

Taking fitness on the road

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It can be a real challenge to set up and follow an exercise routine at home. Then — when you go on a business trip or vacation — it may seem even harder to stick to your workout schedule. Yet it can work if you plan ahead.

Make exercise a priority

There are many ways to build activity into your travels. Here are just a few ideas:^{1,2}

- 1. Phone ahead to ask what's available.** Most hotels understand the fitness concerns of today's clients. Call your hotel to find out if they have a workout room or swimming pool. If not, ask if they offer deals with a local gym for their guests.

Staying with friends or relatives? Find out if they exercise or go to a gym. Tell them you'd like to join in. If it's a club with yoga, spinning or other classes, check to see if there's a daily fee or if you can go as a one-time free guest.
- 2. Get to know the area.** Find out about nearby parks, walking paths, bike rentals, hiking areas, running trails and such. You can research this online or call your hotel.
- 3. Pack smartly.** Bring workout clothes. That eliminates one good excuse for not exercising right off the bat! Then consider packing a jump rope or resistance bands. They're both lightweight and practical. A jump rope enables you to get a good cardio workout in a small space. And resistance bands can be used for strength training.
- 4. Take a drop-in class.** If you belong to a gym at home, a health club at your destination may honor that membership. If not, you can always try a drop-in, pay-as-you-go class or daily membership.

- 5. Look into local events and groups.** Is there a mini-marathon where you're heading? A bike race? A walking club? Nature hike? Again, contact your hotel to find out or go online to search for local activities. Check out www.active.com for listings of activities in different locations.
- 6. Pack a workout video.** Many hotels offer a DVD player in your room. Just bring your favorite video and have a "private class" whenever it's convenient. If you bring a laptop, you can buy or take a trial subscription to a site like www.yogavibes.com for yoga classes online.
- 7. Get thee to the mall.** Mall walking is a good workout when the weather's bad or you don't know the area and want to feel secure. You may meet some other walkers or just window shop your way through a few laps.
- 8. Avoid taxi lines.** Walk to the places you want or need to be. Or take a hop-on, hop-off tour bus that enables you to ride around town, get some exercise and dodge pricey cab rides.
- 9. Use the beach for more than a suntan.** If your travels include beach or pool time, keep in mind that swimming and other poolside, beach and water sports are great exercise.
- 10. Be flexible.** When you're traveling, you may not have time for your full workout at one time. Try breaking your workout into a few segments. Also, be open to something new. While you may be an avid cyclist at home, you might not have the equipment you need while traveling. So change your routine.

Enjoy your travels... and stay fit, too. It can work!

¹www.active.com

²www.usatoday.com