



123 FUNdraising Ideas

1. **Start now** The earlier you begin fundraising, the better off you'll be. You'll be able to go way beyond your pledge minimum and then you can focus on your training.
2. **Make your Own Contribution** Lead the way by making your pledge first.
3. **House Party** This is a sure-fire way to raise money. Collect donations and entertain at the same time. Create a theme (like a costume party) and have fun!
4. **Corporate Matching Gift** Ask your company to match the amount of pledges you receive from your fellow coworkers.
5. **Your friend's matching gift** Ask a friend to see if they can investigate getting their company to match pledges.
6. **Corporate Sponsorship** Identify one of several major companies in your area and contact them directly. They may be willing to sponsor you completely.
7. **Signing your Correspondence** Add a short sentence at the bottom of your email signature (if applicable) saying that you're walking or riding in the 2009 Walk or Bike MS and ask for a pledge. Include an email link to your Walk/Bike MS personal or team page.
8. **Send a letter or email to everyone you know asking for support!**
9. **Business Cards** Print up some inexpensive business cards (you can even do it on your own computer). Have all the pertinent information on the card including your name, the name of the MS event and your address. Hand these out to everyone you meet!
10. **Garage Sale** Do you really need all that extra stuff taking up space in your garage, attic and/or basement? Gather it up and ask your friends to do the same. Then pick a Saturday or Sunday, put the stuff in the front yard and sell! All your money raised can go toward your fundraising goal!
11. **Bake Sale** Become Julia Child or Mrs. Fields and host a bake sale with you and your friends. You can even have it in conjunction with your garage sale.
12. **The "Extra Change in My Pocket" Box** Create these little boxes for your friends and family and have them place it on their dresser or desk. At the end of the day they can drop that spare change in the box.
13. **Start your own extra change box** Keep a jar near your door and every day put all your extra coins in it...it adds up. Or put it on your desk at work—others will join you.
14. **Office Fundraising Challenge** Speak with everyone in your office and get them to challenge each other to raise the highest amount. Give the winner a prize like movie passes or a gift certificate to lunch or dinner.
15. **Answering Machine Message** This will alert everyone who calls you at home that you're up to something special! Let them know that you need their support!
16. **Return Address Labels** Print return address labels for your outgoing mail. Print something like, "I'm walking in the 2009 Walk MS, will you sponsor me?" You may want to include a pledge form and a self-addressed envelope to make it really easy for them to donate.
17. **Internet Chat Rooms** Post a message on an Internet chat room. You will be amazed at how many people you don't even know who will be willing to help you.



Fundraising Ideas and Tips

18. **Personal Web Page** Every participant can create their own web page to share with their family and friends why they are walking or riding and to create an easy way for them to donate and learn more about MS. Click [here](#) to learn how to set up your own page.
19. **Ask your local waiters and waitresses to donate a portion of one day's tips to your cause.**
20. **Ask your local bartender to donate a portion of one day's tips** Same as the waiters and waitresses. Ask them to donate tips from one night. You can create a sign for the bartender to place on the bar stating "All tips collected tonight will go directly to _____ who's walking/riding to raise money for those people living with multiple sclerosis." If patrons see the sign, they may be willing to dig a little deeper into their pockets!
21. **Ask your local restaurants to place a money jar at the front of the restaurant** Check with the restaurant manager. They may be willing to place the jar in a high-traffic area so lots of patrons can see it.
22. **Fundraising dinner at your local favorite restaurant** Ask your favorite local restaurant to host a fundraising dinner for you. They supply the food and you supply the pledge forms!
23. **Happy Hour Party** Invite all your friends (and their friends) and get them to sign your past Walk MS or Bike MS t-shirt. Charge \$10 per signature. You'll even end up with a great shirt to wear on event day.
24. **Theme Party/Dinner** Hold a theme party for 10 or more of your friends. Have each guest donate \$50, spend no more than \$20 per person on food and you'll have \$300 or more in pledges by the end of the night.
25. **Movie ticket donation** Ask your local movie house to donate several movie tickets. Sell them and put the money toward your pledges.
26. **Host a movie party at your house** Pick up a new release at your local video store, make some popcorn, pick up some drinks and invite your friends and family over for the night. Make sure you have plenty of pledge forms out!
27. **Have a local theater donate tickets to a performance** Ask a local theater to donate a pair of tickets to one of their plays or musicals and auction them off.
28. **Birthday Gift Pledge** It will be a lot easier for your friends and family to write you a birthday check instead of spending hours trying to shop for you! And then you can donate the amount to your pledge total.
29. **Delegate** Give 10 of your friends 10 pledge forms each and ask them to help raise money for you.
30. **Creative friends** Find a local artist or ask a creative friend if they would donate a piece of art or jewelry that you could auction off. Or see if they would be willing to create mass quantities that you could sell and keep a portion of the proceeds for your pledge total.
31. **House Warming Party** Are you moving anytime soon? If so, ask your friends to make a pledge instead of purchasing a gift for your new place.
32. **Color Sponsor Letters** These can be very eye-catching. Send them in colored envelopes too. These will stand out among your friends' bills and junk mail.
33. **Travel Agency** Do you always make your travel plans through the same agency? Ask them to donate a travel voucher. You can auction it off at one of your parties.
34. **Doctor/Therapist/Veterinarian/Insurance Agent** Ask him/her to write a check for you instead of the other way around!



