

Get back into the exercise habit



Stressful and busy times in our lives often get in the way of exercise. Whether you've been busy with your job, family, or other commitments, it is possible to get back into a fitness habit. If you haven't exercised for months or even years, here are some safe ways to start fresh and enjoy all the healthy benefits of exercise again.

1. **Go easy at first.** Understand that your body will need to work back up to its prior fitness level. Go for a shorter and lighter workout and see how you feel the next day. Gradually make it longer and more difficult each time. This will help you avoid injury and soreness.
2. **Don't be frustrated.** Perhaps you can't run as fast or lift as many pounds as you did before. That's to be expected. You can, however, keep working at your fitness goals to be your healthiest self. Each day you exercise, you get closer to that goal.
3. **Recovery is important.** You may notice more soreness at first, as your body adjusts to exercise again. Be sure you cool down at the end of your workout and stretch your muscles.
4. **Set realistic goals.** Fitness goals can help move you forward. But goals that are too difficult to reach may cause you to throw in the towel. Be proud of any progress you make and each day you choose to be active.
5. **Ask a friend to join you.** Having a workout buddy can help you stay motivated and make it fun. Perhaps your friend can join you at the gym or for walks around the neighborhood a few times a week.
6. **Consider a coach or trainer.** Professional fitness experts can help you avoid injury and get you on a good fitness plan. Some gyms offer free or low-cost training sessions to new members.

Source: Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion