



Friendly-Friendly London

Fantastic Women Walking Tour

Welcome to **London**, the home city of www.worldforagirl.com. This short, self-guided walk is suitable for families with children of all ages from babies to teenagers. Starting in the heart of central London, it is very adaptable and easy to add-on extra attractions or slow down and relax!

During the walk, you will learn about many **courageous and inspirational women** whose lives have added so much to London's rich social history.

Duration: 30-45 minutes

Start: St James' Park Underground Station (near Buckingham Palace/ St James' Park/ Victoria Train Station)

Finish: Southside of Westminster Bridge (near the London Eye)

Level: Super easy.

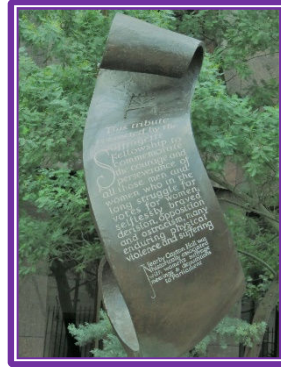
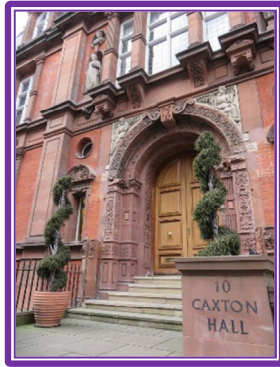
Child-friendliness:

- green spaces and parks
- pavements / sidewalks (very stroller-friendly)
- suitable for wheelchairs
- some streets may be very crowded
- toilet facilities available in Victoria Tower Gardens and at the finish point.

Begin the tour by exiting **St James' Park Underground Station** onto Broadway.

TIP: There are detailed wall maps by the station entrance if you need them.

Head south and turn right on to **Caxton Street** (about a 2 minute walk). Continue a short distance up the street and at the junction of **Palmer Street** on the right hand side, you will see **Caxton Hall**. This imposing red-bricked Victorian building (with a plaque to Winston Churchill) was home to the **Women's Social and Political Union's Women's Parliament**.



Directly across the road from Caxton Hall, there is a small alleyway leading to **Christchurch Gardens**. As you enter the small gardens (plenty of benches if the kids need a rest already!!) there is **the bronze scroll memorial to the Women's Suffrage Movement**. Exit the gardens next to the **Henry Purcell Memorial** diagonally opposite head left towards **Westminster Abbey** (you can't miss it!).

Family-Friendly Tip: If the kids are hungry/thirsty already there are plenty of cafes and shops on the opposite side of Victoria Street.

Westminster Abbey has played a role in the Votes for Women campaign. In 1914, a bomb was planted by a suffragette beside the Royal Coronation Chair in the Abbey. When it exploded it caused a small amount of damage to the chair and the 'Stone of Destiny' below it.



Just before you reach **Westminster Abbey** take a right turn down **Great Smith Street**. Welcome to the quiet side of Westminster! Walk straight past the Ministry for Education and take a left onto Great Peter Street. At the first junction, you will see **Mary Sumner House** on your right hand side. You should be here within 10 minutes.

Mary Sumner (1828-1921) was the founder of the Mother's Union, an Anglican organisation that supported mothers and children in the church. This building was built in her memory.



Continue all the way down Great Peter Street to Millbank. Cross the busy road at the crossing and you will now find yourself in **Victoria Tower Gardens**.

Family-Friendly Tip: **Victoria Tower Gardens** are a great place for the children to have a run around with fantastic views of the **Houses of Parliament** and the **River Thames**. Follow the signs for toilets and **Horseferry Playground** (an awesome family oasis with a sandpit, dance chimes and water play features).

When you've finished playing, head towards the **Houses of Parliament**. At the exit by the Houses of Parliament (Millbank side), you will see **the memorial to Emmeline Pankhurst**. Look carefully can you spot the plaque dedicated to Christabel Pankhurst?



Emmeline Pankhurst (1858-1928) is Britain's most famous suffragette and was a founder of the Women's Social and Political Union (WSPU) in 1903. Her famous call to action was "Deeds not Words". Emmeline was arrested many times and even went on hunger strike in prison. Her daughters, Christabel and Sylvia, also joined her in the fight for women's rights and suffrage.

