

Help

Short answers, in the order you'll probably need them.

Getting started

1. Install PrivateSteps from Google Play and open it.
2. Tap **Allow step counting** and accept the two Android prompts.
3. If asked, tap **Open battery settings** and choose **Battery › Unrestricted** (see below).
4. Put the phone in your pocket and walk. Today's count appears at the top and in the small ongoing notification.

Allowing permissions

Android asks for two things. **Physical activity** lets the app read the step sensor. **Notifications** lets it show the running count; Android requires an ongoing notification for background counting. Neither permission lets the app use the internet, and PrivateSteps has no internet permission at all.

If you tapped Don't allow by mistake: open the app, tap **Open app settings**, then Permissions, and allow Physical activity.

The Samsung battery setting

Samsung's battery manager can put apps to sleep, which stops counting until you open the app again. One setting fixes it:

1. Open **Settings › Apps › PrivateSteps**.
2. Tap **Battery**.
3. Choose **Unrestricted**.

Also check **Settings › Battery › Background usage limits** and make sure PrivateSteps is not in **Sleeping apps** or **Deep sleeping apps**. The app has a **Battery setup help** button at the bottom of its main screen that opens the right place.

Setting goals

Tap **Set my goals** (later **Change my goals**). Enter a daily, weekly or monthly number of steps, or leave a box empty for no goal. **Fill weekly and monthly from daily** sets them to 7× and 30× the daily goal. The daily goal draws a circle around today's count and a dashed line on the Week and Month charts; the monthly goal is the dashed line on the Year chart. Weekly and monthly progress show as bars.

The home screen widget

Long-press an empty part of the home screen, choose **Widgets**, find **PrivateSteps** and drag it out. It shows today's count and, if you have a daily goal, the percentage. Tap it to open the app. While paused it says so. Without an active subscription it shows "Hidden" until you subscribe.

Pausing

Turn on **Pause counting** under Settings on the main screen. Counting stops completely and the notification disappears. Steps taken while paused are never added later. Tap **Resume counting** in the banner to start again.

Exporting and importing

Everything is under **Your data** on the main screen. Files are plain UTF-8 text with a header row, so they open in any spreadsheet.

Export daily totals (CSV)

One row per day: `date,steps` — for example `2026-10-15,8423` . Best for spreadsheets.

Export full detail (CSV)

One row per hour: `hour_start,steps` — for example `2026-10-15T14:00:00-04:00,812` . This is the file to keep if you ever want to restore.

Import a full-detail file

Merges by hour and keeps the larger value for any hour already stored, so importing the same file twice never double-counts. Hours in the future are skipped. Weight and cholesterol days already stored are kept; identical blood sugar entries are not doubled.

Android's own save and open dialogs are used, so you choose exactly where files go. PrivateSteps needs no storage permission.

Moving to a new phone

1. On the old phone: **Export full detail (CSV)** and save it somewhere you can reach from the new phone (a USB cable, your own cloud drive, email to yourself).
2. On the new phone: install PrivateSteps, allow permissions, then **Import a full-detail file** and pick that file.
3. Goals are not in the CSV; set them again under **Change my goals**.

Alternatively, turn on **Include in Android backup** before you switch; Android's backup and restore then carries steps and goals over.

Log and Compare

Use the **Log** tab to write down your own numbers for any day: blood sugar (as many entries as you like, each with a time), weight, and cholesterol (total, HDL, LDL and triglycerides; fill in only what you have). Tap an entry to change or delete it. Choose your units (mg/dL or mmol/L, kg or lb) at the bottom of the Log tab.

The **Compare** tab draws the numbers you pick as lines over a week, month, year or all time. Each line has its own scale so you can see the ups and downs side by side; the range of each line is listed under the chart. Tap the chart to see the actual values for a day. Blood sugar shows the day's average in the chart and every entry in the Log. PrivateSteps only records and draws your numbers. It does not judge them or give advice; ask your doctor what they mean.

Water and reminders

At the top of the **Log** tab, **Water** keeps a running total for the day. Tap a quick-add button for a glass or bottle, **Add another amount** for anything else, or **Correct the total** if you made a mistake. Set a daily water target under **Your targets**. Choose fluid ounces, millilitres or litres under **Units**; the app starts with the one most common where you live.

Reminders (also on the Log tab) can nudge you to take a walk or check your blood sugar. Pick the time and the days of the week, or every day. Add as many as you like and switch each on or off. Reminders are alarms on your phone only. They can arrive a few minutes after the chosen time when the phone is resting, and they need notifications to be allowed for PrivateSteps.

Medications

The **Medications** tab is a plain list: name, dose, how often (type it however you like), the dates you started and stopped, and notes. Tap an entry to change or delete it.

Print or save as PDF opens Android's print screen on a clean one-page list; you can type your name on the page or leave it blank, and the name is not stored. **Export CSV** saves the list as a spreadsheet file. PrivateSteps does not check doses or interactions and gives no advice.

Targets

On the **Log** tab, **Your targets** lets you set one target number for weight, blood sugar, total cholesterol, HDL, LDL and triglycerides. Every change to a target, including your step goals, is kept with its date under **Goal history**. On Compare, targets appear as faint dashed lines. Targets never colour or grade your numbers.

Erasing your data

Delete older data

Tap **Delete older data**, choose how many of the most recent years to keep (1, 2, 5 or 10) and confirm. Everything older is permanently deleted from the phone.

Erase everything

Tap **Erase all my data**, then **Erase everything**. This permanently deletes your steps and every number you entered from the phone and cannot be undone. Want a copy first? Tap Cancel and export. Uninstalling the app also deletes everything stored on the phone.

How backup works, and how to turn it off

Include in Android backup is off by default. When on, your steps and goals are included in the phone's normal Android backup, which is performed by Android (usually to your Google account), not by PrivateSteps. The app itself still never connects to the internet. Turning the switch off stops new backups. To delete a copy already made, use **Settings** > **Google** > **Backup** on the phone.

The free trial and the yearly subscription

PrivateSteps is free to install. Tap **Start 7-day free trial** and Google Play asks for a payment method; for 7 days everything works and you pay nothing. If you cancel before the 7 days end, you are never charged. A slim line at the top of the main screen shows the days left and the date of the first charge.

After the trial the subscription is \$5 a year, charged automatically each year until you cancel. Without an active subscription, history, charts, goals and records are locked. **Counting never stops and nothing is deleted.** Your steps are saved the whole time, and settings, pause and all export, import and erase tools keep working, so you can always take your data with you. The number is hidden until you subscribe: it is blurred in the app, and the notification and the widget stop showing it (the notification says counting continues, and the widget says "Hidden / Tap to subscribe").

Google Play shows the price in your currency (\$5 a year, varies by country) and handles the payment. No account. To cancel or change it, tap **Manage** in Settings (or the trial banner), or open Google Play > Payments & subscriptions > Subscriptions. The app reminds you a month before each renewal, a week before, and on the day, and before the first charge when you are on the trial. PrivateSteps itself still has no internet permission; the Google Play app on the phone does the purchase.

New phone or reinstall? Tap **Restore subscription** while signed in to the same Google account. If a purchase shows as pending, it starts as soon as Google Play confirms it.

Languages

The app follows your phone's language (53 supported). On Android 13 and newer you can also pick a language just for PrivateSteps under Settings › Apps › PrivateSteps › Language. Arabic, Hebrew and Urdu are shown right-to-left, including the charts.

Still stuck?

Email help@privatesteps.com. Say which phone you have and what you expected to happen.