

Freedom Trail Capital City Walk in Boston, Massachusetts

11km & 6km routes

EVENT ID: 2021 / Y0730

OPEN: January 1 to December 31, 2021

TRAIL DESCRIPTION: Boston, known as “America’s Walking City,” is steeped in history and tradition. The trails follow downtown city streets and walkways, exploring a plethora of historic sites, monuments, museums, and landmarks.

The 11km Freedom Trail (FT) walk includes Boston Common, set off for common use in 1634; Paul Revere’s home, oldest in Boston (1680); King’s Chapel, site of the first Anglican Church in New England (1686); the Old State House (1713); Faneuil Hall, the site of political debates for over 2 centuries; Old North Church, where lanterns warned of the British march on Concord; Bunker Hill Monument, site of the 1775 battle; the Granary Burying Ground, where Samuel Adams, John Hancock, and Mother Goose are buried; the State House built in 1798; the USS Constitution, the oldest commissioned ship in the US Navy (1787); Saint-Gaudens’ tribute to the Civil War’s first black regiment; the waterfront; and downtown shopping areas.

The 6km Freedom Trail route concentrates on the sites and events in the central Boston area including a portion of the Rose Kennedy Greenway.

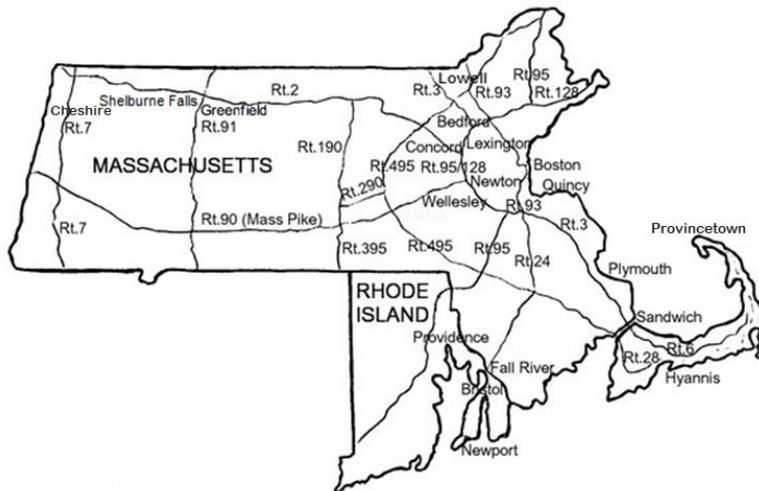
TRAIL RATING: Both walk routes have an AVA rating of 1B, **difficult for strollers and wheelchairs.**

AVA SPECIAL PROGRAMS:

- Carousels Across America (Greenway Carousel)
- Little Free Libraries (Charter #47213 near Faneuil Hall in Boston’s Business District)
- Mayflower 400th Anniversary (Massachuset tribe)
- Rockin’ Around the Clock (Old State House clock, Custom House clock)
- State Capital: Massachusetts
- Walking the USA A – Z: B for Boston
- Walking with America’s Veterans (State House steps and many others)

REGISTRATION: IVV Credit is available with online registration only (<https://my.ava.org>). The online system does not allow Free walkers, a minimal charge is incurred for directions.

AWARD: The award is a fully embroidered patch featuring the iconic Old State House, built in 1713, and the newer, gold-domed State House, built in 1798. **To purchase an award, please send a SASE with check payable to Walk ’n Mass Volkssport Club for \$4.00 to Jack Allen at 10 Hemlock Road, Reading, MA 01867**



START ADDRESS: The walk routes begin from **Boston National Historical Park Visitor Center, 1 Faneuil Hall Square, First Floor, Boston, MA 02109**. See their website for open dates/hours: www.nps.gov/bost/index.htm.

RESTROOMS: If the Visitor Center and Faneuil Hall are closed, public restrooms may be found in Quincy Market. Other public restroom options along the route may be limited.

PARKING: in Boston is expensive and challenging. Public transportation is recommended. If you do drive, public parking is available at the Government Center Garage at the junction of Merrimac, Congress, and New Sudbury streets (2 blocks north of the Visitor Center); the Dock Square Garage (about 2 blocks east); and the Post Office Square underground garage (about 2 blocks south). Rates may be lower on weekends.

