



## How to stay fit during the winter and not let your fitness goals hibernate because of the cold

Winter is steadily drawing closer, and at this point, it can be oh so tempting to snuggle up in front of the TV every night with a cup of hot chocolate and catching up on Netflix instead of going out for that evening run.

Seasons come and go, so even if you dread dragging yourself to the gym during the colder months, just remember that summer's not too far away and all the hard work you put in will pay dividends when the sun is shining.

To help you hit your fitness goals this winter, here are 15 ways to inspire yourself to exercise, regardless of the weather.

### Winter training motivation tips

#### 1. Invest in winter activewear

There's nothing worse than freezing your butt off when exercising. When you first step out for your winter run, the chill goes straight to your bones but then you warm up almost instantly. Even if you just come out of a cardio burst class, you might be so hot and sweaty that you think it's warmer than it actually is! That's when you can get sick. What's the trick then you ask, for winter workouts? Layers!

If you want to stay on track as the temperature drops then you need to start working out with layers. You need a selection of complimentary items of clothing that you can add and remove easily when on the go. You'll also want to opt for lightweight pieces where possible so they can be tied around the waist or thrown in your backpack without weighing you down.

## **2. Make a plan**

A lack of planning leads to a lack of exercise. If you try and wing it you'll soon find you're not doing much in the way of exercise. I don't blame you, you're far from the only person who, given the choice between a windswept workout or a winter warmer and time on the couch, chooses the latter.

However, if you plan your workouts in advance (with alternatives for unpredictable weather), your chances of following through increase dramatically. One of the key aspects about working out in winter is to make sure that you help your body recover well. Exercise recovery is so important when the seasons change – for example, if you're used to attending a hot yoga class, make sure to stretch appropriately after so that your muscles don't contract after feeling so loose and warm during your session.

## **3. Stay inside**

If you've got used to exercising outdoors throughout the summer, then start thinking about how you can move your training indoors. Can you switch from a 30-minute run to a 20-minute HIIT session, for example?

The key is to be flexible – if you're moving from the wide-open spaces of the outdoors to a more confined setting then you may need to change things up to keep yourself on track.

If you wanted to go for a run but it's pouring down outside then instead of doing nothing, why not do a simple bodyweight workout in your living room? Work up a sweat with indoor circuit training and you'll soon be longing for the cooling winter breeze.

## **4. Book a class or get a trainer**

Sometimes you have to set that training session in stone to keep your progress on track. By booking a class or a session with a trainer, you drastically reduce the chances of bailing on your winter exercise plan.

Knowing that someone else is waiting on you is often enough of a motivator to ensure you don't miss out. If you find yourself doing less and less exercise as the weather gets colder, then maybe it's time you booked a block of classes or personal training sessions to blitz your way through the winter.

## **5. Learn a new sport or skill**

Find yourself falling off the wagon as the sleet, hail and snow roll into town? Reinvigorate yourself by learning a new sport or skill, not only is this a great excuse to meet new people and get social, which definitely increases the fun factor compared to training alone but there is also the great sense of accomplishment that comes with learning something new.

Whether you want to try out a martial arts class, team sport or have always fancied rock climbing, grab a few friends and give something new a try this winter.

## **6. Remember, summer is coming**

If winter is here, then that means summer is just around the corner.

Don't forget the 'beach body' or active holiday where you know you'll want to be looking good, feeling good and able to keep up and stay strong.

That's motivation enough to keep you going with your fitness routine during winter. It's the hard work and effort you put in now that will spell the difference in how you look, and feel come the summer months.

Try viewing winter as preparation for summer and use this as the motivation you need to continue working out during winter.

### **7. Get a workout buddy**

Everyone needs a friend to pick you up when you're down, tell you how great you're doing or drag your lazy ass to the gym when you can't be bothered!

Getting a workout buddy who has similar goals and a similar fitness level to you is a great way to stay motivated throughout the winter. It will reduce the chance of you skipping a workout when you don't really feel like it and keep you training hard even when it's the last thing you feel like doing.

