

WALK CAPE MAY COUNTY



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Cooperative Extension
of Cape May County
New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station

FCHS
Family & Community
Health Sciences



Cape May County Walking Guide

This walking guide was created at Rutgers Cooperative Extension of Cape May County under the guidance of Assistant Professor/Educator Chris Zellers, MPP, Department of Family and Community Health Sciences (FCHS). Written content is evidence based and authored by Chris Zellers, MPP. Rutgers Cooperative Extension (RCE) is a partnership between the Board of County Commissioners, Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey and USDA's National Institute of Food and Agriculture and has faculty and/or staff in all of 21 New Jersey counties. RCE is composed of three departments including Agriculture and Natural Resources, 4-H Youth Development, and Family and Community Health Sciences. FCHS provides outreach in NJ and beyond on topics related to nutrition, chronic disease prevention, food safety, and overall wellness.



Exercise is an important component of a healthy lifestyle. The Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans recommends 150-300 minutes of physical activity each week, with two additional days that include weight bearing exercise¹. Walking is a free way to reach movement goals while preventing chronic diseases and supporting mental and physical health. The Walk Cape May County Guidebook offers both residents and visitors the opportunity to experience the county's beauty while being physically active with over 100 miles of walking trails and parks.

More regular and experienced walkers can increase the pace of movement, use arm movements or add distance to make walking a more challenging form of physical activity. Experienced walkers may want to increase their pace for a short distance and then slow to a moderate stride to make the walk more of an interval type workout and to more rigorously challenge the body. Experienced walkers can enjoy a continuous vigorous pace that will be less strenuous on the body compared to running and offers many of the benefits of high intensity aerobic exercise like increased heart rate and increased aerobic capacity.

Walking can be done almost anywhere or anytime. Try adding a walk in while waiting for the kids at an extracurricular activity or hold a walking meeting at work to get the whole office team moving. Weekends are the perfect time to enjoy the outdoors and a walk on one of the many Cape May County beaches is the perfect way to enjoy the benefits of walking in nature for exercise and relaxation. Taking children or grandchildren for a walk on a bike trail will support their intellectual growth and ability to explore their surroundings while adding movement. Studies have shown that dog owners tend to move more than those who don't have a pooch. Dog owner or not, taking short frequent walks has health benefits too. The places and times you can add a walk into your day are endless, be creative and find ways to take the first steps to moving more!





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Rutgers Cooperative Extension

The New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station (NJAES) is an integral component of Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey. The experiment station provides a diverse range of research, extension, and education programs that serve the people of New Jersey and the urban, suburban, and rural communities in which they live. Through its Cooperative Extension offices in all 21 New Jersey counties, dedicated 4-H agents, Extension specialists, Family & Community Health Sciences educators, and Agriculture and Natural Resources agents work to serve New Jersey residents in every area of the state. In addition, off-campus field stations and farms focus on research ranging from support for fisheries, agriculture and allied businesses to support for youth and teens, while several centers and institutes on the George H. Cook Campus at Rutgers–New Brunswick engage in world-class research to provide solutions for a range of issues faced by New Jersey residents.

Legend

-  Parking available
-  Handicap access
-  Restrooms
-  Benches
-  Picnic Table
-  Recreation Area
or Playground

Health Benefits of Walking

Walking can assist with preventing chronic diseases like diabetes, cancer and heart disease and supports better overall health too. Additionally, walking assists with a better sleep quality, increased energy and improved mood.

The many health benefits of walking include:

- **Improved mental health** - walking has been shown to improve mood and lessen depression and anxiety symptoms.⁴
- **Substance use disorder** - increased aerobic exercise like walking has been shown to decrease the incidence of anxiety and depression in those with substance use¹¹ disorder.
- **Ability to maintain a healthy weight and prevent obesity** - walking regularly burns calories and paired with a healthy eating pattern can support a healthy weight and prevent obesity.
- **Arthritis** - Walking is a joint friendly exercise that can improve arthritis pain, body function and mood when done regularly according to the Centers for Disease Control.
- **Better sleep** - regular physical activity has been shown to improve sleep quantity and quality which in turn could lead to¹⁵ better productivity, increased energy and better overall health.
- **Improved cognitive and memory function** - Increased blood flow when walking is good for memory and³ cognitive health because it gets blood flowing to the brain.
- **Increased life expectancy** - Increased daily step counts from 4,000 to 8,000 per day has¹² shown a decrease in mortality from various chronic diseases.

