KAISER PERMANENTE®

Making time

Ways to work in your workout

Fitness should be a fundamental part of your life, like eating and sleeping, but when you're busy, it can be hard to remember that. Discover simple ways to work exercise into your daily routine, tips for scheduling workout breaks, and ideas for doing effective workouts in less time.

You're already exercising

Are you walking from the car to your office? Taking the stairs instead of the elevator? Gardening and mowing? Playing with your kids?

Good news — you're working out. Doing everyday activities and chores can improve your health, all without going to the gym.

Now that you know, look for other opportunities to work out while you're doing other things:

- While you're on the phone, do simple stretches.
- Do brief neck and shoulder exercises at your office or while you're watching TV.
- Try a "squeeze ball" to tone your arms, flex your hands, and relieve stress.
- Use a rake rather than a leaf blower, a hand saw rather than a chain saw, and a push mower rather than a riding one to do your yard work.

And don't forget all that walking you're doing. Check it out:

- Park your car farther out, and walk to deliver a message, rather than calling.
- Walk to work or to the shops instead of taking the car or the bus. If it's too far to walk, park the car or get off the bus and walk part way.
- Pace up and down in your office as you read reports or memos.
- Walk with your kids to the park, their play dates, or school.

All these steps add up to better health. Get a pedometer, and see how far you're going.

You're off to a great start. Keep going!

Take a fitness break

When you're taking care of other people, it's easy to put their needs first. But you can't take care of your loved ones if you don't take care of yourself.

Take 10 minutes for yourself. Think of it as a coffee break without the caffeine, or a time out. Go for a walk. Walking just 10 minutes can boost your energy and reduce stress for an hour or more. Time away from your to-do list and worries can restore you, body and mind.

Have a little longer? Take half an hour to work on your tennis game, or try a new walking route. If you can plan blocks of time, you're partway to a fitness routine. Now choose an activity.

Shrink your workout

You might be surprised how many times in a day you can spare 10 minutes. Do 3 or more 10-minute mini-workouts, and you'll get the same health benefits as a longer workout:

- Running errands? Park 5 minutes from your destination. Walk there and back briskly.
- Invite a co-worker to join you in a brisk walk-and-talk meeting.
- Walk up the stairs, then down, as fast as you can. Repeat as many times as you can in 10 minutes.
- Play with your child or grandchild. For 10 minutes, toss a Frisbee, shoot hoops, play badminton, dance, ride bikes, or play soccer.
- Grab 2- to 8-pound weights and do 10 minutes of strength training, like shoulder presses, side lifts, lunges, bicep curls, triceps extensions, and squats.
- Have to clean? Crank your music and clean quickly, till you're breathing harder.
- Jump rope slowly for 1 to 2 minutes, then jump fast for 1 to 2 minutes. Repeat until you've jumped 10 minutes.
- Do 10 minutes of your favorite exercise video.
- Turn on your favorite music and dance, dance, dance.

Go hard

Got less time? Already exercising? Try doing shorter, more intense workouts.

How do you measure intensity when you're working out?

- If you're doing moderate exercise, you should be able to carry on a conversation.
- If you can sing, you're doing light exercise, so you should boost the intensity to get more health benefits from your workout.
- If you can't talk comfortably, you're exercising harder, so consider adjusting your exercise time.

If you choose more intense activities, you can get the same health benefits in about half the time.

Exercise longer with less intensity (150 minutes/week)	**Exercise harder in less time (75 minutes/week)**
Water aerobics (30 minutes)	Swimming laps (20 minutes)
Bicycling 5 miles (30 minutes)	Bicycling 4 miles (15 minutes)
Wheeling in a wheelchair (30 to 45 minutes)	Wheelchair basketball (20 minutes)
Shooting baskets (30 minutes)	Playing basketball (15 to 20 minutes)
Pushing a stroller 1.5 miles (30 minutes)	Running or jogging 1.5 miles (15 minutes)
Playing touch football (30 to 45 minutes)	Jumping rope (15 minutes)
Raking leaves (30 minutes)	Shoveling snow (15 minutes)
Fast social dancing (30 minutes)	Climbing stairs (15 minutes)

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

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