

Sometimes the most difficult part of exercise and being active is staying motivated. You might be too busy, or just not feel up to it. But even if you take a short break, you can get moving again. Here are a few ways to help you fit some activity into your day.

Make a plan

Having an exercise plan can help keep you on track. Take into account how active you are now, and be realistic in your goals. Your plan, according to the National Institutes of Health's National Institute on Aging (NIA), should include:

- □ Your reasons for being physically active
- □ Your short- and long-term goals
- The activities you plan to do
- When, where, and with whom you'll be active
- Things you need to do to get started and keep going

Find a buddy

Having a friend or family member to exercise with is not only more fun, it gives you both someone to be accountable to. And that helps you both stick to the activity plan.

Get an early start

Being active first thing in the morning, before you get busy, will help you succeed.

How much exercise you need depends on your age and health, but most recommendations for adults is 30 minutes of moderate aerobic activity per day. If you can't do 30 minutes all at once, break it into three 10-minute segments throughout the day.

Talk to your healthcare provider about the amount and type of activity that's best for you.

Make the Most of Your Exercise

According to the Go4Life® program from the National Institutes of Health's National Institute of Aging, there are four types of exercise that are beneficial:

- Endurance
- Strength
- Balance
- Flexibility

To get the most benefits, do some of each, and mix them up to reduce boredom and lower your risk of injury.

To learn more, visit <https://go4life.nia.nih.gov> .

Remember the benefits

If you feel yourself losing motivation or feeling discouraged, remember the good things regular exercise and activity can do for you:

- Help control your weight
- Reduce your risk of heart diseases
- Strengthen your bones and muscles
- Improve your mental health and mood
- Help keep your thinking, learning, and judgement skills sharp
- Reduce your risk of falls
- Improve your sleep

Make it interesting

Variety is the spice of life, so work some different types of activity into your day. The NIA suggests:

- Walk every aisle of the grocery store when you go shopping
- Take one or more flights of stairs up, or two flights down
- Try a dance or water aerobics class
- Sign up for a yoga or tai chi class

- Go bowling once a week
- Spend more time gardening, hiking, or biking

Don't worry

If you have a break in your routine because of illness or vacation or overnight guests, don't worry. It happens to everyone, so go easy on yourself.

As soon as you can, get back to some sort of activity; it'll make it easier to get back into your routine. Most importantly, think about the reasons you started exercising and believe in yourself!

For more information, visit www.nia.nih.gov/health/exercise-physical-activity .