

Creating an Activity Plan

Creating an activity plan with specifics about how you'll stay active can help you move toward your fitness goals. What activities will you do? How often will you do them? What time of day will you set aside for them?

Apps are available to help you create a plan and track your progress on a smartphone or tablet, or you can use paper and pen or a recording device.

Make a Plan

- **Find a large print activity tracker or make your own.**

You can find exercise logs and other worksheets online, or create your own plan in large print, braille, or an audio recording.

- **List the date, the activities you plan to do, and how long you plan to do them.** This makes it easy to jump right in and get it done, instead of having to come up with fresh ideas when it's time to work out.

- **Keep your schedule on a calendar.** A large print paper system is handy, or record reminders on your smartphone, tablet, or smart speaker.

- **Include different types of exercises.** To keep it interesting and improve your overall fitness, vary your routine with flexibility (sometimes called stretching), strengthening, balance, and aerobic (sometimes called

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cardio) exercise. Decide whether you want to do a little of each type every day, or do them on different days. For example, you might want to run on the treadmill for 20 minutes three days per week, and do strengthening and balance exercises on the other days. Or you might prefer a daily routine that includes them all.

- **Plan activities you enjoy.** If you like your workout, you'll be excited to come back for more.

Record Your Activity

- **Record or check off the activities you do,** either on your paper system or on your app. If you didn't complete an activity, make a note that explains what got in the way, along with any changes you made. This helps you adjust future plans.
- **Include everyday tasks.** Give yourself credit for walking, taking the stairs instead of the elevator, vacuuming, gardening, playing with your kids or grandkids, or stretching to put canned goods into cupboards. These count, too!

Evaluate Your Plan

- **Notice what works and doesn't work, and revise it as needed.** For example, if you plan to walk with a friend and they often cancel, plan a walk by yourself or choose a different activity.

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Find Ways to Stay Motivated

- **Have a backup plan.** The goal is progress, not perfection, so don't get discouraged if you miss an activity. Make up for it at a different time or with a different activity.
- **Set short-term goals and build on them.** For example, start with a distance goal of walking 5 blocks, and then build up to 5 miles. Or start with a stamina goal of walking for 5 minutes, and then build up to 2 hours.
- **Consider exercising with a buddy.** Getting together with a friend, joining a group class, or working with a personal trainer can help you stay motivated. Making an appointment with someone else means you're less likely to skip the activity.
- **Reward yourself.** Celebrate your accomplishments by doing something special or treating yourself to something you've wanted.

Each time you're physically active, you're one step closer to a healthier, stronger you!