- **Better cardiovascular function** - Movement like walking has been shown to improve aerobic function which supports better cardiovascular health and may prevent heart disease and stroke.⁷
- **Improved blood pressure** - walking can improve systolic pressure, strengthens the heart muscle and gets blood flowing for improved blood pressure.
- **Improved cholesterol** - walking raises good cholesterol (HDL-high-density lipoprotein) and lowers bad (LDL - low-density lipoprotein) to balance cholesterol levels.⁸
- **Prevent diabetes or improve blood sugar** - walking can help the body burn insulin properly whereby preventing or improving diabetes.⁶
- **Better lung function** - walking improves lung function and exercise capacity. There is also evidence that adults with asthma who walk could improve their lung function and better control asthma.
- **Increased energy and stamina** - instead of reaching for an energy drink go for a walk. Going for a walk when you are tired can increase your energy levels and doing it regularly will help improve stamina to walk and do other¹⁰ daily tasks.
- **Supports bone strength and can prevent osteoporosis** - walking creates improved bone density and muscle mass to ward off the effects of bone loss or osteoporosis.⁹
- **Feel better**- Given all the ways that walking improves our physical health it is almost a given it would make us feel better, but don't dismiss the fact that walking and physical activity can prevent depression and⁵ anxiety too!



Getting Started

Before starting any new exercise routine it is important to consult with a doctor. Walking is free but it is important to have safe supportive walking attire like sneakers and weather appropriate clothing. Dressing appropriately to avoid overheating or being too cold can provide comfort and stamina when it's hot or if the sea breezes are too chilly. Loose fitting comfortable clothing is appropriate for walking but it can be done in almost any clothing provided proper footwear is being used.

Beginners should start at a moderate pace and gradually increase to a more vigorous walk. Begin with smaller distances and extend the length as frequency builds. Try walking for at least ten minutes at a time if moving at a moderate pace.



Avalon

Avalon Beach

Avalon beach runs the length of Avalon and spans 4 miles from South to North from 80th Street to 9th Street.

Avalon Boardwalk &

Avalon Boardwalk runs South to North 0.5 miles from 8th Street to 32nd Street.

Avalon Dune and Beach Trail

Avalon Dune and Beach Trail can be accessed off Dune drive on either 48th Street or 44th Street. The loop is 1.1 miles long with a portion of the trail on the beach.

Cape May City

Cape May City Beaches

Cape May Beach spans 2.5 miles from the South to North on Beach Avenue, starting at the Cove and ending at Wilmington Avenue.

Cape May Promenade & ♿

Cape May promenade is 2 miles from South to the North between the beach and Beach Avenue from the Cove to Madison Avenue.

Cape May Point

Cape May Point State Park P ♿

Cape May Point State Park is located at 305 Lighthouse Avenue in Cape May Point.

Duck Pond Trail (Red) &

Duck Pond trail is 0.5 miles.

Monarch Trail (Yellow)

Monarch Trail is 1.2 miles long through Cape May Point State Park.

Plover Trail (Blue)

Plover Trail is a longest of the CMP trails which loops along the beach and coastal dune and spans 1.5 miles.

Dennis Township

Recreation Center Loop P ♿

The Dennis township Recreation Complex is located at 565 Dennisville Road and has a trail that loops the perimeter of the park 1.3 miles long.

Eldora Nature Preserve P

Eldora Nature Preserve is located at 2350 NJ-47 in Delmont.

Three trails at Eldora Nature Preserve are:

