

6 Tips for Staying Active Without the Gym

Hitting the gym is not the only way to stay active and fit. And it's not the only way to reap the healthy rewards exercise can bring. With a bit of creative planning, you can find ways to sit less, move more, and boost your health in the process.

Try these tips:

1. Turn chores into exercise

You can tackle your to-do list and get active at the same time. Wash, dry, and wax your car by hand instead of going to the car wash.

Rake leaves or mow the lawn at a brisk pace. Clean your windows and put your whole body into it.

2. Schedule 10-minute mini-workouts

No time for a 30-minute workout? No problem. Research suggests you can get many of the same health benefits when you cobble together three 10-minute workouts instead.

3. Change your relationship with your car

Park your car 2 or 3 blocks from your destination and walk a bit further. Get a wheeled cart and walk to the grocery store. Bike to work or the train station a few days per week for an active work commute.

4. Schedule active breaks at work

What if sitting at a desk is a big part of your job? Set alerts every hour to get up and move.

Stand up and stretch or do some lunges or squats. Walk on your lunch break. Take the stairs instead of the elevator.

5. Adopt an active hobby

Think about learning to dance or drum. Take up mountain biking or kayaking. Join a rock-climbing gym.

6. Play with your kids (as if you were one)

Join your kids in a game of hopscotch, tag team, leapfrog, roller skating, basketball, dodgeball, biking, or hiking. It won't even feel like exercise!

If you are receiving treatment for an injury or chronic pain, check with your health care provider before trying any of these or other activities to make sure they are safe for you.