

## TIME-SAVING TIPS FOR ON-THE-JOB FITNESS

**A** long commute doesn't just eat up your time — it can also sap your energy and leave you wondering when you'll ever be able to squeeze in a workout. Weaving physical activity into your daily work routine enables you to enjoy the health benefits of exercise while living in the real world.

### Getting There

Walking or bicycling to work is your best bet for workday fitness. Studies show that people with active commutes have fewer risk factors for heart disease. They have lower blood pressure, triglyceride, and insulin levels — and are less likely to be overweight. If active commuting isn't practical for your entire trip to work, do as much as you can — take the bus, train or ferry and walk the last mile to your worksite. Or, pedal to work — but catch a ride home.

### Built-In Fitness

Scheduling physical activity into your work day helps make it a habit. Once it's on your calendar, honor your exercise time just as you would any other appointment. You may need to reschedule occasionally, but at least it will be on the books — and you're more likely to get it done. Here's a bonus — if you have kids, childcare is already taken care of while you're at work.

### Keep It Simple

Your at-work exercise plan doesn't have to be complicated. Arrive early and walk briskly around the building for 20-30 minutes. Invite a co-worker to join you for a lunchtime walk. Or, squeeze in a workout before you head home instead of jumping right into traffic. Find an empty conference room and pump out a few push-ups and core exercises. Wear a pedometer, and increase your steps by 500-1000 each week until you average at 10,000 or more steps a day.

### At The Gym

If your building has an onsite fitness center, take full advantage of it. If not, check around for nearby gyms that offer corporate membership discounts. If there's no gym available, packing workout clothes — or at least a clean shirt and socks — makes mid-day exercise more practical. Some buildings have showers available for bike-commuters and runners. If yours doesn't, keep baby wipes and deodorant at your work station for freshening up quickly after a workout.



you'll strengthen your entire lower body while getting a great cardiovascular workout. Some companies even hold stair-climbing challenges for fun and fitness. Look outside for nearby public stairways and hilly streets.

### Packable Tools

Keep elastic tubing or bands at your desk or in your locker. You can easily strengthen your chest, upper back, shoulders, and arms in just a few minutes, two or three times a week. A jump rope gives you another option for a moderate or high-intensity cardiovascular workout.

### Fun and Camaraderie

Leveraging on-the-job social support can help you stay on track — and makes your workout time more enjoyable. Make your physical activity plan more fun — and more sustainable — by inviting co-workers to join you.

### Additional Resources

ACE *Fit Facts*: Interval Training  
[www.acefitness.org/fitfacts/fitfacts\\_display.aspx?itemid=87](http://www.acefitness.org/fitfacts/fitfacts_display.aspx?itemid=87)

Fitting in Fitness: Making Time for Physical Activity  
[www.mayoclinic.com/health/fitness/HQ01217\\_D](http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/fitness/HQ01217_D)

CDC's StairWell to Better Health  
[www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpao/hwi/toolkits/stairwell/index.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpao/hwi/toolkits/stairwell/index.htm)

### High-Intensity Workouts

Make the most of your workouts when you're pressed for time by increasing intensity. A higher-intensity workout allows you to challenge your fitness level and burn more calories than you would at a slower pace — and it's also been shown to be more effective at reducing abdominal fat. Interval training — alternating brief segments of near-maximal effort followed by recovery periods — is one way to boost intensity. Keep in mind that any time you increase exercise intensity, you also increase risk of injury. Experts recommend high-intensity workouts no more than once or twice a week. High-intensity training isn't for everyone — check with your health care provider before you give it a try.

### Urban Hiking

If the stairwells at your worksite are safe and accessible, use them for exercise — and

*If you are interested in information on other health and fitness topics, contact: American Council on Exercise, 4851 Paramount Drive, San Diego, CA 92123, 800-825-3636; or, go online at [www.acefitness.org/GetFit](http://www.acefitness.org/GetFit) and access the complete list of ACE *Fit Facts*™*



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