

NO GYM? NO PROBLEM! 7 Ways for 7 Days of Fitness Without Going to a Gym

By Shannon Corey

Have you been avoiding exercise because you don't have access to a gym, or you hate going to the gym? Here are ten ways you can get in shape without going to a gym.

1. Invest in a Home Gym or Other Resistance Training Equipment

Do you love working out with gym equipment but hate going to the gym? Maybe investing in a home gym is the answer. Home gym equipment sales have never been higher, and manufacturers are constantly improving products, offering them at more affordable prices, and giving the consumer (you) many options and features to choose from. If you decide to add a home gym to your program, please do some research and buy only what will work best for your situation. For example, if you are going to put your equipment in a small spare bedroom, make sure you buy equipment that fits in the allotted space. Also, decide ahead of time which features are important to you. If you already have an established exercise routine that uses specific equipment, find a home gym that will allow you to perform all of your current exercises. If the idea of exercising at home appeals to you but you are not interested in owning a home gym, there are many other ways for you to perform resistance training exercises without a lot of equipment. You may use your own body weight for some exercises (squats, lunges, push-ups, dips, etc.), or you can use smaller equipment like dumbbells and bands. For more information on how to exercise without going to a gym, visit www.shannoncoreyfitness.com.

2. Burn Calories by Jumping Rope

Jumping rope is an excellent way to burn calories and improve your cardiovascular fitness, it requires very little space, and you only need a jump rope. If you do not own a jump rope, you can buy one at your local sporting goods store. To determine which length you need, stand on the jump rope and hold the handles up to your armpits. The handles should go up to your armpits, but not much higher. If the rope is too short, look for a longer one. If the rope is too long, tie knots in the sides until it fits. To jump rope, hold the handles close to your sides, keep your elbows in, and use your wrists to move the jump rope. When you jump over the rope, try to land lightly on the balls of your feet. As your jump rope skills improve, your speed will increase.

3. Use Stairs for Cardio and Toning Exercises

If you have tried running and need an extra challenge, try running up and down the stairs in your house or at a neighborhood school. Running on stairs will not only challenge your cardiovascular system, it will also help tone your legs and glutes. Try running up the stairs one at a time, then try two at a time for more intensity. You may also use stairs as a platform for lunges. Try lunging with your back foot elevated on a step behind you and your front foot on the floor. For an upper body challenge, try doing incline push ups with your feet on the floor and your hands on the steps above you.

4. Load Your MP3 Player With Motivating Music

If you struggle with boredom, try exercising to your favorite music. Make several play lists for your MP3 player, and use a different list each time you exercise. If you are shopping for an MP3 player, consider an iPod. iPod is the most popular MP3 player, and the iTunes program (a free program that you can download onto your computer) gives you the option of downloading your favorite songs or using already designed play lists. Also, check out www.podfitness.com. This is a relatively new concept where you pay a monthly membership fee and gain access to thousands of exercise routines made by personal trainers, group exercise instructors, and other fitness experts.

5. Try Exercise Videos/DVD's

Exercise videos/DVD's are a helpful tool for your at home exercise program because they give you the option of exercising at home with an instructor, and you can learn at your own pace. Exercise videos/DVD's are available in many different formats and intensity levels, and there are enough different types of workouts to keep you busy for a long time if you decide that this is the best form of exercise for you. You can find exercise videos/DVD's at bookstores, big chain retail stores (Target, Fred Meyer, etc.), sporting good stores, libraries, or do an internet search to find websites where you may shop for and order the video/DVD format of your choice.

6. Try a New Sport or Recreational Activity

How often do you go home from work and skip your workout because you are too tired? Maybe you need a fun new activity to keep you interested in exercise. Some examples of fun sports to try are tennis, basketball, golf, swimming, rowing, hiking, and the list goes on. If you haven't played a particular sport but you want to try it, consider taking lessons or join a team of other recreational athletes. Sometimes finding a group of people with similar interests is the best way to stay active, and you will have fewer excuses to skip your new activity when you have scheduled lessons or meetings with your team.

7. Ride Your Bike (or Walk) to Work or to Other Activities

Try riding your bike to work one day every week. If your place of work is too far to bike, try biking to your after work or weekend activities. Biking instead of driving is a simple way to burn calories, and once you are in the habit of biking, you will likely bike more and drive less. If you have no interest in biking, try walking instead. If you live too far from your job to walk, bring your walking shoes and walk for 30 minutes outside during your lunch break. Once walking becomes easy, change your walk to a jog.

8. Invest in a Pedometer and Walk 10,000 Steps Every Day

Using a pedometer to measure how many steps you take each day is probably the simplest way to add fitness to your daily routine. Did you know that 10,000 steps equals about five miles? Five miles! All you need to do is wear a pedometer, and at the end of the day make sure you walked 10,000 steps. A pedometer is a very small device, usually worn on the hip. A pedometer will cost you between \$10 and \$20, and you can find one at your local sporting goods store.

Now that you have 7 new exercise ideas that do not require going to a gym, try putting one or more of them to use. Incorporating these tips into your routine is a simple way to get fit and have fun in the process. Enjoy!

About the Author

Shannon Corey is a certified personal trainer in Lake Oswego, OR. Visit her at www.shannoncoreyfitness.com