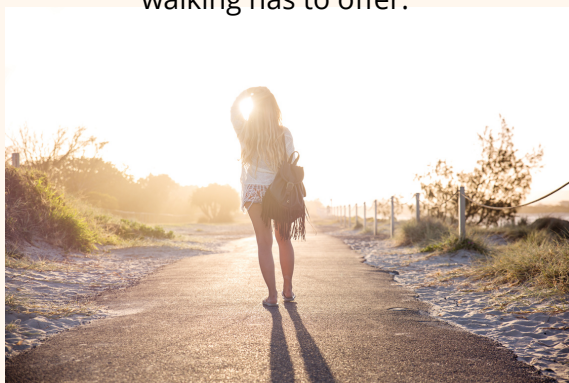
Yellow Trail: 0.6 miles

Blue Trail: 0.6 miles

Red Trail: 1.6 miles

Staying Motivated using the SMART Method

The SMART Method for motivation can be a good motivator to start walking and to make walking a healthy habit for years to come. SMART stands for **S**pecific, **M**easured, **A**ttainable, **R**ealistic, and **T**imely. Set a *specific* goal to stay motivated, like walking in the woods to allow time in nature and destress from everyday life. Choose one of the trails in this guidebook from the Belleplaine State Park and make a specific goal to walk that trail a certain number of times in one month. Creating a *measured* goal can help to get or stay motivated as well. Set a distance goal that can be measured and built upon to increase stamina. Be sure to make the goal *attainable*. For example, it's a much more attainable goal to walk a path twice a week rather than every day as a beginner. Be *realistic*, especially when starting a new walking routine, start small and work up to bigger goals to stay challenged and motivated. *Timely* goals are important too. Set a special time aside during the day that is convenient and easily maintained so that excuses and other activities don't infringe on the time set aside for walking. If walking is a well established habit already then use the timely part of the SMART method to expand on the time and go even further on walks. Using the SMART method to stay motivated is important to move more and experience the health benefits walking has to offer.



Lower Township

Clem Mulligan Sport Complex Loop 🚶

Clem Mulligan Sports Complex is located at 240-298 Caroline Avenue in Villas, offers a loop trail around the perimeter of the complex which includes a baseball field and soccer field. The distance and trailheads are undefined.

Cox Hall Creek Wildlife Management Area 🅑

Cox Hall Creek WMA is located in Villas and has two entrances at 2978 Bybrook Drive and 7 Shawmount Avenue. All trails are paved except green trail.

Blue trail is 0.5 miles.

Green trail is 0.8 miles.

Red trail is 1.5 miles.

White connector trails is 0.6 miles.

Yellow trail is 0.6 miles. ♿

Dune Trail 🅑 ♿

Dune Trail is located at The Friends of Cape May National Refuge at the Two-Mile Beach Unit on USCG Entrance Road, just off Pacific Avenue, in Wildwood Crest. The trail spans 1.8 miles.

Garrett Family Preserve 🚶 🅑

Garrett Family Preserve trail is located at 810 Wilson Street in Cape May City. There are six trails ranging from 0.2 – 0.5-miles in length. There is also a 2-mile loop along the forested perimeter of the preserve.

Higbee Beach Loop Trail 🅑

Higbee Beach Loop Trail spans 2.9 miles and is in the northwest corner of Cape Island at the end of New England Road.

South Cape May Meadows

South Cape May meadows offers a 1.7-mile loop through sections of soft sand. This trail is located at 692 Sunset Boulevard in Cape May.

Sunset Beach 🅑 🅑

Sunset Beach is located at the foot of Sunset Boulevard in Cape May Point.

Walking in Nature

Cape May County New Jersey is home to 620 square miles of beautiful sandy beaches, Pinelands Forest, trails and parks making it the perfect place to enjoy walking in nature. Walking in nature has been shown to have health benefits such as decreasing anxiety, depression and stress. Using the sounds of nature like the ocean or birds chirping can bring awareness to surroundings and an appreciation or mindfulness of the world around us relieving the pressures of being constantly 'plugged in' to technology devices. Try to unplug by walking in nature and enjoying the sights, sounds and smells.

Middle Township

Lizard Tail Swamp Preserve Trails

Lizard Tail Swamp Preserve is located at 460 Court House South Dennis Road in Cape May Court House. There are two loop trails: the blue trail is 1 mile, and the yellow trail is 2 miles.

Woodcock Trail

Woodcock Trail goes through Cape May National Wildlife Refuge Delaware Bay Division and is located at 15 Woodcock Road in Cape May Court House. The loop spans 1.2 miles long.

Songbird Trail

Songbird Trail is located at 11 Kimbles Beach Road in Cape May Court House. Parking is at Cape May National Wildlife Refuge Administration Building and Visitor Contact Station. This loop trail is 1.2 miles long.

Cape May Loop

Cape May Loop is located at the Cape May County Park and Zoo on 707 U.S. 9 North in Cape May Court House and spans 1.5 miles.



Ocean City

Ocean City Boardwalk 🚶♿

The Ocean City Boardwalk is 2.5 miles and runs from St. James Place to 23rd Street.

Corson's Inlet State Park

Corson's Inlet State Park is located at 5898 Bay Ave, County Hwy and has three trails.

Green Trail - approximately 0.3 miles begins at parking lot and runs south to north through the marshes.