### **8. Create new habits**

It's a lot easier to get out and be active when the sun is shining and it's a joy to be outside. However, when winter rolls around, getting outside to train becomes more and more difficult.

This is where habits come in. By creating new habits like packing your gym stuff the night before, you make sure that you follow through with action. When you pre-pack your gym kit you have no excuse for forgetting to take it to work with you. Give it a try and see for yourself how powerful habits can be.

### **9. Remind yourself why it's important**

You're working out because you have a goal – it could be to be fitter, faster, leaner, stronger, etc. Whatever it is, you have a reason and it was important enough to spur you into action in the first place.

As you begin to progress on your fitness journey, it can be easy to get lost in it all and lose motivation especially when you're uncomfortable, freezing, and just want a hot shower. It's important to take the time to remind yourself why you started in the first place.

### **10. Challenge yourself**

Challenges are tough, hard and sometimes painful (in a good way), but they also fill you with a sense of pride, accomplishment and serve to show you how you're capable of more than you thought possible.

So, if in the depths of winter, you're struggling to get any exercise done and motivation is wearing off, why not set yourself a challenge? Aim to push yourself and see where your limits really lie.

As for what your challenge could be – you could aim to compete in a race, learn a difficult skill, set a new personal best or any number of other things.

### **11. Take a before photo**

They say a picture is worth a thousand words, and this is particularly true when it comes to fitness. Being able to definitively see the progress you've made is insanely powerful and will be a constant reminder of the power you have for change.

Take a photo of yourself from a couple of angles (front, back, side) as winter begins to set in, then spend the season working hard, taking additional photos monthly to get a visual snapshot of how far you've come. Do it right and you'll never struggle to work out during winter again.

### **12. Track your progress**

Building from the previous point, tracking your progress shows you exactly how far you've come and will inspire you to keep going.

The funny thing is that because you see yourself every day, it can be hard to spot the changes that are happening, but by tracking your progress you get real proof of what's going on and can rest assured that you're progressing towards your goal even if sometimes you don't feel like it.

Good stats to track are your weight, waist circumference and workout performance.

### **13. Become accountable**

Sometimes internal motivation just isn't enough and that's ok. If it's already pitch-black outside by the time you leave the office, the last thing you want to do is go home into the warmth just to turn back around and go out to exercise.

This is where accountability comes into play. As by becoming accountable to someone else (a workout buddy, personal trainer) or a group of people (a sports team, class) you increase your chances of following through. So, if you're struggling to get inspired to train this winter, try using accountability to keep you on the right path to reach your goals.

### **14. Update your playlist**

Music is a great motivator and can help to distract you from fatigue. As it gets colder and darker outside, your playlist needs to step it up to keep you going! As the seasons begin to change take the time to revamp your playlist and reap the benefits.

### **15. Sign up for a charity event**

Struggling to get inspired? Why not do a good deed and get fit at the same time?

Signing up for charity run is a fantastic way to not only contribute to a cause you believe in but also keep you on the straight and narrow when it comes to your training. Knowing that you have so many people relying on you will keep your head in the game regardless of what the weather outside is like.

Not to mention charity events often have a great sense of community and comradery, meaning you'll be surrounded by like-minded people who will help you train and stay motivated.

Let's be honest, it's going to get cold whether you like it or not, so there's nothing you can do to avoid that (short of leaving the country), so the best tactic is to embrace it.

Accept that it'll be cold, and you won't always feel like going outside but also know that the change in seasons doesn't have to halt your progress in its tracks. Create a shift in mindset to embrace the cold weather and work with it, instead of against it. Find activities you can enjoy in the cold or just simply shift your exercise indoors. You can do it.

<https://www.deleisure.com/how-to-stay-fit-during-the-winter-and-not-let-your-fitness-goals-hibernate-because-of-the-cold/>