

# 4 Ways to Change Your Routine and Get FITT

So how do you get from where you are to where you want to be? Change your routine. Think **FITT** to get fit and stay fit:<sup>3</sup>

## 1. Raise Frequency

How many days per week do you exercise? If you're at zero, now is always a good time to start. If you've been at it awhile, can you add another day to your exercise schedule? Aim to be active at least five days a week.

How many days a week are you active now? Can you increase that by a day?

## 2. Choose Intensity

How much effort do you put into your exercise? At a minimum, your heart rate should be elevated when you exercise. That's around 80 to 170 beats per minute for most adults, depending on your age. You should break a sweat or breathe a little heavier than normal. Intensity can also be measured by your effort to lift weights or be flexible. Think "E" for effort.

Can you work a little harder during your next workout compared to your last?

## 3. Increase Time

How long is your typical workout? Or how many minutes per day are you physically active? If you don't know, start tracking it. Write it down or use a digital fitness device or mobile app to help you keep track. Be active for at least 30 to 60 minutes of moderate physical activity per day, plus two days of strength training per week.

Can you increase your next exercise session by a few minutes?

## 4. Pick Type

What kind of exercise do you like? Pick an activity. Swim, bike, run, jog, dance, lift weights, play a sport, take a fitness class. Any form of exercise will help you improve metabolism and strengthen your heart, lungs, muscles, and bones. Choose an activity you enjoy, or try something new. Make a small change to your exercise routine. Now is always the best time to start.

What activities do you enjoy to build strength and endurance, manage your weight, and improve your health?

## Make Small Changes to Get Big Results

What changes can you make to your fitness routine to lose weight, build muscle, improve balance, or increase endurance? Here's a hint. Start small, make simple change, rinse and repeat.<sup>5</sup> For example:

<b>DON'T</b> try to run a marathon, if walking a mile is your max.	<b>DO</b> increase your one-mile walk by a quarter-mile, walk faster, or both.
<b>DON'T</b> try to bench press 300 pounds, if your max is 100.	<b>DO</b> increase weight by 5-10 percent, sets, repetitions, or all three.
<b>DON'T</b> try an extreme 60-minute fitness bootcamp, if you're not in great shape.	<b>DO</b> exercise 5 to 10 minutes longer per week to improve strength and endurance.
<b>DON'T</b> try to exercise hard 6 days a week, if one day a week easy is your norm.	<b>DO</b> work up to 30 to 60 minutes a day, adding a day at a time then increase effort over time.

The secret to better health – exercise  
[tinyurl.com/y6rmo5zj](https://tinyurl.com/y6rmo5zj)

Bootcamp workout: Is it right for you?  
[tinyurl.com/y2s7n9e6](https://tinyurl.com/y2s7n9e6)

Changing your fitness routine every 4 to 12 weeks helps train your brain and body to keep adapting. Check out this build-muscle-play-soccer experiment:

**Prepare.** Will a change in training help soccer players perform better and reduce the risk for injury? Researchers wanted to find out.<sup>2</sup>

**Make a change.** Instead of the usual running, passing, and scrimmage drills, the soccer players changed their routine.

**Adapt.** They lifted weights for 10 weeks, twice a week, to strengthen their leg muscles.

**Measure results.** The routine change helped soccer players reduce muscle injuries. It also helped improve jumping height and running speed.

## References

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