**8 Tips to Help You Ease Back Into Working Out**

Between crazy work hours, family commitments, and trying to maintain a social life, it’s easy to get a little off track when it comes to your fitness routine. Even missing a few weeks of working out can really set you back on your health goals. Taking a break from exercise can reduce your sense of motivation and make the gym seem more [intimidating](http://info.totalwellnesshealth.com/blog/5-reminders-to-help-you-conquer-gym-intimidation) than it once was.

When you take an extended break from working out, your body notices. Your blood pressure rises, your endurance starts to decrease, your muscles start to shrink, and you might start feeling a bit more grumpy or stressed than you usually are. But the good news is that these changes are completely reversible once you get back into your fitness routine.

Since regular exercise is one of the best things you can do for your health and wellbeing, it’s important to get back into your exercise habit after hitting a rut. If you need a bit of a motivation boost to get back on track with your fitness goals, here are eight tips to help you ease back into workout out:

**Find a mantra.** A mantra is like a personal motto or catch phrase associated with a particular task, situation, habit, or goal. Using a mantra can help center and inspire you to tackle any challenges you might be facing when it comes to getting back into your exercise habits. Find a mantra that helps inspire you to start exercising again. Remember that this mantra doesn’t need to make sense to anyone except you. Scroll through Instagram or Pinterest to find a mantra that speaks to you. A couple of our favorites include: “your mind gives before your body does” and “find a way, not an excuse.” Repeat your mantra whenever you need an instant boost of motivation.

**Make a goal.** If it’s really been some time since you quit the gym, it might be beneficial to develop a goal to keep yourself motivated. Try setting a [SMART goal](http://info.totalwellnesshealth.com/blog/focusing-on-smart-goals-in-your-employee-wellness-program) (**s**pecific, **m**easureable, **a**ttainable, **r**elevant, and **t**ime-bound) for best results. A SMART goal can help keep you motivated and on track with your fitness goals. Ask yourself what you hope to accomplish from working out. Do you want to run a 5K in the summer? Do you want to gain muscle? Do you want your jeans to fit more comfortably? Figure out what is it that you wish to accomplish, and turn it into a SMART goal.

**Start small.** Unfortunately, if you’ve taken some time off from exercise, your first few workouts might feel a bit more difficult than they used to. This is why it’s important to smart small. Taking on more than you can handle can lead to [excessive soreness](http://info.totalwellnesshealth.com/blog/how-to-prevent-sore-muscles-after-a-workout), fatigue, or even injury. If a weight-lifting session at the gym sounds like too much for you at the moment, try going for a light jog or walk outside just to get yourself moving and feeling good. Once you get used to being more physically active again, you’ll be ready to get back to your usual fitness routine.

**Schedule it in.** It’s way too easy to skip your workout when it’s not a part of your schedule. Determine a regular time that works best for you to go to the gym or get some exercise in. Depending on your work schedule and family commitments, the best time for you to exercise could be [first thing in the morning](http://info.totalwellnesshealth.com/blog/6-amazing-benefits-of-morning-exercise), over lunch break, or right after work. Find what time fits best for your lifestyle and be sure to write it down in your schedule.

**Take rest days.** Rest days are incredibly important for any fitness routine! Taking a rest day will help your muscles heal and rebuild. Taking rest days will also help your body build up endurance and help prevent injuries. But just because it’s a “rest day” doesn’t be you can’t be active at all. You can still go for a walk or do light cardio on your rest day – just be careful not to do full-body strength training every day without a break.

**Focus on your form.** Taking a break from working out might mean you lost a bit of your technique. Quality is always better than quantity when it comes to exercise. Start slow and concentrate on your movements and breathing to work on your technique and help prevent any injuries. If you’re not sure you’re using proper form, don’t be afraid to ask a personal trainer at your gym for some assistance.

**Find a buddy.** [Workout buddies](http://info.totalwellnesshealth.com/blog/6-reasons-to-find-a-workout-buddy-asap) are one of the best ways to get and stay motivated. Finding a friend, family member, or colleague to workout with makes exercise more fun, gives you someone to talk to, and keeps you accountable. If you’re not sure where to find a workout partner, try joining a fitness class, use an app, or ask a trainer at your gym.

**Remind yourself of why you’re exercising.** Regular exercise is amazing for both your physical and [mental health](http://info.totalwellnesshealth.com/blog/exercise-for-better-brain-and-mental-health). It helps reduce your risk of many diseases and can help you feel more productive at work. Write down a list of your favorite benefits of physical activity and look at it whenever you need a boost of motivation to get up and get active.

Getting back into the swing of things after a long break from the gym might seem a bit overwhelming at first, but you can easily get back into your fitness routine with a bit of effort and some daily habits. We hope some of the above tips motivate you and help you ease back into working out. Your body will definitely thank you for it!