DRIVING DIRECTIONS:

Ongoing Exit Renumbering: *As renumbering of exits along many highways per federal mandate is ongoing in MA & RI, you may find things look different than how directions are described here. Please watch signs closely as old exit numbers will also be noted on the new signage, and have patience as you navigate highways during this ongoing project.*

From the North: Take I-93 South to Exit 24A (Government Center). Bear **RIGHT** at the end of ramp onto Clinton St. (Government Center Parking Garage on right.) Either walking or driving, continue on Clinton Street to the end. **LEFT** onto North Street. ****LEFT** on Congress Street. Visitor Center on the left at 1 Faneuil Hall Square.

From the South: Take I-93 North to Exit 23 (Government Center). *****LEFT** on North Street to the end. Follow from ****** above.

From the West: Follow I-90 (Mass Pike) to I-93 North. I-93 North to Exit 23 (Government Center). Follow from ******* above under “From the South” directions.



PUBLIC TRANSIT DIRECTIONS:

Boston has an excellent subway system with several stations near the start (Haymarket on the Orange & Green Lines, Park Street on the Green Line, Government Center on the Green & Blue Lines, and State Street on the Orange & Blue Lines). For information: www.mbta.com

From the West (I-95/Rt. 128): Take Exit 22 (Grove St.). Follow signs for Riverside (Green Line). All day parking is \$6.00. For fare information, see www.mbta.com Hotel Indigo is adjacent to the station.

From the North: Park at Wonderland Station (Blue Line) on Rt. 1A in Revere.

From the South: Park at Quincy Adams Station (Red Line) at I-93 and Rt. 3 in Quincy. Change to Orange Line at Downtown Crossing.

From the Northwest: Park at Alewife Station (Red Line) at the junction of Rts. 2 and 16 in Cambridge. Change to Orange Line at Downtown Crossing.

By Commuter Rail from the Suburbs: From North Station, take the Green Line to Haymarket or Park Street. For South Station terminus routes, get off at Back Bay Station & take Orange Line to Haymarket or State Street.

REMEMBER: you must log back into the Online Start Box at <https://my.ava.org> to finish online registration procedure after completing this event.

In case of Emergency Dial 911

Contact Jack Allen with questions at jeallen@gmail.com or 781-333-8129. Or you may contact Bonnie Neggers at narcavage@verizon.net or 781-483-6115.

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Thanks for attending our walk! If you are interested in other nearby AVA events, you may want to consider the Back Bay route which explores another area of Boston, or other events in Massachusetts or Rhode Island, please see our website: <https://walknmass.org>



Freedom Trail 6 / 11 kilometer Volkswalk in Boston, Massachusetts (Capital Walk)

Jan 1 - Dec 31, 2021 (Y-0730)



1. Exit the Visitor Center through the door on the Quincy Market side of Faneuil Hall. Turn **LEFT** and continue **STRAIGHT** to the crosswalk at North Street.
2. Cross North Street and turn **LEFT**. Proceed across Union Street and turn **RIGHT** into Union Park. Near the entrance are 2 statues of Mayor James M. Curley (whose 30 years in politics delighted some & angered others).
3. Continue **STRAIGHT** through the New England Holocaust Memorial (ca 1995) to the end at Hanover Street.
4. **RIGHT** towards the "Bell in Hand Tavern" (operating as a tavern since 1795) and **CROSS** Union Street.
5. **RIGHT** to the end of the building and the intersection with Marshall Street
6. **LEFT** to **CROSS** Marshall Street and **LEFT** again (you're back on the Freedom Trail [FT]). This neighborhood is a fascinating remnant of 18th century Boston. The Union Oyster House (built in early 1700s) is the oldest continually operating restaurant in the United States. The Ebenezer Hancock House (ca 1767, on the right) was owned by John Hancock but used by his brother.
7. Back at Hanover Street, turn **RIGHT** (on Fridays and Saturdays this area is the site of an open air marketplace) and carefully **CROSS** Blackstone St., Surface Rd., and Cross St. into the "North End" (Italian restaurants galore).
8. **CROSS** and **RIGHT** onto Richmond Street to North Street.
9. **LEFT** on North Street to Prince Street. Shortly after turning onto North Street you'll pass the Paul Revere House (ca 1680, oldest house in Boston). Revere and his family lived here from 1770 to 1800. It is now a museum with tours available.
10. **CROSS** Prince Street and **LEFT** to Hanover Street.
11. **RIGHT** on Hanover Street and proceed two blocks to the crosswalk at St. Stephen's Church (renovated by Charles Bulfinch in 1804 [busy guy!]).
12. **CROSS** Hanover Street into Paul Revere Mall (that's "him" on the horse), continuing **STRAIGHT** through.
13. The Mall ends near the rear left corner of the Old North Church a.k.a. Christ Episcopal Church (ca 1723), the oldest religious edifice in town. Sexton Robert Newman hung two lanterns (you know, 1 if by land, 2 if by sea...etc.) in the bell tower to warn Paul Revere (waiting in Charlestown) that the British troops were headed to Concord to capture military materials stored there.
14. Go **UP** the steps following the path between the church and the souvenir shop to Unity Street.
15. **RIGHT** to the crosswalk, then **LEFT** to **CROSS** Unity Street and proceed **UP** Hull Street. Near the crest of the hill is Copp's Hill Burying Ground (ca 1659), the second oldest cemetery in Boston.
16. Go **DOWN** Hull Street to end at Commercial Street.
17. **LEFT** to **CROSS** Hull Street to the crosswalk.
18. **RIGHT** to **CROSS** Commercial Street at the crosswalk.
 - a. If you're walking the 6 km trail, turn **RIGHT** and follow the instructions starting at Step #47.
 - b. If you're walking the 11 km trail, turn **LEFT** and follow the instructions at Step #19.
19. Go a short distance to the intersection at North Washington Street and turn **RIGHT** to **CROSS** the Charles River via the Charlestown Bridge.
20. At the first intersection (busy) carefully **CROSS** Chelsea Street and **BEAR RIGHT** into City Square Park.