Yellow Trail - approximately 0.3 miles begins at the parking lot and runs west to east through the dunes to the beach.

Red Trail - approximately 0.3 miles begins from the yellow trail and runs south to north perpendicular to the beach.

9th Street Bridge P 🚶♿

The 9th Street Ocean City Bridge is located at 300 West 9th Street in Ocean City, and it spans 2.5 miles from Ocean City to Somers Point.

Ocean City Beach 🚶♿

Ocean City Beach spans 8 miles south to north from Corson's Inlet to Gardens Parkway.

Sea Isle City

Promenade 🚶♿

The Promenade in Sea Isle City spans 5 miles from South to North from 57th Street to 29th Street.

Sea Isle City Beach

Sea Isle City Beach spans 1.5 miles south to north from 94th Street to Second Street where the beach connects with Strathmere Beach in Upper Township on Taylor Avenue.

Stone Harbor

Stone Harbor Point P

Stone Harbor Point is a 3.4-mile trail that is mostly on the beach. It spans from the Stone Harbor Beach on the south end of 2nd Street near 122nd Street to the inlet and back.

Stone Harbor Beach

Stone Harbor Beach is approximately 2.5 miles long from south to north starting at 122nd street and spanning to 80th Street where it connects with Avalon Beach.

Promenade 🚶♿

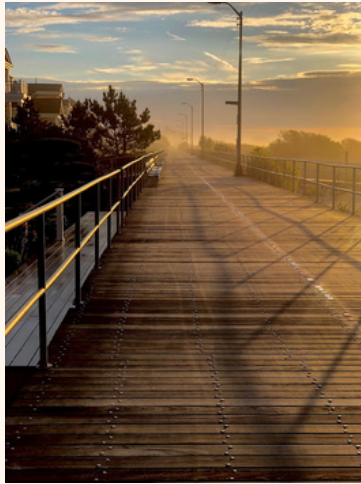
The promenade is located from south to north on 83rd street to 80th street and offers a paved path of 0.2 miles.

Level of Exercise

Exercise levels vary with every individual. Age, fitness level, and gender may affect how much, how long and at what rate a person can exercise. Understanding levels of exercise exertion can assist with gaining stamina and maximizing workouts, while also preventing overexertion for people who have special health conditions or may be limited to specific levels of exertion.

One way to determine exertion rates is using the talk test, if talking or singing is not difficult that is a low exertion rate, if talking comfortably is not difficult but singing is, that is a more moderate intensity level and if speaking a few words is difficult without gasping for breath that is a vigorous exercise level. Being aware of exertion rates while walking can assist in staying within needed boundaries or increasing exercise for a more vigorous workout.





Upper Township

Amanda's Field

Amanda's Field is located at 10 Sunset Drive in Petersburg. The path has a span of 1.3 miles.

Great Egg Harbor Bridge

Great Egg Harbor Bridge has a pedestrian walkway that spans 1.5 miles. The trailheads are at Beesley's Point Park in Upper Township and Great Egg Harbor Toll Plaza in Somers Point. Beesley's Point Park is located at 1 Harbor Road, in Beesley's Point.

Great Egg Harbor Path

Great Egg Harbor path is at Beesley's Point Park on 10 Harbor Road, in Beesley's Point. This path is a multi-use path which spans 1.5 miles long.

Park North Cameron Wildlife Sanctuary Trail

Cameron Wildlife Sanctuary is located at 1099 Route 9 South in Marmora and offers a trail throughout the sanctuary. The span is undefined.

Strathmere Beach

Strathmere Beach is about a 1.8 miles walk south to north from Taylor Avenue to Seaview Avenue. Strathmere Beach connects with Sea Isle City beach at Taylor Avenue.

Finding Target Heart Rate

The amount of exercise a person does, their heart rate and exertion levels all contribute to the benefits of physical activity. Everyone has a different ability level and it's important to be safe while still maximizing the benefits of walking. Knowing if a walk is at a moderate or vigorous intensity can create an understanding of how hard the body is working. Intensity levels vary from moderate to vigorous and these amounts are determined by a person's heart rate. Each person's exertion level will vary depending on their age, weight and fitness levels. To find your heart rate when walking, stop moving and take your pulse at your neck, wrist or chest. To determine your estimated maximum age related heart rate, subtract your age from 220.

