

The Top 10 Ways To Fit Fitness into Your “Too Busy” Schedule

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If you think you don't have time for fitness because your children need your attention, or work seems to be consuming all your time, or you have absolutely no energy left by the end of the day to even think about exercising, perhaps it's time you look at the priorities in your life. Ask yourself... do you want to feel good and have more energy? Have easier weight control? Have an improved appearance? Less stress? Better health? Increased sense of well being? Enhanced relaxation? If you answered yes to any of these questions, take a look at the tips below to see what strategies you can adapt in your daily life.

Exercise should be an enjoyable part of your everyday life. If it is not, you will not continue with it. Choose activities that you enjoy and that are readily accessible. Begin with a little increase of activity as a first step and then, over time you'll see that it becomes easier to do even more. A trim and healthy lifestyle can be enjoyed by adding incidental exercise to a busy schedule. Even your busiest schedule can have time for fitness activities. See how creative you can be with your schedule and your family.

(Note: Always consult your healthcare provider before beginning or changing your exercise routine. Work with a certified exercise instructor to learn how to exercise safely.)

1. STRETCH EVERY A.M.

Do wake-up stretches every morning for a few minutes. This energizes your muscles and limbers your joints.

2. STEP IT UP.

Take the stairs instead of the elevator or escalator. If you live or work in a high-rise building, perhaps you could opt for getting off the elevator a few floors prior to your floor and walking the stairs the rest of the way.

3. WALK WITH A BUDDY.

Take a 20- to 30-minute walk with a co-worker during your lunch hour. Having a buddy will help motivate you daily. Eat just a light lunch afterwards.

4. DO P.M. STRETCHING & BREATHING EXERCISE.

Take a stretch break in the afternoon to ward off fatigue and soreness from sitting too long. Practice deep-cleansing breathing exercises for about 5 minutes each afternoon.

5. PARK & WALK.

Rather than taking the first space in the parking lot, park farther away from the building, grocery store, etc. and walk the distance. (NOTE: Make sure your parking lot is safe!)

6. EXERCISE YOUR CHORES AWAY.

Do yard work, rake the leaves, mop, dust, vacuum, walk the dog, etc. while enjoying the physical activity. Pop on some tunes if it helps brighten your mood to accompany these tasks.

7. HAVE THE FAMILY JOIN IN.

Add no-cost, fun exercise activities to Sunday family outings. Rotate the selection and planning of the activities with each family member. Some examples include walking the beach, going for a bike ride, hiking up a mountain.

8. GO AEROBIC.

Experiment with mini-aerobic workouts for 20-30 minutes at least 3 times per week. Some examples include following an exercise video, stair-climbing, cross-country skiing, walking, jogging, bike riding, dancing and rowing. These activities strengthen your cardiovascular system and burn fat.

9. STRENGTH TRAINING.

Strength training is important for your muscles and bones. Do 10 to 15 minutes 2 to 3 times per week. Follow a muscle conditioning video or join a gym.

10. SNACK WISELY.

Don't wait till you're starving to eat. For a snack, try fresh fruit, yogurt, raw vegetables, juice, or herb tea. Drink plenty of water throughout the day.

About the Author: Natalie Gahrman is an internationally certified professional coach and work/life expert who works with organizations to underscore the causes of stress and productivity issues and teach their employees how to better self-manage their burgeoning workload – in all aspects of their lives. She delights in helping entrepreneurs, executives, and SuperBusySM Parents balance their work and personal life, achieve better results, and create more fulfillment and congruency in their life.

She is the author of the award winning, *Succeeding as a Super Busy Parent* and *Tools for Creating Success, Fulfillment and Balance in your Work, Family and Personal Life*. Natalie has helped thousands of people at every level of the business manage the complexities of life's challenges through individual & group coaching, workshops & keynote presentations, on-line advice, a monthly column in *Moms Business Magazine*, and her free e-newsletter (which you can subscribe to at www.theprioritypro.com). She is a contributing expert for *Parenting Magazine*, *BlueSuitMom*, iVillage, and MyPath. She has been featured in a number of articles and on TV and radio in the US, Canada, Australia, and the UK.

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