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35. **Dentist** Hopefully you won't have to pull teeth to get him/her to help you out a little!
36. **Chiropractor** They've cracked your back. Now ask them to crack open their checkbook and make a pledge.
37. **Yoga Instructor** You've bent over backward for them, now it's their turn to do the same for you!
38. **Radio Station** Call your favorite radio station and ask them to make an announcement on the air. They may even interview you. Pledges can be sent directly to the National Multiple Sclerosis Society office.
39. **Gym** Ask your gym to place a pledge jar at the front desk! Leave a stack of pledge forms at the counter as well.
40. **Spinning Class** Have a stack of pledge forms with you and ask your spinning instructor to make an announcement in class.
41. **Hair Salon** Ask your barber or hairdresser to donate \$2 of every haircut they complete over one weekend or ask them if they would be willing to donate their tips.
42. **Picnics** National Holiday Picnics are a great place to raise some money!
43. **Mow-a-Thon** Get your kids involved in this weekend activity. Check ahead of time with all your neighbors and ask them if you can mow their lawn for \$50.
44. **Neighbor** Write to all your neighbors on your block or in your building. Attach a letter stating what you're doing and ask them to make a donation. Or just stick a flier in their mailboxes explaining why you're raising money.
45. **Free Rent** Ask your landlord to donate one-month's rent to the cause!
46. **Good Karma Tipping Jar** Ask local businesses to put a pledge jar near the register or on their front counter. Tape to the jar a picture of yourself and a short explanation of why you're raising money.
47. **Errand boy/girl** Offer to be your friends' and/or coworkers' personal assistant for a day (or maybe for just a few hours) in exchange for a large donation. Maybe \$250 or more!
48. **Garden Tour** Check with a local historical society to see if they would sponsor a garden tour of one or several homes in your area. Promote the event in local newspapers.
49. **Meet the Press** Does your company distribute a newsletter? Does your company have interoffice email? Take advantage of these...it's a perfect way to get the word out!
50. **Babysitting** Offer up your services and let your friends have a nice, quiet night out of the house!
51. **Pet sit** Are your neighbors going away and they don't want to leave their pet(s) at the kennel? Again, offer up your services and charge them what they would have paid at the kennel and donate it to your pledge total!
52. **House sit** Are your friends going out of town for awhile? Maybe they need a warm body to stay at their place while they are away.
53. **Neighborhood Chores** Are you a Mr. or Ms. Fix-It? A lot of your neighbors would probably rather pay you than someone else. Place signs around your neighborhood or place in mailboxes advertising your services (i.e. watering gardens, cleaning roof gutters, sweeping the driveway, fixing an easy plumbing problem, painting a room, etc.)
54. **Karaoke Night** Who cares if you can't carry a tune? Spend a Friday night at a Karaoke Bar and sing for pledges!