Next continue past the **Houses of Parliament**. Maybe cross the road to explore the statues in Parliament Square. Keep your eyes peeled! A new statue of Millicent Fawcett is set to be revealed sometime in 2018.

Dame Millicent Fawcett (1847 -1929) was a suffragist (a peaceful campaigner) and a key figure behind women winning the right to vote.

Turn right and start walking across **Westminster Bridge**.

Family-Friendly tip: Westminster Bridge is often very crowded and newly erected safety barriers mean it can be tricky to navigate in large family groups. Stay on the right hand side of the bridge but stop as you reach the Thames. Look across the road and there you will see the mighty **Boudicca** high on a plinth riding her chariot.



The legendary Boudicca was Queen of the Celtic Icenii tribe from East Anglia. When the Roman Army invaded in AD60/61, Boudicca led an army that attempted to fight them off. She died in battle but her legend lives on.

Continuing walking across Westminster Bridge. You will be able to spot the London Eye, County Hall and further along Waterloo Bridge and the Southbank Centre. At the far side of Westminster Bridge, you should see a statue in the St Thomas' hospital Gardens to your right. Descend the steps and approach the statue. This is a **memorial to Mary Seacole**.



Mary Seacole (1805-1881) was an inspirational half-Jamaican half-Scottish woman who left Jamaica to volunteer to help British troops during the Crimean War. When her help was refused by most organisations, she travelled to Crimea independently and set up a 'hotel' where she nursed and cared for wounded soldiers.

Next, walk to the right side of the building directly behind the hospital where there is a walkway between the buildings. These are all part of St. Thomas' Hospital.

Family-Friendly Tip: If the children are desperate for the toilet or you need a baby-change, pop into the hospital (a bit cheeky, but needs must!) and you will find toilets right by the entrance.



Finally, follow the signposts to the **Florence Nightingale Museum** and have a peek in the gift shop. The small, interesting museum charges an entrance fee which you may choose to look round depending on the kids' moods and the weather. The main exhibition is mostly aimed at adults and older children who can read, although there are some interactive kid-friendly exhibits.

Florence Nightingale (1820-1910): 'The Lady of the Lamp' was a famous nurse and social reformer who changed the face of British nursing. During the Crimean War, she worked hard to change filthy and overcrowded field hospitals into comfortable, caring and clean environments where injured soldiers could recover.



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Well done! You've finished the self-guided walking tour. (Told you it was short, yay!). If you've still got some energy and the kids are in the mood, here are some other ideas to make the most of your visit to London.

- If the sun is shining, walk alongside the River Thames towards the **London Eye** (spot the huge climbing frame in **Jubilee Gardens?**). On the way, you'll pass many major (expensive) tourist attractions (The London Aquarium or London Dungeon anyone?!) and plenty of street entertainers. If you have the energy continue to the **Southbank Centre** just on the other side of the **Waterloo**

Bridge. As Londoners, the Southbank is one of our absolute favourite places to go in the whole of London. Check out <http://www.southbankcentre.co.uk> to find out what's on.

- If it's raining, head further south towards the **Imperial War Museum**. This excellent, free museum is only 10 minute walk from the end of the walk. Although it may not heavily feature women in all its exhibitions, they have had some excellent exhibits of women's roles during wartime and in the armed forces. There's a cafe and it's a great space for young children who love the huge airplanes and tanks. Just outside is **Geraldine Mary Harmsworth Park** a lovely green space created in 1934, named after a local Irish mother and dedicated to all the struggling mothers of Southwark.
- If it's Saturday, **The Feminist Library**, runs a weekly bookshop at Multipurpose Resource Centre, 5 Westminster Bridge Road, London, SE1 7XW (it looks a bit derelict but ring the buzzer and they'll let you in). They have some lovely, if expensive, feminist colouring books. Smash the patriarchy, little ones!
- If you're a travel addict who loves coffee (like me!) perhaps stop by the Waterloo branch of **The Travel Cafe** at 139 Westminster Bridge and peruse travel books as you relax with a warming latte.

Thank you so much for following this **Fantastic Women of London Tour**. Although it's very short, I hope it introduced you to some lesser known feminist memorials that can be found amongst the crowds of London's major tourist zone. Follow us on social media for more inspirational travel advice and activities.



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