

How do I WORK OUT how to WORK OUT?



By Gaynor

From Abs to Aerobic, Body balance to Boxercise and Cardio to Conditioning it can be confusing sometimes out there in the world of fitness and exercise.

Do we all need to exercise?

Yes is the short answer. Human beings are designed to move, to hunt, to gather, to carry, to travel, to stretch, to reach, to play. We are inventing numerous ways of cutting these basic movements out of our lives. We move a lot less than people 2,000 years ago did simply because some of the necessity has gone and we can survive without moving. Or so we think!

So why do we need to exercise?

Move more to keep your weight down

If you run for about 30 minutes each day but then spend the rest of the time sitting in your car, office or house then you're still likely to put on or find it difficult to manage your weight. You'll have burnt about 300 calories but by just generally moving more in a day you can burn up to 800.

A 15 minute walk in the morning to work, a trip to post-box mid morning, walking around the office or running around after children, dashing around town for 40 minutes at lunch doing jobs and walking the long route home for 30 mins. Even that will add up to approximately 600 calories and you'll barely notice and you won't have to have a shower afterwards!

Build movement into your life slowly until it's the norm.

Get your heart beating faster to keep you going for longer

That's YOUR heart beating faster than it is used to. Don't compare yourself to anyone else. Our heart will only perform more effectively if we ask it to at times and then it will get more used to it. So try and get your heart beating faster by walking quickly, climbing stairs 2 at a time, jogging, cycling, dancing and playing with friends or the kids in the park.

Ignore your muscles and they'll go away

Studies show that between the ages of 20 and 30 we start losing muscle if we don't do weight resistant exercise. You can rebuild muscle that you've lost no matter what your age.

Muscle is important for many reasons including its ability to burn calories. (35 per lb of muscle per day as opposed to 2 calories for fat!)

Resistance training also decreases your risk of osteoporosis and reduces blood pressure (the heart is also strengthened). Start carrying more weight, heavier shopping bags and perhaps buy a resistance band for a low cost way of working your muscles.

Don't be a push over

A strong core, good balance and flexibility help us to do everyday tasks more efficiently and protect us from injury. You can go to classes or you can fit it into your week as much as possible by standing on one leg whilst queuing or washing up, doing slow sit ups or practice reaching your toes whilst watching television.

How much exercise should you be doing?

We're all on a journey. Simply we should all be doing more. So just start and see where it takes you. Listen to your body as you build slowly and enjoy yourself and the benefits!