



GETTING BACK INTO EXERCISE

Thinking about getting back into exercise?
Here's how to start... and keep going!

When life happens (and your exercise routine doesn't) it can be frustrating to start again. Activity that was once easy feels out of reach and dreaded muscle soreness looms.

But, evidence shows that when you play the long game and build up activity over time you're more likely to make these changes a lasting part of your lifestyle.

Your restart plan

Try not to focus on what you used to do, but what you can do now.

TIP ONE

Start slow

Begin at a low intensity for about 10 minutes on the first day and progress at a pace that is safe and manageable for you. Remember, fitness is a lifelong journey, not a one-time achievement.

TIP TWO

Plan it

Scheduling time for physical activity helps prevent procrastination and last-minute cancellations. Set yourself a plan for the next week—achievable, small tasks you can build on.

TIP THREE

Understand parameters to improve

A parameter is any variable that can be adjusted to change the difficulty of the exercise—think time, weight, resistance, number of repetitions... even incline. Include careful adjustments to parameters in your plan—don't try and change everything at once. 'Time' is a great place to start by trying to do a little more each day, building up to 30 minutes.

TIP FOUR

Play your own game

Comparing yourself to others can be a source of anxiety when it comes to exercise. But consistency—not intensity—is key to overcoming those feelings. Stick to the plan.

TIP FIVE

Don't forget everyday physical activity

You don't have to start jogging or going to a gym. Look for simple opportunities to add more movement into your daily life. Taking 5 minutes for a bit of gardening, a walk to the shops, or a mindful stretch can add up when you add a few sessions throughout the day.



How to increase your activity safely

The last thing you want is to overdo it and end up on the couch nursing an injury.

WARM UP AND COOL DOWN

Warm up with movements similar to the activity you're about to do—for example: circling your arms mindfully before swimming, or walking before jogging. Then, cool down with stretches to relax and lengthen muscles.

MIX IT UP

To avoid overuse injuries and stay motivated try to mix it up. Change surroundings, activity or time of day to keep things interesting.

SEEK GUIDANCE

Consider discussing your goals to increase your activity levels with a GP, physiotherapist, exercise physiologist or personal trainer. We're all different and a professional can help personalise a plan that considers your age, ability, goals and activity preferences while ensuring safety.

RESPECT YOUR LIMITS

Be wary of too much, too fast, too soon. Remember the long game and even be prepared to 'under do it' in the early stages of increasing activity or trying something new.

DON'T FORGET TO REST

Work some rest and recovery into your plan. 'Off days' help prevent injury and prepare you for the next day's activity!

If you have any concerns or questions about your health before undertaking any physical activity, please consult with a physician or health-care professional first.

www.getactive.vic.gov.au

