

# 5 WAYS TO GET FIT

Experts explain today's hot workout trends and how they can work for you.

How many years in a row have you put “lose weight” or “get in shape” at the top of your list of resolutions? Don't worry — you've got company. But the benefits of regular exercise could be simpler to achieve than you think. Today's methods offer an efficient route to greater fitness if you use them wisely, and some can be used in the comfort of your home. Below are five current fitness approaches and what the experts have to say about them. (As with any new exercise program, check with your health care provider first to make sure the activity you choose is safe for you.)



## HIGH-INTENSITY INTERVAL TRAINING (HIIT).

A workout is considered HIIT if it involves short bursts of intense exercise, followed by brief rests or lower-intensity moves in between sets. Overall, HIIT routines help decrease fat, build muscle and improve body composition, and they don't need to be an hour long to be effective. The American College of Sports Medicine's (ACSM) official recommendation is a more doable 30 minutes of moderate-to-intense activity five times a week.

**What's next:** “We'll see more programs designed with HIIT or SIT (sprint interval training) aspects included,” predicts Allison Kalsched, a personal trainer in Maplewood. “Additionally, with more studies and an increase in awareness of the importance of exercise for peri- and post-menopausal women, I think we'll see more of these kinds of classes and programs available.”

**How-to at home:** Choose four exercises such as squat, reverse lunge, plank variation and bicycle, and do each for one minute with 20 seconds of rest in between. Aim for doing five to six rounds, says Kalsched, but you can start with fewer and work your way up.

## { FITNESS }

### TECH WORKOUTS.

Technology and fitness have collided over the past decade, especially since the pandemic began and brick-and-mortar gyms either closed or imposed limits on users. In fact, wearable technology was the number-one fitness trend of 2022, according to the ACSM. With the touch of a button, you can track your steps, your progress, your form, your heart rate and sometimes even your sleep patterns. "Information is gold—the more we have, the better we can track our performance and our progress," says Lenin Rodriguez, owner of F45 in Morris Plains. These devices can help you optimize your workout in real time and achieve a healthier lifestyle. A recent study out of Brigham Young University found that simply wearing a fitness tracker—even if you don't pay attention to it—may increase your time spent walking.

**What's next:** Apps that do it all—such as the F45 Challenge App, which includes meal plans, recipes, educational articles and videos to support one's health and fitness goals—are continuing to gain steam. And in addition to wearables and apps, experts are projecting 2023 as a big year for AI-based fitness training programs. This means that a workout aficionado can expect bespoke workouts with moves and intensity levels specific to his or her body and needs, resulting in highly personalized regimens—and top-notch results.

**How-to at home:** There are hundreds of apps you can download right to your phone, from Fitbit Charge 5 to Sweat, to help push you to your personal best in terms of both diet and overall fitness. "Many of us don't have a great understanding of how many calories we take in on a daily basis," says Rodriguez. "These tech tools help us understand this area better so ultimately we make healthier lifestyle choices." FitnessAI is at the forefront of artificial intelligence workouts; its

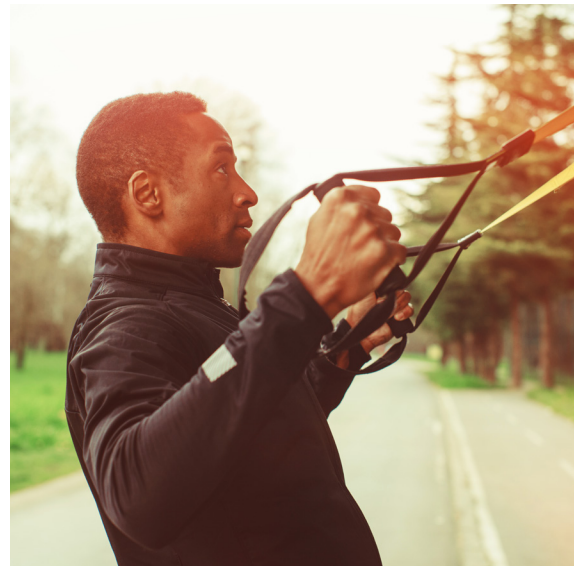


### TOTAL-BODY RESISTANCE EXERCISE (TRX).

This is suspension training that improves strength and tightens muscles by using just your body weight and gravity—no weights or kettlebells required. All you need is the adjustable straps (the original TRX straps were invented by a Navy Seal), which amplify standard moves such as planks, pushups, squats, crunches and chest presses. "TRX works for all fitness levels and can target all the major muscle groups, including upper body, lower body and core, depending on the particular exercise," says Rodriguez. You'll probably want to work with a trainer at least at first to perfect your form and limit the risk of injury. But once you're well equipped with the basics, this regimen is completely scalable for just about anyone, from student athletes to seniors.

**What's next:** Some studios offer TRX-specific classes, but many gyms have the straps so that members can utilize them as they please. At F45, for example, TRX is used frequently on the studio's cardio and resistance training days.

**How-to at home:** Alternatively, you can purchase a set of TRX straps for between \$100 and \$200 online and do this exercise at home.



### EXERCISE "SNACKING."

This may be the best life hack for those of us who are busy and can't always commit to a lengthy workout. The idea is that rather than one long session, you get some movement in via "bite-sized" bursts throughout the day, in whatever way feels comfortable to you. "This gets people moving throughout the day who otherwise don't work out, and helps build consistency and motivation for a lifestyle that includes exercise," Kalsched says. Bonus: Short-but-sweet workouts will make you feel accomplished, and that, in turn, can improve your mood and mental health.

**What's next:** Expect to see more online programs and challenges offering five-, 10- and 15-minute workout snippets that you can pepper into your daily routine. (Peloton is known for this, and Kalsched offers a program like this too.) Low-intensity moves such as walking the dog or climbing the stairs count too, so you can feel productive knowing you're doing even just a little something to get your body moving.

**How-to at home:** The point of exercise snacking is that it doesn't need to be formal and planned out. But if you prefer it to be, in between Zoom calls or the chauffeuring of kids, aim to take three 10-minute breaks each day, with three sets of 10 exercises during each. Kalsched suggests "using your stairs for a step-up and your coffee table for a push-up and doing resistance band rows—you can buy an inexpensive resistance band on Amazon."



### YOGA.

Something new? Of course not. But this ancient practice is breathing new life into workouts in '23. It combines breathing techniques, physical movements and meditation to challenge both the mind and the body. Yoga improves strength, balance and flexibility, and it has cardio and circulatory health benefits as well.

**What's next:** Yoga is more than just exercise, and it's gaining steam with the current focus on mental health and wellness. "Yoga helps to release tension from the body and create more clarity in the mind, and it can lead to better sleep and reduced stress and anxiety," says Sarah Bodnar, co-owner of Three Birds Yoga Studio with locations in Florham Park and South Orange. She adds that in-person classes will replace hybrid options, as more and more people are getting comfortable with working out in-person once again. "On-screen classes have lost their charm, and there is nothing like the energy created in a studio yoga practicing with your fellow yogis!" Sarah says.

**How-to at home:** "Start your morning with five sun salutations and five minutes in quiet meditation," says Bodnar. Doing so will give you a good stretch and get your heart rate going.