Fundraising Ideas and Tips

55. **Talented Friends** Do you have a little piano bar in your neighborhood and a talented piano-playing friend? Ask the owner to let you bring some friends in one night for a cocktail and piano night. Charge anyone who attends and let them know that it's a fund-raising event for Walk or Bike MS.
56. **ebay.com** Gather up goods from you and your friends and auction it off on ebay.
57. **Company Vacation Days** Ask your boss or human resources director if they can swap one of your vacation days for a day's pay.
58. **Sell Shoes** Create sneaker-shaped cut-outs and print them on thick paper and say they benefit the National Multiple Sclerosis Society. Sell the sneakers for \$1 and put that toward your pledge total. You can create a necklace or pin them to your T-shirt on Walk day to display those who sponsored you.
59. **In memory of...** If you're walking in memory of someone, include a picture of you with your loved one in your pledge letter, on posters, etc.
60. **Pledges for each mile you walk or ride** Ask people to pledge an amount for each mile of Walk MS or Bike MS. For example, walk three miles at \$50 per mile and you will receive \$150 or ride 75 miles at \$2 per mile and you will receive \$150.
61. **Pet Birthday Party** People love their pets and they even love their friends' pets. Get the word out that if they were thinking about buying your pet a new toy, maybe they should think about writing a check to the National Multiple Sclerosis Society instead.
62. **Television Show Finale Party** It would be fun to gather a big group of friends together to tune in to watch a big season or series finale. Of course, charge them at the door and put the money toward your pledges.
63. **Game Night** Get out those board games and start playing! Break into teams and let the fun begin.
64. **Host a poker game** Call your card-playing friends and invite them over for poker night!
65. **Bowling Nights** Plan a fun night of bowling at your local lanes. Ask the owner to waive the cost of bowling and you can collect that money and turn it into pledges.
66. **Used-book sale** Everyone has books that have been sitting on shelves, in the attic or in the basement collecting dust. Ask your friends, family and neighbors to donate books they no longer want and set up a weekend book sale in your front yard. Put up some signs so people will know where the money is going and once they know, hopefully they'll give you even more!
67. **Local stores** Ask a local store manager what the hot-selling item is these days and then ask if he or she would be willing to donate a percent of the sales from that particular item to you.
68. **Curse Jar** Place a curse jar in your office and whenever someone says a bad word they have to open up their wallet, grab a dollar and put it in the jar.
69. **Dress Down Day** Ask your company to allow an official Walk MS or Bike MS Dress Down Day. For the privilege of dressing down, employees pledge \$10 or \$20 toward your team.
70. **Company Grants** Find out if your company offers grants to employees who volunteer their time for charitable causes. If so, you can volunteer your time at the National Multiple Sclerosis Society office and get paid grant money (pledges!) for the work. You may need a letter from us stating that you'll be volunteering in the office and we'd be happy to make that happen.



Fundraising Ideas and Tips

71. **Church Bulletin** Place an advertisement in your church bulletin/newsletter letting the congregation know what you're up to! Or better yet, invite them to join you at the event!
72. **Is there a teacher in the house?** Get your students to help you fundraise. Kids are incredibly creative and cute too!
73. **Other Parents** If your kids play in soccer leagues or any other sports teams, distribute your pledge forms to the other parents at the event.
74. **Walk Along** Ask a potential donor to join you on a fitness walk. He or she may be more willing to donate once they fully understand what you are committed to doing.
75. **Remind Them** If you didn't receive an answer the first time you asked, ask again! Your potential donor may need a little coaxing.
76. **Inspirational Bookmarks** Create them and sell them to your friends and family.
77. **Universities and Colleges** Contact your local schools and ask if you can put an advertisement in their school newsletter asking for donations. Some of the organizations may even invite you to make a short presentation.
78. **Sneaker Companies** Contact a few of the major sneaker companies (Nike, New Balance, Reebok, Ryka). Tell them what you're walking for and ask them if they would like to sponsor you for the entire amount! You may even get some cool gear too.
79. **Computer Screen Savers** Create a Walk MS or Bike MS Screen Saver and send it to everyone in your company! Or simply create a text screen saver on your own computer that others will see when you're away from your desk.
80. **Mechanics** You've given them lots of money to work on your car. Now it's time for them to give a little back to you!
81. **Rock on!** If you know any musicians, ask them to perform a benefit concert. Tell people that their admission ticket is a check made out to the National Multiple Sclerosis Society.
82. **Tell your story** The more you talk about your upcoming adventure, the more people will share in that excitement and want to pledge you.
83. **Children's Party** Throw on that Barney outfit and get out there! The kids will be having fun as their parents are writing you pledge checks.
84. **Wine and Cheese Party** Host a party at a local restaurant and ask the owner to donate the wine and cheese.
85. **Temporary Tattoos** Swap a temporary tattoo for a pledge.
86. **Do you have a favorite magazine?** Call the editor and ask them to sponsor you. If you've subscribed to a specific magazine or local newspaper for a long time, they may be willing to give something back to you.
87. **Fraternities and Sororities** Contact the National Chapter of your Fraternity or Sorority and ask them to make a donation.
88. **Alumni Organizations** Call your own college or university and ask them to place an ad in the alumni newsletter asking for donations.
89. **Ask for the Right Amount** Take a good look at who you're asking for donations and make sure you ask for the right amount. Don't ask for \$100 if you know someone could pledge \$1,000.
90. **Beneficiaries** Get to know them well. You'll be asked where the money is going and it will be very impressive to a potential donor if you're able to speak eloquently about it.



