local knowledge.

This can make for an even more dynamic walk!

## **Recruiting Help: Volunteers and Walk Co-Leaders**

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.

You also don't have to lead your walk alone. Often times, walk leaders recruit a co-leader, which can help to create a more dynamic, comfortable, fun, and conversational walk.

## **Stay Curious, Learn, and Practice**

Don't worry about being an expert. You are an expert in your own experience of the city and you have plenty to share. Remember, this isn't a lecture - this is a walking conversation.

MAS is also here to help! For support in your research and planning, we organize a variety of in-person training opportunities, which you can view and sign-up for online at [www.mas.org/janes-walk-nyc](http://www.mas.org/janes-walk-nyc).

# SUBMITTING YOUR WALK

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## 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 1: 1PM, 3PM, 6PM, 9PM**
- **Saturday, May 2: 9AM, 11AM, 1PM, 3PM, 6PM, 9PM**
- **Sunday, May 3: 9AM, 11AM, 1PM, 3PM, 6PM, 9PM**

## Time Slot Considerations

- Late morning and afternoon slots (11AM, 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 in the area of your walk. Take into account what time the streets are easiest to maneuver with a group and when participants will best be able to hear you.
- Check the Jane's Walk roster on the [MAS website](#) 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 attendees 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 YOUR WALK

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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 MAS Jane's Walk NYC Facebook event page on your wall or invite your friends to join.
- Share fun videos or stories on your social media, and tag MAS! We may repost what you have shared!
- Send an email announcement to your personal and professional networks.
- Post flyers in your local gathering places including coffee shops, libraries, or schools. These are available [on our website](#).

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!

 **@MASNYC**

 **@MASNYC**

 **@MAS\_NYC**

# LEADING YOUR WALK

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## 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 in your group can hear you.
- Pick a spot that is removed from foot traffic and noisy streets to gather the group.

## Speak Up and Stay Visible

- Standing on a higher elevation, such as a park bench or stairs, can help everyone in your group 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. If you have a volunteer, position yourselves at opposite ends of the group when walking from point to point so everyone stays together. We also suggest wearing attire that is easy to spot, such as a brightly colored shirt.
- MAS will provide a free Jane's Walk t-shirt to each walk leader. Make sure to submit your walk by March 20 to secure your size!

## Encourage Conversation

- 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 to enhance your walk, including walk itinerary handouts and historical photographs for reference.
- Keep the conversation going after your walk. Think about ending at a cafe or park where participants can gather and connect.

# LEADING YOUR WALK

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## 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. You can also choose to share your email or other contact information to make yourself available to answer questions after the walk.

## Document Your Walk

- MAS encourages walk leaders to share about their Jane's Walk experience. Ask participants to pose for a group photo, encourage attendees to take photos, and capture any testimonials or great quotes. We also would love to see any video footage captured on your walk! Share these memories with your community, on social media with #JanesWalkNYC, and by e-mailing them to [janeswalknyc@mas.org](mailto:janeswalknyc@mas.org).

# TALKING POINTS

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## ***What is MAS?***

For more than 125 years, The Municipal Art Society of New York (MAS) has worked to educate and inspire New Yorkers to engage in the betterment of our 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 many programs and 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 walks that generate conversation about the city and celebrate 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) starting in mid-April. It's easy to find a walk on the Jane's Walk NYC website, where you can filter by date, theme and borough.

## ***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

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

[janeswalknyc@mas.org](mailto:janeswalknyc@mas.org)

**(212) 935-3960**

[mas.org/janes-walk-nyc](http://mas.org/janes-walk-nyc)



Photo: Giles Ashford

## Thanks to our Funding Partners



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