

Get moving, keep moving

Do what you love

It's always a good time to start a fitness routine — or change one that's not working for you anymore. Whether you've set a new goal to live a more active life or you're trying to stay motivated, the key is finding activities you love. When you love what you're doing, you're more likely to make time for it, no matter how busy you get.

Skip the guilt, not your workout

You're probably not going to do something you don't like.



If you choose fitness activities because you think you should do them, you're probably not going to keep doing them. And chances are, you'll feel bad or guilty when you quit.

Life's too short to feel bad. Pick something you love, and feel joy when you keep doing it.

Have some health conditions? Ask yourself these questions to see if you need to talk to your doctor before starting or changing your routine.

Are you a dedicated gym-dodger? That's OK. You don't have to go to the gym. The list of activities you can do is pretty long, so with a little patience, you can find your thing.

Take baby steps

Even if you love what you're doing, build up the intensity and length of your workouts slowly. Try to exercise at a rate that allows you to talk but not to sing. Moderate exercise is safe for most people, but pushing yourself too hard, too fast can lead to injuries — and you can burn through your enthusiasm, too.

You don't need to work out for hours every day to get the benefits of fitness. Aim for a total of 2 hours and 30 minutes (150 minutes) a week — that's just 30 minutes a day, 5 days a week.

Not sure you can find 30 minutes in a row? That's OK. Try walking 10 minutes 3 times a day, or one of our great 10-minute workouts. Studies show that being active, even if you can't do 30 minutes of exercise every day, still has a big impact on your health.

Add one thing at a time

If you're just getting back into fitness, pick one thing you'd like to try. Check out our health classes for some ideas.

Choose an activity like jogging, swimming, walking, or dancing that works major muscle groups and gets your heart rate up. Don't put together an elaborate schedule, only to find out that you're stressed out or have injured yourself.

If you're not enjoying yourself, try something else. Or buddy up with a family member, friend, or coworker for support and encouragement. Sometimes the right company makes all the difference.

Once you're comfortable with your new activity, add something else. Or build a fitness plan [📅](#). Cross-training will help you get fitter and healthier.

Adjust for your limitations

Many people have limitations that limit the kind or amount of exercise they can do. It could be something that you need to make minor adjustments for, like arthritis or allergies, or something that requires larger changes, like having limited mobility.



It's just as important to stay active if you have limitations. Even moderate exercise can reduce fatigue and stress, and help you feel your best. The key is finding something that suits your situation.

Are you in a wheelchair or have difficulty walking? Ask your doctor which upper body strength and stretching exercises might be right for you and which fitness equipment is appropriate. If you're into competition, consider wheelchair sports, which include basketball, archery, fencing, and more. Check out our list of fitness activities.

With a little creativity, you can find your thing. Listen to your body and talk to your doctor about what's recommended for you.

Repeat

If you've worked out once, you know that you can do it again. But if your couch is still calling you, we've got some tips to help. We're all members of The Backsliders Club at one time or another.

Reviewed by: Robert Sallis, MD, February 2016

Additional Kaiser Permanente reviewers

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