

Take Your Workout Outside

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There is no better place to be than the great outdoors. The fresh air, sunlight and beautiful scenery inspire me to exercise more. One of the best parts of summer is the longer days, which give you more time to fit in some outdoor exercise. Bringing your workout outside has psychological benefits and can eliminate fitness boredom, resulting in a better workout.

Researchers from the Peninsula College of Medicine and Dentistry in Devon, UK monitored the exercise regimes of over 800 adults and proved that exercising outdoors is more beneficial than an indoor workout. According to a report by The Telegraph, the study found that stepping into the fresh air to exercise is not only physically beneficial, but can also lower levels of anger, confusion, depression, and tension. People who exercised outside felt more revitalised and more energetic. You don't need to completely ditch your gym membership, but do try to get outside to work out every once in a while (taking proper precautions when the weather's particularly hot, of course).

Want to burn more calories? Aside from the psychological benefits of exercising outdoors, medical research has proven that outdoor running burns 5-10 percent more calories than running on a treadmill (the number ranges depending on your running pace). What accounts for this difference? The treadmill does some of the work by helping pull your feet back underneath your body. When you run on a treadmill, you also don't have to overcome wind resistance, natural elevation, or a difference in terrain that you will experience outdoors.

Here is how you can get in the best shape this summer:

- 1) **Run in the early AM or in the evening.** To avoid the worst heat of the day (between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m.) aim to run earlier in the mornings or in the evening.
- 2) **Turn your weekend hobby into a workout.** While at the beach, lake, or pool kick your legs for a leg workout and pump those arms. Pool running is one of the most effective workouts and it is fun! Try and do this workout for 20-30 minutes to work your cardiovascular system and burn calories.
- 3) **Join an Outdoor Fitness Program.** Search your town to see if there is an outdoor fitness bootcamp. In a 1-hour fitness bootcamp you can burn 600-800 calories! Now that is an hour well spent in the great outdoors! Usually fitness bootcamps are taught by experienced certified trainers with worlds of experience helping clients reach their goals. This is a cost-effective way to be professionally trained in the great outdoors.
- 4) **Create your own beach body workout.** While at the beach, focus on your gambs by running in the sand. Exercising in the sand will not only increase your calorie burn but also eliminate workout boredom. Some great time-effective beach exercises with proven results include:
 - A) **Walking lunges.** Aim to walk 200-400 yards. This exercise works your quadriceps, hamstrings, and glutes and is the most effective way to work your larger muscles.
 - B) **Jump Squats.** Start at 1 set of 18 and work your way to 3 sets of 18. This exercise will work your quadriceps, hamstring, glutes, and core.
 - C) **High knees.** Go for 200-400 yards of high knees to work your hamstrings.
 - D) **The Beach Plank.** Get on your forearms in a push-up position and hold the plank for 20 seconds to 1 minute. Your body should be in a straight line from head to toe. This exercise works your total core, which includes your back, obliques, and rectus abdominus.

Bonus Stay Cool Tips:

- 1) **Drink plenty of water.** To avoid dehydration, remember to drink before, during, and after your workout.

2) **Eat a small meal before your workout.** 45 minutes to 1 hour before your workout eat an apple and a piece of low-fat cheese. This is a great pre workout mini meal. Apples are high in fiber and will give your glycemic index a boost, and cheese has protein in it. Protein is the building block of cells. This is a great combination to supply you with energy for your workout.

Have a great workout outdoors, knowing you are reaping the psychological and physical benefits and eliminating your boredom by enjoying the scenery around you! Remember: you can get in your best summer shape. It all starts with you. Today is a new day, so hurry up and make a change. You will be thankful you did!

Check out some of Tara's favorite outdoor fitness moves!

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T3c5RdsPnHQ>