For example if you are 40 years old you would use this formula:

$$220 - 40 = 180 \text{ beats per minute (bpm)}$$

After determining the maximum beats per minute for optimal movement, your heart rate will let you know if the exertion level is moderate to vigorous depending on your heart rate while exercising. For moderate intensity the target heart rate should be 64%-75% of maximum heart rate. To estimate moderate exercise rates use the formula: estimated maximum age-related heart rate \times 0.64 = moderate exercise or using the above model of a 40 year old:

$$180 \times 0.64 = 115 \text{ beats per minute for 64\% exertion.}$$

To determine vigorous walking levels, the heart rate should be between 77%-93% of estimated maximum age-related heart rate and estimating this can be done by using estimated maximum

age related heart rate \times 0.77 (to 0.93) = vigorous exercise heart rate
or using the above mode of a 40-year-old:

$$180 \times 0.77 = 139 \text{ beats per minute for 77\% exertion}$$

Fitness devices can determine heart rate too and using the formulas above can establish the intensity of the walk by age. Always be sure to consult a doctor to determine what exercise routines are safe and appropriate for your fitness level.²

The Wildwoods North Wildwood

North Wildwood Seawall

North Wildwood Seawall is a paved path that runs along the beach for 1.25 miles. It starts at John F. Kennedy Beach Drive and runs to Cherry Avenue.

JFK Beach Drive Walk

JFK Beach Drive Walk from south to north starts where the Wildwood Boardwalk ends at 15th Street and spans to where the North Wildwood Seawall starts on East Second Avenue. This paved trail spans about 0.7 miles.

Wildwood

Wildwoods Boardwalk

The Wildwood boardwalk spans 2.5 miles south to north from East Cresse Avenue in Wildwood Crest to East 15th Avenue in North Wildwood. In Wildwood Crest the boardwalk connects to the bike path and in North Wildwood it connects to the JFK Beach Drive walk.



Wildwood Crest

Centennial Park

Centennial Park is an undefined loop around the park on East Fern Road and Ocean Avenue.

Sunset Lake Park

Sunset Lake Park offers a 0.4-mile paved walk along Bayview Avenue overlooking Sunset Lake. It runs from West Monterey Avenue to East Rambler Avenue.

Woodbine

Belleplain State Forest

Belleplain State Forest is located on 1 Henkinsifkin Road in Woodbine and offers 24 nature trails. Twelve of the trails are also for motor vehicles.
<https://nj.gov/dep/parksandforests/maps/belleplain-trail.pdf>

Boundary Trail is a multiuse trail that spans 0.7 miles along the eastern boundary of the forest. Trailhead at Dehirsch Avenue.

Eagle Fitness Trail is a hiking loop which runs 0.3 miles and offers various exercise stations. Trailhead is at the south end of Camp Road.

East Creek Trail is a multi-use loop trail which spans 7 miles. Trailhead starts at Lake Nummy parking area.

Goosekill Trail is a multi-use trail that runs 0.5 miles along the east side of Lake Nummy. The trailhead is on Champion Road near North Shore Campground.

Meisle Trail is a hiking trail that runs 0.62 miles along the southern edge of Lake Nummy. The trailhead is across from the Interpretive Center.

Nature Trail 1 is a hiking trail that spans 0.7 miles along the northern edge of Lake Nummy. The trailhead is located at Lake Nummy.

Nature Trail 2 is a hiking trail that spans 0.5 miles along the northeastern shore of Lake Nummy. Trailhead is located on north shore of Lake Nummy and links to Nature Trail 1.

North Shore Trail is a multi-use trail that runs 0.7 miles. The Trailhead is at the forest office parking lot.

Ponds Trail is a multi-use trail that links Pickle Factory and East Creek Ponds. The trailheads are at the parking areas at Pickle Factory or East Creek Ponds.

Tarkiln Bogs Trail is a multi-use trail through old cranberry bogs that spans 0.85 miles. The trailhead is on Cinder Trail.

Seashore Line Trail is a motorized and multi-use trail that follows an old rail line for 7.3 miles. Trailheads are on Weatherby Road (Route 548), Hunters Mill Road, and Dehirsch Road.

Champion Trail is a motorized trail that spans 0.9 miles. The trailhead is on Route 550 or Steelman Bog Road.

Cinder Trail is a motorized use and multi-use trail that spans 0.8 miles. The trailhead is at the south side of Weatherby Road (Route 548) west of Route 605.