21. **CROSS** diagonally through the park, past the fountain and between the two bronze carp to the far corner (*take in the historical markers along the way, if you like*).
22. **BEAR LEFT** (leaving the FT for now) to the crosswalk, **CROSS** Main Street and **RIGHT** towards the bus stop.
23. Shortly after the bus stop, **LEFT** to go up the steps into John Harvard Mall and proceed to the flag pole in the upper section of the mall (*browse the plaques around the base of the pole and an on the mall walls*).
24. Standing next to the flag pole and facing the entrance you came up, turn **LEFT** and go **THROUGH** the opening in the wall to a driveway to Henley Street.
25. **CROSS** Henley Street, turn **RIGHT**, going down the hill to Main Street.
26. **CROSS** Main Street and turn **LEFT** (*you're back on the Freedom Trail...FT*).
27. **RIGHT** on Winthrop Street to Warren Street.
28. **CROSS** Warren Street and **CONTINUE** on Winthrop Street past the fire house and across Common Street.
29. Follow the FT as it **BEARS RIGHT** into the "Training Field." *Local militiamen would meet here to drill. Since Charlestown was burned by the British in 1775 most of the wooden houses surrounding this field date from the end of the 18th century while the brick townhouses are from the 19th century.*
30. Half way into the "field" the FT turns **LEFT** to exit the park. **FOLLOW** it across Winthrop Street and to the right **UP** the hill on Monument Square to the Bunker Hill Monument (*tall granite obelisk*). *The monument was constructed 1825-1843 to commemorate the 17 Jun 1775 battle fought against the British. Although the colonists lost, the battle and subsequent militia actions delayed the British long enough for Washington's army to arrive and force their evacuation the following March by sea.*

Water and restrooms are available here.
31. From the monument retrace your steps to the "Training Field" (to the corner of Winthrop and Adams Streets).
32. **FOLLOW** the FT along Adams Street (the "Training Field" is to your right) **ACROSS** Common Street.
33. **RIGHT** on Chestnut Street, following it downhill, to go under Route 1 and **LEFT** to the signal. **DO NOT** cross the road without using the pedestrian signal. This is a very busy and dangerous road.
34. **FOLLOW** the FT along Constitution Road to Gate 1 of the Charlestown Navy Yard (*in use from 1800 to 1974*).
35. **LEFT** into the yard to the end of the block, then **BEAR LEFT** towards Second Avenue (*off to the left is the Commandant's House, ca. 1805*).
36. **RIGHT** at Second Avenue to pass the tennis courts (on right) to driveway at the far end.
37. **RIGHT** at the driveway and **CROSS** First Avenue to the USS Constitution Museum (restrooms). *The USS Constitution is the oldest commissioned naval vessel in the world (christened 1797). She earned her "Old Ironsides" nickname during the War of 1812 when she defeated three British ships while most of their shot appeared to bounce off her "iron sides" (thick oak actually). She has an impressive 42 wins and no losses (or boarding) record! The museum is free (donations accepted) and tours of the USS Constitution and the USS Cassin Young (World War II destroyer, commissioned 1943 to 1960. She fought at the Battle of Leyte Gulf in 1944 and the invasion of Okinawa in 1945, suffering 2 kamikaze attacks) are available.*
38. With the museum entrance at your back, go **STRAIGHT** ahead (**Dry Dock 1** on your left) toward Gate 1 (exit). *The dry dock is a National Historic Civil Engineering Landmark. A massive granite dry dock built in 1833 (one of two, the other is in Norfolk, VA) for the staggering sum of \$1.5 million. At the time it was the largest civil works project undertaken by the federal government.*
39. Follow the FT out Gate 1, onto Constitution Road to the intersection (Warren Street)

