
Exercise with a friend

Summary

- Exercising with a friend or loved one can make it more fun, and increase your chances of sticking to your exercise plan.
 - Exercising with a friend is a great way to keep you motivated. It's also a great way to meet new people. It can even save you money.
 - Exercise with someone around the same fitness level as you so you can spur each other on. Ask a family member or a friend, or join a sporting club or group.
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Eight reasons to exercise with a friend

We know that exercise is great for our minds and bodies, but sometimes it's challenging to maintain interest. That's why exercising with a friend can be a huge benefit. Here are eight reasons to get exercising with a friend.

1. It's more fun exercising with a friend

You're less likely to get bored when you have a workout buddy, especially a friend. While you're catching up, having a laugh, encouraging each other, you're also getting healthier. It's a win-win.

Chatting to a friend during exercise and breaks can help time pass quickly too. You'll have more options as well, such as a game of tennis or squash.

2. You can build new friendships

Exercising with someone you don't know well provides an opportunity to build a new friendship. You'll be starting with a shared interest – improving your health – which can make it easier to chat about other things as you work out.

Joining an exercise class can be a great way to meet people, get to know them better, and make new friends.

3. You're more likely to stick to your commitment

If you've arranged to meet a friend for a walk or booked an exercise class, you're more likely to keep that commitment. Not wanting to let your friend or exercise partner down can be a great motivator to show up.

And as your exercise becomes routine, perhaps after a few weeks, you'll both find it less challenging and will more likely stick to your commitment.

On those days when you don't feel like exercising, a pep talk from your workout buddy might be just the lift you need. You can support each other.

4. You're more likely to succeed in your goal

Having someone to motivate you can make all the difference to achieving your goal. In fact, **research** has found that people are more likely to lose weight if their exercise buddy is losing weight. Bonus!

But remember, exercise is still beneficial even if you aren't losing weight.

5. You'll work harder with someone else around

When you exercise with a friend who's around the same fitness level as you, you're more likely to encourage each other and to push a little harder (to increase intensity, for example) than you might do on your own.

A friend can bring out your competitive side and spur you on. When you're ready to give up, the sight of your friend powering on might be just the incentive you need to keep going.

6. It can be more affordable exercising with a friend

If you hire a personal trainer, or buy equipment, splitting the cost two ways will save you money.

You can also save on travel costs by car-pooling to get to the park, gym, pool or sports venue.

7. Your friend may have new exercise ideas

Your workout buddy probably has some skills and knowledge that you don't. Along the way, you might learn new skills – refine your running style, for example – or you could learn a whole new sport or activity.

Variety is the key to sticking with your exercise plan. Mix it up. You'll have more fun and less reason to quit.

8. It's safer to exercise with someone else

Having someone to spot you when you're lifting weights (that is, someone ready to support you, if need be), or to go running with you, especially at night, means you have help at hand if anything goes wrong.

Finding someone to exercise with

There are plenty of ways to find an exercise partner. Here are a few suggestions to get the ball rolling.

Friends or family

Start with friends and family who live nearby, or maybe your neighbour or a work colleague. Suggest a daily or weekly workout date, and make the commitment, helping each other along the way to achieve goals.

Join or start a walking group

Walking groups are easy to find, or to start up from scratch. Check out the **[Heart Foundation Walking website](#)** for everything you need to know to get started. What about starting up a lunchtime walking group at work?

You can also find walks in your local area and throughout Victoria on the **[Victoria Walks website](#)**.

Charity or fundraising teams

Get fit and do a good deed at the same time while taking part in a charity event. Many charities host walks, runs and triathlons to raise money and awareness for their causes.

Popular events include:

- **Mother's Day Classic**
- **Run for the Kids**
- **Color Run**
- **Million Paws Walk**

For more activities, check out the following events websites:

- **Australian Running Calendar**
- **Triathlon Victoria**

Neighbourhood boot camps

Boot camps are a fun and affordable way to join a fitness group. Many personal trainers, as a side line, offer discounted boot camp programs at local parks and recreation centres. Search online for a 'boot camp' or 'personal trainer' in your area.

Search for your local **registered exercise professional** or **registered fitness business** for professional advice and ongoing support.

Sports clubs or groups

If a particular sport takes your fancy, there's sure to be a club or group where you can share your passion, practise and play. Think soccer, AFL, tai chi, table tennis, darts or dancing. Search online for clubs or groups in your area. Having structure to your exercise helps to keep you committed.

You can find a list of recognised sporting associations at **Sport and Recreation Victoria**, and at **Vicsport**.

Exercise ideas to share with friends

Exercise options are endless. Here are a few suggestions to try with a friend:

- **walking** (and talking!)
- **running or jogging**
- **tennis**
- **swimming** or aqua aerobics
- **dancing**
- **yoga or pilates**
- aerobics classes
- **tai chi** in the park
- a gym class (this can be easier to do together if you are nervous to try on your own)
- hiking in local nature reserves
- **cycling** around your neighbourhood
- **personal training**
- **golf** (walk, don't get a cart!).

Where to get help

- Friends or family
- Your neighbours
- Your work colleagues
- **Local pool**
- **Local gym**
- Local sports club

- **Fitness Australia** Tel. **1300 211 311**

- [Sport and Recreation Victoria](#)
- [Vicsport](#)
- [Heart Foundation Walking](#)
- [Victoria Walks](#)

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