

Fall Fitness Challenge 2013



Finding Time to Exercise

Adapted From Intellihealth.com

Finding the time to exercise is often as much of a challenge as a new aerobic workout. In fact, the number one reason given for not exercising is lack of time. That's why it is important to come up with a regular exercise schedule — one that lets you know where and when you're planning to work out each week. Of course, plans can change — but it's better to skip a scheduled exercise session than to have no schedule at all. If you save your workouts for whenever a spare moment "pops up," you'll end up exercising infrequently. Intermittent exercise increases your risk of injury because the muscles, bones, tendons and ligaments can receive too much stress, too soon.

Your own schedule might involve a variety of workout times — morning workouts on some days, for example, and lunchtime or after-work exercise sessions on other days. The key is to find a blend that works for you and to stick with it. You may find it helpful to buy an inexpensive calendar and schedule your planned workouts in advance. (You can check off each workout when you're finished and even make notes for yourself.)

Basic scheduling options

Weekends usually provide the best time for full exercise sessions. Try to work out on Saturday and Sunday, and pencil in your planned workout times before the weekend begins. You may need to fit your exercise into your preplanned weekend activities. For example, if you're planning to go to a beach or park, try scheduling a vigorous walk on the beach or a bike ride through the park.

You may prefer an early morning workout, because you can shower afterwards and get on with your work day. When you get out of bed, spend 10 to 15 minutes "puttering around" before you begin your exercise session (a cup of coffee or tea is OK, too, if you like). This gives your body a chance to shake off the effects of sleep. Be sure to warm up fully at the beginning of your workout. Many swimmers in particular find they enjoy starting the day with a session of laps in the pool.



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If walking or biking is your favorite aerobic activity and you don't perspire so heavily that you have to shower after a light workout, then walking or cycling to work (or your local bus or rail station, if you're a commuter) can be another way of fitting in some aerobic exercise. Simply wear athletic shoes and keep an extra pair of dress shoes at the office. Or bring a pair of athletic shoes to work and fit in a walk on the way home.

If you do not work outside the home or you're self-employed and working from your home, you might enjoy breaking up your day with a workout break. Instead of taking a 20-minute break to read the paper and have a snack, stretch the break out a few minutes longer and enjoy a long walk, bicycle ride or swim, or put a favorite aerobics tape in your VCR. You'll find that this exercise break is even more relaxing than putting your feet up.

Lunchtime can also be a good time for a walk, cycle or swim. If you're a swimmer or prefer the facilities of a health club, your pool or club should be close to your place of business. You will probably need at least an hour for this type of workout. You don't need to get all your exercise in one session. If you're aiming for an hour of exercise each day, you can split it up over two half-hour sessions (for example, at lunchtime and again after work).

You may find that working out in the late afternoon or early evening fits your schedule best. It is generally recommended that late evening exercise be avoided as it may make falling asleep difficult. The key is to find an exercise schedule that fits your lifestyle and includes activities you enjoy.

