

Fit in Fitness: Activities and Tips

1. Take a movement break every hour during one day: Reduce sedentary time

Sitting less and moving more can help improve mental well-being, avoid muscle tightness, and decrease our risk for many diseases.

- Set a reminder every hour and take a short walk down the hall or up and down the stairs
- Use a bathroom or water fountain on a different floor or area of the building you are in
- Pace around the room while talking on the phone, watching a webinar, etc.
- Energize with some jumping jacks, dancing, or body weight exercises (squats, crunches, wall pushups)
- Keep a water bottle with you. Not only will you stay hydrated, but you'll get up to take regular bathroom break and fill up your water bottle.
- Try some seated movement like leg lifts, arm circles, marching in place, toe touches or any movement that is comfortable/acceptable for the space you're in



2. Substitute an active behavior for a sedentary one: Move more

Fitting activity into everyday activities makes it easier to find time

- Take the stairs instead of the elevator
- Walk, roll, bike or ambulate someplace that you would usually drive, bus or use other transportation
- Schedule a meeting that requires moving to get to it (on a different floor or in an office further away)
- Take a movement break during a meeting – stand, stretch, march your legs, swing your arms, etc
- Move your body while watching a show; try yoga, knee lifts, crunches, squats, lunges, planks or whatever you feel up for
- Play with a pet outside (instead of just letting them out) – take a walk or throw a ball/stick/toy for them

3. Do a physical activity with a group or partner: Socialize

Exercising with others has been shown to enhance consistency, duration, motivation, and most importantly, enjoyment.

- Try out a group fitness class at the CRWC or Field House <https://recserv.uiowa.edu/programs/fitness/group-fitness/group-fitness-schedule>
- Sign up for a Specialty Program to cater to your athletic interest <https://recserv.uiowa.edu/fitness-programs>
- Consider hiring a Rec Services group exercise instructor to provide a fun activity for your organization or group <https://recserv.uiowa.edu/programs/fitness/group-exercise/hire-instructor>
- Recruit a workout buddy
- Gather a group for a walk, hike, bike ride, game of basketball, dodgeball, volleyball or any other activity you all enjoy
- Sign up for a LLS ([Lifetime Leisure Skills](#)) or HPAS ([Health and Physical Activity Skills](#)) class

4. Try a new way to move or try a new physical activity/sport (or move your body in some way that you don't usually): Add variety

While regular exercise is great for you, it's important to vary your fitness routine to prevent boredom and overuse injuries, keep your brain healthy, and so much more!

- Check out Rec Services – from classes, intramurals, outdoor programs and rental equipment, aquatic activities, personal training and more: <https://recserv.uiowa.edu/>.
- Try a new piece of equipment like BOSU or medicine balls, resistance bands, or cardio equipment
 - If able, try actively commuting to campus by biking or walking.
 - Use an app to do a new workout, some we like: [Nike Training Club](#), [SWORKIT](#), [Seven](#), [Workout Trainer](#)



Need tips or ideas just for you? Or want to learn how to use some type of equipment? **Schedule a Student Wellness Fitness consult** – a free service for students! <https://studentwellness.uiowa.edu/appointments/fitness/>



5. Spend at least 30 minutes doing movement you enjoy: Keep it fun!

Finding exercise you enjoy helps motivate you to do it more regularly. Try these activities that are often reported as enjoyable:

- Yoga
- Dancing
- Zumba
- Rock climbing
- Walking or hiking – there are many great parks and trails in the area!
- Active video games
- Basketball, volleyball, other sports
- Jump rope, hula hoop or other “kids” activities
- Martial arts



Keep in mind we all enjoy different activities – find the ones that are the right fit for you and fit them in regularly! If you like what you currently do, just keeping doing that (and fit it in on 3 days)!

More ideas: <https://www.webmd.com/fitness-exercise/features/the-unworkout-7-ways-get-fit-have-fun#1>



6. Stretch for at least 10 minutes

Stretching can be done anywhere— in a yoga class, while watching Netflix, before bed, and even at your desk (see below)! Stretching helps relax both mind and body; it speeds recovery from a tough workout and prevents future injury. Plus it feels good!



More physical activity resources:

<https://studentwellness.uiowa.edu/appointments/fitness/>

<https://www.youtube.com/user/UIStudentWellness/videos>

<https://recserv.uiowa.edu/>

<https://www.eatright.org/fitness>

<https://www.acefitness.org/education-and-resources/lifestyle/blog/fitness/>

<https://sustainability.uiowa.edu/campus-initiatives/biking>

<https://hr.uiowa.edu/well-being/livewell/health-and-well-being-resources/physical-activity/local-area-walking-maps>

Please understand that not all struggles can be addressed by changes in physical activity. If you are struggling with a mental health concern such as anxiety, depression or disordered eating, or have been negatively impacted by external factors such as trauma or systemic oppression the University of Iowa has professional resources to support you. Start here to find resources: <https://mentalhealth.uiowa.edu/>

IOWA

Student Wellness