

Cool Workouts to Beat the Summer Heat



Sticking to your workout routine in the dead of summer can be tough. Hot weather can sap your energy and motivation. But you can push past this seasonal barrier with a bit of planning and these smart strategies for cooler—and safer—workouts.

- **Turn a parking garage into your own outdoor gym.** This cool, cave-like structure offers shelter from the sizzling sun. Take advantage of the incline for an invigorating walk or run. Or challenge yourself by tackling the stairs. Just remember to stay aware of your surroundings. Watch for cars coming and going, or opt for a garage with a walkway on the periphery. To ensure your safety, don't work out in the garage late at night or when it's empty. And choose one with security cameras and a guard on patrol.
- **Aim for early morning or evening workouts.** Timing is key when it comes to exercising outdoors during the summer. Plan your outdoor workouts for the coolest part of the day—early in the morning or later in the evening.
- **Head for a tree-shaded park.** Head to your local park and experience a double dose of mood-boosting benefits—both exercise and spending time in nature can help lower stress levels. So, join a lively boot camp class or connect with your fellow fitness enthusiasts in a jogging club. Enjoy the serene flow of tai chi or yoga under a canopy of trees. Or explore the wooded trails on an adventurous hike or bike ride.
- **Jump in the water.** Under the hot sun, there is nothing quite like a refreshing dip in the water. So, take your summer workout to the pool or beach! Try a water aerobics class or go for a swim. Or explore exciting water sports, such as bodysurfing, stand-up paddleboarding, waterskiing, or kayaking.
- **Bring a spray bottle.** Try bringing a small spray bottle with cool water to mist yourself on long walks or runs. But even with a spray bottle, take extra caution if you go out in temperatures above 90 degrees.
- **Embrace air conditioning.** Of course, you can always take your workout to the great indoors! If you're already a gym member, you've got the perfect escape from the heat. If not, think about joining an air-conditioned gym—at least for the summer months. Or turn your home into a mini gym oasis. Find a cool spot, roll out your mat, and get moving. Whether you're lifting weights, doing yoga, or following a fun workout video, the comfort of a cool environment can make all the difference.
- **Know the signs of heat-related illness.** Heat cramps, heat exhaustion, and heatstroke can happen when your body gets too hot. Signs of heat exhaustion may include:
 - Muscle cramps
 - Fatigue
 - Headache
 - Dizziness or lightheadedness
 - Nausea and vomiting

- **Signs of heat stroke may include:**

- High body temperature (over 103 degrees)
- Very fast heart and/or breathing rate
- Hot, flushed, dry skin or flushed with heavy sweating
- Rapid pulse and breathing
- Seizures
- Loss of consciousness

If you have any signs of heatstroke, get medical care right away as this is an emergency. If you note signs of heat exhaustion, stop working out. Sit down safely in a cooler area, such as in the shade or indoors. Find ways to cool off immediately. Sip water or suck on ice cubes. Pour cold water on yourself. Apply cold, wet cloths to your neck, groin, and armpits. If you don't start to feel better, seek medical care.

Hot weather doesn't have to mean boring summer workouts. Get creative with your exercises, and you can stay energized and on track with your fitness goals while having fun in the sun!

With the Active&Fit Direct™ program, you'll have access to thousands of gyms nationwide. Should you choose to stay fit at home, you can choose from over 14,000 on-demand fitness videos—free of charge—when you register with the Active&Fit Direct program. Not only that, but you'll receive one-on-one, goal-oriented well-being coaching in areas such as fitness, nutrition, stress management, and sleep. You can also add your spouse or domestic partner through your account as well! Access the Active&Fit Direct program through your employer, health plan, or association.

References

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*Add a spouse/domestic partner to a primary membership for additional monthly fees. Spouses/domestic partners must be 18 years or older. Fees will vary based on fitness center selection.

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