

Your Employee Assistance Program is a support service that can help you take the first step toward change.

How To Be Active and Stay Fit at Home

You don’t need to leave the house to stay fit. There are things you can do to stay healthy and incorporate fitness into your home life. Here are some ideas to get you started!

Despite the reasons, millions of us get regular exercise without a gym membership. Here are some of the many ways to get regular exercise on your own:

Make a space at home. If you do not have a lot of space to dedicate to working out, find things you can do that require less movement. Strength training, yoga, or Pilates all require limited space. Try putting floor coasters under the legs of a table or couch so you can easily move it aside to give yourself more room. If you're streaming a workout on an app or watching along with a DVD, be sure to set things up so you can see the screen.

Follow along with a recorded workout. There's a huge industry of exercise videos, and in many cases they're free to view. You can stream online videos on your computer, smartphone, or device. To find them, try searching YouTube for "free workouts" or "exercise videos," for example. If you find one you like, you can also build a collection of paid workout videos from instructors you like.

Invest in equipment. Exercise equipment doesn't have to be bulky or expensive, and there are many ways to exercise where equipment isn't even necessary. But, if you choose to invest in equipment, find pieces that fit your space and style. Skipping ropes, mats, exercise bands, hand weights, or pull-up bars take up minimal space. Before making a large investment, like purchasing a treadmill or rowing machine, make sure the machine provides a type of workout you'll enjoy and be willing and able to do often.

Make the time. Sometimes it can be hard to find a block of time to exercise for at least 30 minutes. Fortunately, research shows that exercising for 10 minutes three times a day provides many of the same health benefits as exercising for 30 minutes straight. Make it a priority to schedule mini-workouts during the day and evening.

Work activity into your day. The best results come from combining planned periods of exercise with increased overall movement. For example, park farther away, use the stairs instead of taking the lift, or leave the car at home when going somewhere nearby. Walk to the farthest bathroom when possible. Take a moment to stretch after responding to emails. Pace or use hand weights while you're on the phone or watching TV.

Be creative. Not everyone enjoys lifting weights. Be creative and find what works for you. You might try having a family dance party before or after dinner, using a hula hoop while watching TV, or skipping during commercial breaks. Try listening to your favourite music or an audiobook to make the time pass more quickly as you’re working out.

Get connected. If you use a smartphone or tablet, a huge variety of fitness apps are available for exercise reminders, guidance and tips. Apps like Fit Radio stream DJ music mixes with a consistent beat. Try the app Sworkit for guided exercise routines that last 5-60 minutes. There are many apps to help you track your habits and keep you motivated, like MyFitnessPal or Habitica.

Join a virtual group. Some people like the competitive nature of fitness challenges. If you can't find one already sponsored by your company or an online community, create your own and invite friends
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and family to participate virtually. Getting started is always the hardest part. Start small and make sure your reasons for increasing your activity are personal. Set realistic and achievable goals, track your progress and have fun!

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