

How to Actually Enjoy Exercise

Exercise is mother nature's Prozac. Exercise manufactures chemicals called *endorphins*, which make you feel happier and reduce pain. It can take from ten to thirty minutes for these endorphins to kick in, but once you've felt it, you won't want to stop. This is why people get "hooked" on exercise.

"...But I hate exercise..." If I had a penny for each time I've heard that, I'd be wealthy today. But exercise is what our bodies were built for; it improves our health in so many ways. Exercise keeps us slim, prevents disease, makes us happier, builds muscles and bones, builds confidence, improves balance, reduces stress, improves sleep, improves flexibility, prevents osteoporosis, improves our skin and makes us feel so much better in every way. And if that's not enough, it adds years to our lifespan.

Can you really enjoy exercise?

Of course you can. The trick is to start slowly 😊

Set yourself a goal, even if it's just a five-minute walk. Everyone can tolerate the idea of five minutes. If it's raining, or too hot/cold/windy, just walk around the house, or around a shopping center. If you can do that, you'll probably find yourself going longer over time. Walking will become a habit and you'll feel like something's missing if you don't do it. You'll find a way to fit it into your day, no matter what.

There is one particular type of exercise which dramatically speeds up weight loss, if that's your goal. You'll need to build up a reasonable level of fitness first though, otherwise it can put too much stress on your heart. It's called high intensity exercise and combines a period of slow movement, followed by very rapid movement. This can be done by walking and running, riding a bike slow and fast, or even swimming at different speeds.

Start with three minutes of slow movement followed by one minute of going as fast as you can. There are MP4s you can buy online that show you how to do that, but you don't need fancy moves. YouTube has free videos you can search for, or simply doing the above works just as well; just increase the intensity as your fitness improves.

The one, and maybe the only, thing you will need is a good pair of walking/running shoes. Chose a comfortable pair that come far enough up the back of the heel, so they grip your foot well.