40. Continue STRAIGHT onto Water Street (leaving the FT), following it as it CURVES LEFT, then RIGHT.
41. Go UNDER the Charlestown Bridge to Paul Revere Park to the raised plant bed near the entrance.
42. LEFT and proceed on the path, clockwise around the edge of the park, passing a play area (on the left).
43. As you pass the brick building look for the pedestrian walkway leading out and across the river locks. Turn LEFT and FOLLOW the walkway (chiming the tubular bells if you like) to the end of Beverly Street (no sign).
44. Go STRAIGHT UP Beverly Street, past the State Police facility (on the left) to Causeway Street (*TD Garden - home of the Celtics and the Bruins will be to the right*).
45. LEFT on Causeway Street to the intersection at the foot of the Charlestown Bridge.
46. CAREFULLY (each lane is on a different signal cycle) CROSS North Washington Street to Commercial Street.
47. Keeping on the harbor (left) side of Commercial Street, FOLLOW it for several blocks (*along the way you'll pass Langone Park, the U.S. Coast Guard Station, Battery Wharf, Union Wharf and Sargents Wharf*).
48. At Lewis Wharf Commercial Street veers off to the right. You'll CONTINUE STRAIGHT ahead onto Atlantic Avenue into Christopher Columbus Park, keeping on the path closest to the water.
49. At the far end of the park BEAR RIGHT to go through the lobby of the Long Wharf Marriot Hotel (a public right-of-way) and out the other side (water and restrooms are available up the escalator).
50. STRAIGHT on Old Atlantic passing the whale watching cruises and the New England Aquarium. *The aquarium houses harbor seals, 3 breeds of penguins, and over 2,000 fish and other aquatic animals.*
51. Continue STRAIGHT on East India Row passing two large concrete apartment towers. When the row turns right, BEAR LEFT towards the large stainless steel sculptures (keeping them to your left). *Good views of Logan International Airport here.*
52. Passing the sculptures go OVER the wooden walkway onto Rowes Wharf and turn LEFT.
53. FOLLOW the brick walkway along the waterfront around several building to the giant archway of the Boston Harbor Hotel.
54. Route Splits
 - a. 6 km walkers will go THROUGH the archway to Atlantic Avenue and turn RIGHT. Proceed several blocks to State Street. LEFT on State Street, following it back to the Start/Finish.
 - b. 11 km walkers will go THROUGH the archway to Atlantic Avenue, turn LEFT and continue with Step #55.
55. CONTINUE on Atlantic Avenue keeping the buildings on the left and the Greenway on the right. Pass by James Hook + Co Restaurant and continue to the next street which is Seaport Boulevard. CROSS Seaport Boulevard and LEFT to go over the bridge.
56. Keep to the right side of the bridge, you will be CROSSING the Fort Point Channel.
57. Almost at the end of the bridge, you will come to an opening on your right.
58. Go THROUGH the opening which turns to the RIGHT and leads you to the terrace along the Museum Wharf.
59. LEFT at the railing towards the giant "Hood's" milk bottle on the left. The Congress Street Bridge with the Boston Tea Party Ships and Museum will be further up on the right. (*The Children's Museum, housed in a refurbished 19th century wool warehouse, will be on the left.*)
60. RIGHT after the milk bottle to CROSS back over the channel on the Congress St. Bridge. The Boston Tea Party Ships and Museum will be on the right hand side about half way across. (*Worth a visit!*)
61. CONTINUE on the bridge to the cross walk at the next traffic signal.
62. Using the second crosswalk, CROSS Congress Street to the right side of Dorchester Ave.
63. FOLLOW Dorchester Ave. to Summer Street.

