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This is how to make exercise a daily habit

Maintaining an active and healthy lifestyle can seem difficult, especially when it feels like there aren't enough hours in the day. Research estimates 80% of UK adults aren't meeting the government's target of exercising 12 times in a four-week period.

Fitting exercise into your everyday routine might be easier than you think – and in many cases cheaper and more enjoyable.

Exercising at work

With many people in the UK tied to long hours at work and not enough leisure time, it can be difficult to schedule in a workout. [Research from the University of Bristol](#) shows people who exercise on workdays are generally happier than those who don't, so it's well worth making the effort.

Walking and jogging

Walking is easily incorporated into your daily work routine. Offer to make someone coffee and take the opportunity to visit a different floor in your office. You can also use your lunch break for a brisk 20-minute stroll, or you might want to think about walking to and from work.

Taking the stairs is another option. Instead of heading for the escalator or lift, using the stairs will help tone your legs and improve your [cardiovascular](#) fitness. Many athletes use stair climbing as a means of making their muscles more efficient, while also improving their lung capacity.

Leg exercises

Sitting at a desk all day can increase the risk of poor circulation. There are a few different exercises you can try to get your blood flowing.

Lift both your feet off the floor and rotate them at the same time, first clockwise and then anticlockwise. To improve movement in your knees, pull one up to your chest using both hands and hold for 15 seconds. Then repeat using your other leg.

Get everyone involved

Group exercise has many advantages. Not only will everyone in your office be able to take part but you'll collectively reap the health benefits. Whether you do this during work time or outside office hours will be your boss's decision but there are various ways to make it happen.

Many offices have shower facilities, so why not arrange a lunchtime jog or stroll? Alternatively, put together a company football or netball team and see if any other local businesses want to get involved. A bit of friendly competition is good for everyone.

Exercising when you travel

Constantly travelling can make it hard to stay fit and healthy. From [jet lag](#) to fatigue, and reaching for quick fix snacks, there is no shortage of health problems frequent travellers may face.

Add to the mix an irregular routine and it can seem virtually impossible to establish an exercise regime. However it's vital to keep yourself active, even when time is at a premium.

Plan ahead

Some forward planning could be all you need to improve your well-being. The NHS recommends 150 minutes of physical activity per week – that's 30 minutes, five days a week. If packing your case or printing your documents the day before frees up just half an hour of your time, you can spend this getting your routine in check.

Tour the airport

Got time to kill at the airport? You might not think it, but it could be the perfect opportunity to squeeze in a small workout. The average person can burn up to 170 calories from just half an hour of brisk walking, so next time you find yourself in the departure lounge, go for a quick power walk through the terminal.

Explore your surroundings

Most frequent travellers say they only see the four walls of their hotel room or conferencing hall when they're away from home. Instead of retreating to your bed or the hotel bar at the end of the day, take a look around the local area. It's a great way to find out more about a place, and it will give you an excuse to exercise.

Create your own workout

Exercise doesn't have to be confined to the gym, especially when you can put together your own workout. Resources such as YouTube and specialist apps will make this easier than you think. A simple range of exercises, including squats, lunges and stretches, could make all the difference.

Exercising while at home

Putting time aside to exercise can be tricky, especially when trying to fit it into a busy family routine. Getting the whole family involved is not only a great way to spend time together, but also teaches children how to follow a healthy lifestyle. Here are some suggestions on how to get fit as a family and have fun at the same time!

Go swimming

Why not take a weekly trip to the local pool? While the kids have swimming lessons, you can use the opportunity to fit in a few lengths. You could also play games in the pool – some places have special events where they provide inflatables and equipment.

Get on your bike

There are many local parks and areas of countryside with cycle paths, as well as bike hire facilities. Make a day of it and take a picnic, discover new places in your local area and try to keep up with the little ones as they pedal ahead!

Put on your dancing shoes

Who doesn't love a good boogie? Put on your favourite tunes and have a pre-dinner dance-off. It's fun and will get everyone on their feet. You never know, you might pick up some new moves.

Get active for charity

With charity runs such as Race for Life, it's easy to sign up and get moving for a good cause. Take part in fundraising and train together in the run-up to the event - you could even make it an annual family tradition.

Walk the dog

Turn a daily chore into an opportunity to get active. Go for an after dinner walk, or make it more interesting by running for two minutes then walking for five. Gradually you can build up the routine and adapt it to your family's schedule.

Keeping your healthy lifestyle in check doesn't have to be expensive. The gym should be a last resort after trying out the many low-cost ways of staying active.

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