Duck Pond Trail is a motorized use and multi-use trail that spans 1.8 miles which leads to a remote pond. The trailhead is approximately 1 mile southwest of pillage on north side of Route 550.

Dundrea Trail is a motorized and multi-use semi loop trail that spans 1.3 miles. The trailhead is on the north side of Steelmantown Road.

John's Run Trail is a motorized and multi-use trail that spans 1 mile. The trailhead is off Cinder or Old Cape Trail, and it connects to the Tarkiln Bogs Trail.

Kalker's Pond Trail is a motorized and multi-use trail that spans 1.7 miles through abandoned cranberry bogs. The trailhead is at Joe Mason Road, west of Belleplain.

Narrows Road Trail is a motorized and multi-use sand road through the north side of the forest that spans 1.4 miles. The trailhead is at Route 605, north of Belleplain.

Old Cape Trail is a motorized and multi-use trail that spans 4.5 miles following Old Stagecoach Road. The trailhead is on Weatherby Road (Route 548), east of Hunters Mill Road.

Sally's Pond Trail is a motorized and multi-use trail that spans 1.2 miles and is a connector path through pine-oak forest. The trailhead is off Duck Pond or Seashore Line Trail.

Tom Field Trail is a motorized and multi-use trail that spans 2 miles through the southernmost part of the forest. The trailhead is on Cedar Bridge Road.

Turtle Walk Trail is a motorized and multi-use trail that spans 1.4 miles and runs along the east creek drainage. The trailhead is at Route 347 and Route 47. The trail heads south from Route 347.

Woodbine Railroad Trail is a 3-mile trail the ends points are Dehirsch Avenue near Grant Avenue and Woodbine Oceanview Road. 🇺🇸

How Many Steps

Americans live a sedentary lifestyle meaning a large portion of work and home life involves sitting more than moving. Walking provides people of all ages and physical ability a suitable option to move more and sit less. The introduction of wearable step monitors has created a demand for Americans to reach 10,000 steps per day; however that figure is not scientifically based. A goal of 10,000 steps is a random figure that was developed to create more movement. The number of steps a person should move will vary with each person but the overarching message of the 10,000 step goal is to move more to improve overall health. All steps count and walking is a great way to avoid a sedentary lifestyle!²



Get Moving

Engaging in regular physical activity such as walking prevents disease, lightens mood and creates an overall sense of well-being. The beautiful trails, beaches, forests and paths of Cape May County New Jersey offer endless opportunity to explore nature and get fit. Enjoy walking in Cape May County!

Bike Paths for Walking

All bike paths are paved and wheelchair accessible. These paths are primarily used for walking, running and road biking. The Regional Trail System can be walked from the Cape May Lewes Ferry to The Cape May County Zoo.

The paths that are part of the regional trail System are listed with  icon

Cold Spring Bike Path

The length of the bike path is 2.75 miles from Sandman Boulevard, Erma to Sally Marshall Crossing, Cold Spring.

Dennis Township Bike Path

The length of this bike path is 2.4 miles. The end points are Woodbine Road behind the South Seaville Fire Station and South Township limits. The address for the South Seaville Fire Station is 489 Main Street in Seaville.

Middle Township Bike Path and Walking Trails

End points are at the Cape May County Park & Zoo and Cold Spring bike path at Seashore Road. There is parking at the north end of the path at the Cape May County Park & Zoo. This path runs 8.9 miles. The Middle Township Bikes Paths provide access to the Davies Sports Complex, 4-H Fairgrounds and Atlantic Cape Community College.

Ocean City Bike Path

Ocean City Bike Path runs from 25th Street to 35th Street on Haven Avenue, a span of 0.9 miles. It continues at 35th Street on West Avenue and is a bike way that continues in the street not a separate walking path. The path also continues north after 25th Street and is part of the roadway.

Wildwood Crest Bike Path

Wildwood Crest Bike Path runs along the beach, south to north for 1 mile. The trail end points are East Cresse Avenue and East Rambler Road.

Tracks

The tracks can be accessed by the public when school is not in session.

Avalon Elementary School Track

235 Avalon Boulevard, Avalon

Byrne Community Center Track

Maxwell Field, 401 West Youngs Avenue, Wildwood

Lower Cape May Regional School District Track

687 Route 9, Cape May

Middle Township Elementary School #2 Track

101 West Pacific Avenue in Cape May Court House

Ocean City High School Track

966, 5th Street, Ocean City



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Learn More About FCHS Programs in Cape May County

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