64. **CROSS** Summer Street and **RIGHT** towards South Station (second building on left).
65. **ENTER** South Station through the rear entrance and turn **LEFT** into the main concourse (food and restrooms).
66. **EXIT** South Station through the front entrance onto Summer Street.
67. **BEAR LEFT** to the corner to **CAREFULLY CROSS** Atlantic Avenue to Surface Road.
68. **CROSS** Surface Road (**CAREFULLY**) and South Street to the next intersection (Lincoln and Bedford Streets).
69. Here Summer Street **BEARS RIGHT**. **FOLLOW** Summer Street a few blocks to Washington Street (a.k.a "Downtown Crossing", a pedestrian only zone, established 1975-1978. On one side is Macy's Department Store and on the other is Filene's Basement [famous for discounted wedding dresses]).
70. **CONTINUE STRAIGHT** as Summer Street becomes Winter St. to end at Tremont St.
71. **LEFT** on Tremont Street to Temple Street.
72. **RIGHT** to **CROSS** Tremont Street (at the crosswalk) into Boston Common and back onto the Freedom Trail. Boston Common was "set aside" in 1634 as a public pasture, military training field, and gallows.
73. **FOLLOW** the path leading **UP** a slight incline and to the right past the Brewer Fountain towards the gold domed State House. Brewer Fountain was purchased at the 1867 Paris Expo. The cornerstone of the State House was laid by Samuel Adams and Paul Revere 04 Jul 1795 and completed 11 Jan 1798. Its dome is sheathed in copper (1802) and gilded (1872) in 23-carat gold.
74. Go **UP** the stairs to the front of the Shaw Memorial at the top of the stairs (on the right). This memorial is dedicated to the Civil War's 54th Massachusetts Infantry, the first free-black regiment and their white colonel, Colonel Robert Shaw (see the 1989 movie, "Glory").
75. Facing the memorial turn **LEFT** to go **DOWN** the stairs to the path running along the fence. **FOLLOW** this path **DOWN** to the corner of Park and Tremont Streets.
76. **LEFT** to cross Park Street and proceed **DOWN** Tremont Street to Beacon Street. *First on your left is the Park Street Church (ca. 1810...America the Beautiful was first sung here), next will be the Granary Burying Grounds (ca. 1660...Samuel Adams, John Hancock, Paul Revere and Robert Treat Paine are buried here).*
77. **CROSS** Beacon Street and **IMMEDIATE RIGHT** to **CROSS** Tremont Street. *In front of you is King's Chapel (ca. 1749) and Burying Ground (to the left...Boston's oldest cemetery, ca. 1630).*
78. After crossing Tremont Street, **LEFT** to follow the FT to Burying Ground entrance.
79. Retrace your steps to the corner (Tremont and School Streets, King's Chapel is on your left).
80. **LEFT** and proceed **DOWN** School Street to Washington Street. *Along the way you'll pass the old City Hall (on left; used as such from 1865 to 1969) now a steak house.*
81. **RIGHT** at Washington Street, crossing School Street and go to the crosswalk. *At the corner of School and Washington Streets is the Old Corner Bookstore (ca. 1718). Note the memorial to the 1845-1849 Irish Famine on your right just after crossing School Street.*
82. Use the crosswalk to **CROSS** Washington Street and turn **LEFT**. *In front of you as you cross the street is Old South Meeting House (ca. 1729) now a museum (since 1877).*
83. **CONTINUE** on Washington Street. *You're now going through Boston's former publishing / printing district.*
84. **FOLLOW** the Freedom Trail as it turns **RIGHT** at the Old State House. Keeping the Old State House on your left **CONTINUE** on the Freedom Trail. *The Old State House, built in 1713, replaced a wooden one (ca. 1658) as a public meeting place for both government and merchants. In the years preceding the American Revolution, disputes between the Crown's governors + revenue agents and the elected representatives + civic leaders of the colony led to many key meetings and actions here by both sides. On 18 July 1776 the*

Declaration of Independence was read to the people from the balcony. This building also served as the State House until 1798.

85. FOLLOW the Freedom Trail to the corner.

Stop and look to the right for the circle of cobblestones on the traffic island. The circle commemorates the "Boston Massacre." In 1770, British troops opened fire into a threatening mob, killing or mortally wounding five. Patriot John Adams (later our 2nd president) courageously and successfully defended the soldiers against murder charges in court.

86. CROSS State Street and IMMEDIATE RIGHT to CROSS Congress Street.

87. Once across Congress Street, LEFT to FOLLOW the FT down towards Faneuil Hall to the end. *The 1742 building donated to Boston by Peter Faneuil burned down in 1761. It was rebuilt in 1763 and enlarged in 1806 (by prominent architect Charles Bulfinch). It has served as a meeting hall, a theatre (by British officers), a museum, and most importantly the headquarters of the Honorable Artillery Company of Massachusetts (since 1746).*

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The Walk 'n Mass Volkssport Club hopes you enjoyed this trail in historic Boston. You may also like our Back Bay walk which explores that area of Boston along with Beacon Hill. Our thanks to the rangers at the Boston National Historical Park Visitor Center and you for making this volkswalk possible. Thank you for coming and have a safe journey home!

Emergency: 911

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