

10 Tips to Keep Moving

A screenshot of a text message conversation on a smartphone. The messages are as follows:
Grey bubble: "Hey! I'm about to head out for a run, want to join?"
Blue bubble: "Hmm, not sure if I'm feeling up to it today 😊"
Grey bubble: "No pressure, I'm aiming for around 4 if you change your mind. Going to try that new trail along the river."
Blue bubble: "I've been meaning to check that out—I think I'll join you!"
Grey bubble: "Great! See you soon 🏃"
The phone's status bar at the top shows the time 2:08, signal strength, Wi-Fi, and battery icons. The contact name is "KM".

Accountability helps.
If your motivation is lagging, connect with a friend or family member with a similar goal to move more. A workout partner can help keep you on track and motivate you to get out the door.

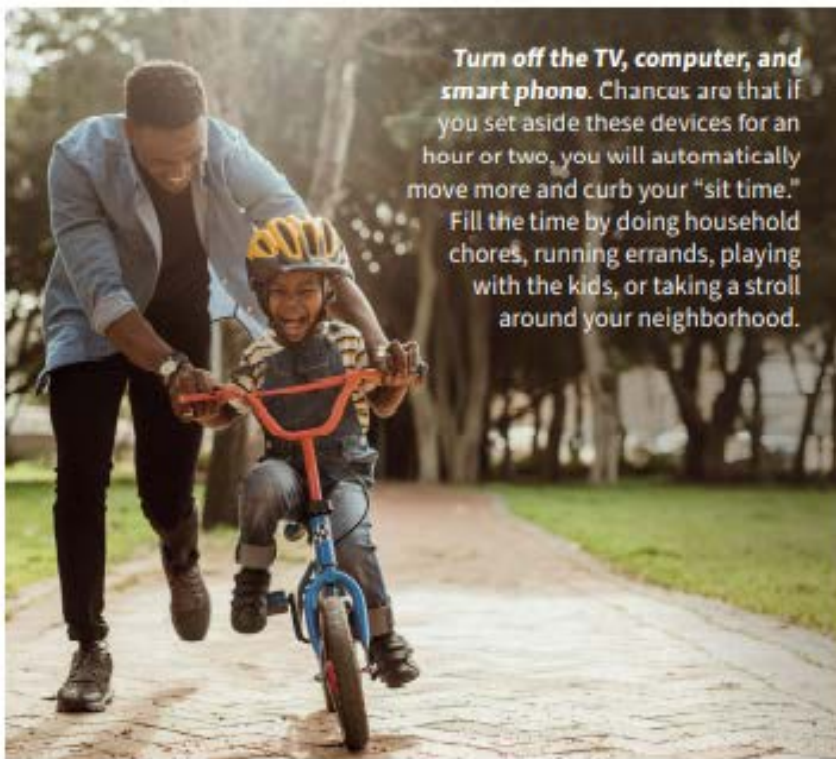
A photograph of a calendar page with a white background and a blue border. The days of the week are labeled at the top: Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday. The numbers 4, 5, 6, 7, 11, 12, 13, 14, 19 are visible. The number 4 is circled in blue, and a blue pen is shown writing on the number 12.

Plan exercise into your day. Intention is an important first step. Set aside a specific time in your schedule to exercise and write it in your planner.

Try counting steps. Step-counting apps or pedometers are an easy way to remind yourself to move. Working up to 10,000 steps per day can be a good general goal. If that seems too intimidating, measure your steps on an average day and increase by 1,000 steps every two weeks.



Keep it brisk. When you walk, make it brisk, since this may help control weight better than walking at a leisurely pace. What is brisk enough? Walk as though you are meeting someone for lunch and you are a little late.



Turn off the TV, computer, and smart phone. Chances are that if you set aside these devices for an hour or two, you will automatically move more and curb your "sit time." Fill the time by doing household chores, running errands, playing with the kids, or taking a stroll around your neighborhood.

Turn sit time into fit time. Try to combine exercise with a sedentary activity that you already do. For example, perform basic exercises like squats, marching in place, jumping jacks, push-ups, or sit-ups while watching TV or throughout each commercial.



For inspiration on how to move “creatively” wherever you are, check out VMove-Activating a Move-Friendly World: hsph.me/vmv20



Move at the office. If you work long shifts or care for a busy family after hours, fitting in a workout can be daunting. So focus on moving at the office even if you have a sedentary desk job. Make climbing stairs and avoiding elevators the norm, park as far from the front office door as possible, set a reminder to get up and walk for 5 minutes each hour (that could add up to 40 minutes in a day!), or follow a short desk exercise video online.



Reward yourself. Set short-term goals—then acknowledge and reward yourself when achieving them. Positive affirmations are key to building confidence as you commit to ongoing fitness goals. Treat yourself to new exercise shoes, clothing, or workout gear; a new book; or a massage.

Split the workout. If you are new to exercise and find a 30-minute session challenging, split it into two 15-minute sessions. The fitness benefit may actually be greater if you can exercise with higher energy and intensity in two shorter bouts, than if you tried to exercise for 30 minutes but slowed down from fatigue towards the end.



Sign up for a class or an event.

Check out the fitness class schedule at your local gym, yoga studio, or community center. Some offer virtual classes with a live instructor which you can do at home. Or, sign up for a specific event like a road race or walk-for-charity a few months out; this can help drive you to train regularly in the weeks leading up to the event. You may find that having a target date or the structure of a weekly class keeps you consistent.