Fundraising Ideas and Tips

91. **Be a Massage Therapist for a Day** For every contribution of \$100, offer a massage to the donor.
92. **Pizza Party** Check out your local Pizzeria Uno (especially since they started in Chicago), they have a great deal to help you fundraise.
93. **Clubs and Organizations** Send a solicitation letter to your local Knights of Columbus, Lions Club, Rotary Club, Kiwanis, etc. They support individuals in their communities.
94. **Raffle** Everyone that contributes is entered into a raffle to win a special item such as a homemade quilt or baseball tickets.
95. **Contact your Local Paper and Get an Article** Make sure that you put in information about how people can contribute. And have a photo ready to go!
96. **Ask someone you don't know for money!**
97. **Send Reminders** Remind people to support you in your fund-raising efforts.
98. **Write to your local politicians** You supported them, don't you think they should support you?
99. **Try Fundraising Companies** Purchase flower bulbs and sell them to friends and family so you receive a portion of the profits. Or try selling candy (you see basketball teams doing this all the time), wrapping paper, nuts and calendars. Companies offer these fundraising packs year-round.
100. **Host a silent auction** Ask local companies and stores to donate items and then organize a party that includes a silent auction for all of your donated items.
101. **Ask a company to make a donation and put their name on your t-shirt** This can be kind of like a sponsorship agreement – get a company to make a donation and then put their company name on your team t-shirt.
102. **Host a Super Bowl party** Have half of the money raised in the pool go to the winner and the other half to the National MS Society.
103. **Host a party for the Golden Globes or the Oscars**
104. **Valentine's Day pledge** Have your sweetheart make a donation in honor of you.
105. **Creative friends** Find a friend who is crafty with art or jewelry and auction off the donated items.
106. **Tutoring** Offer your tutoring services and donate the money made to Walk MS or Bike MS
107. **Competition** Friendly competition is always encouraged – let your team know that you will be awarding the top fundraiser on your team with a special prize.
108. **Host a meeting with your co-workers or friends** Meet with a group of people you know and do a presentation on MS and why the cause is important to you.
109. **Ring the bell** It works for the Salvation Army! Stand in a heavily-trafficked location and ask for donations. You'll need to look official, so wear your Walk or Bike MS t-shirt and pass out information on the National MS Society, the event, or your team. Be sure to ask for permission at the location you are standing!
110. **Recycle for MS** B.C.S. Recycling Specialists (www.scrapdr.com) operates an inkjet cartridge and cell phone recycling program. They send you collection boxes and you receive money for the items turned in. Download the B.C.S. Recycling sheet for more information. Old cell phones can also be recycled for cash through www.wirelessfundraiser.com.



Fundraising Ideas and Tips

111. **Host a letter writing party** Have your team get together to write personal letters including a self-addressed, stamped envelope, a team picture, and your 2009 fundraising goals.
112. **Host a tournament** Organize and host a golf, tennis, or pool tournament.
113. **Compile a cookbook** Pull together your team's favorite recipes, type them up, and publish in a 3-ring binder or have your local copy shop bind them. Sell as many as you can!
114. **Offer to do something unusual** Offer to shave your head or dress up if your team meets their fundraising goal
115. **Reserved parking spot for company team** For corporate teams, give the team member who recruits the most members a reserved parking spot for a month
116. **Brown Bag Lunch** Have everyone bring a bag lunch to work and give the \$10 they would have spent on lunch to your team
117. **Use the web** Use your online resources to send emails, make contacts, and create a personal and team page
118. **Ask for help** Please ask the National MS Society staff for help or ideas if you ever need ANYTHING!
119. **Retention and Cultivation** Make sure to focus on retaining your team members from the year before, and make sure to cultivate your new team members to make them feel a part of the team.
120. **Get competitive** Generate friendly competition between your team members and between other teams and have prizes for the winners
121. **Make your chapter staff do something crazy** Be on the lookout for a challenge that your chapter staff may be willing to partake in if a certain goal is reached!
122. **Make it personal** Tell stories of those who have MS and make the cause personal by sharing your connection to the disease.
123. **Ask as many times as you can** Then ask again!