

# *decades of fitness*

Want to feel healthy and energetic at any age? According to fitness editor **Martha Lourey-Bird** it's about tailoring exercise to suit the changes in your lifestyle. Here's how.



# TEENS

Exercise has to be enjoyable, especially for teenagers, as it helps them establish lifelong habits. Physical activity should be a positive outlet for teenagers, not a form of punishment, so try these ideas.

**WEEKLY:** Get a mixed group of friends together for a weekly social game of tennis, basketball or soccer.

**SEASONAL:** Join a different competitive sport each summer and winter. Team sports are also good for confidence and developing social skills.

**DAILY:** Incorporate incidental exercise into daily routines by riding to school, exercising the family pet, walking to the bus stop, train station or shops.

**YEARLY:** Ask for active birthday and Christmas gifts such as surf lessons, dance classes or even a new bike.

**BEST EXERCISE CHOICE:** Team sports.

**20s** In your 20s, you're likely to have a bit of spare cash and extra time, so you can probably afford to splurge a little on your exercise regime. You might try a personal trainer, gym membership or active weekend escapes. Other ways to stay active and maintain your fitness might include:

- Socialise and exercise at the same time with group exercise or dance classes, barefoot bowls or bootcamp.
- Use your me-time to train for specific goals such as a fun run, half-marathon, charity distance event or triathlon.
- Set up exercise opportunities within your work place such as a regular lunchtime power walk, touch footy match or revitalising yoga breaks.

**BEST EXERCISE CHOICE:** High intensity cardio.

**30s** Your 30s can be one of the most challenging and change-filled decades of your life. Your career might be taking off, your relationships developing and you might be thinking about starting a family. Manage your time and make the most of your lifestyle by:

- Blocking out exercise dates during your week.
- Setting fitness challenges and goals to strive towards.
- Catching up with friends for a walk instead of a drink.
- If you're a new mum, post-natal exercise can resume after your six-week check-up and may need to include the baby too – such as in a mums-and-bubs yoga class, walks with baby in a front pack or pram-ercise.

**BEST EXERCISE CHOICE:** Interval training.

**40s** Time is probably tight for you this decade while you're juggling family and/or work life, so exercise needs to fit in easily.

- It may work best to get your exercise done first thing in the morning by getting up early and going for a walk, jog, ride or swim before anyone gets the chance to distract you.
- Alternatively, if you only have the opportunity to exercise during school hours, try doing regular exercise after the school drop-off, a 9.30am spin class, gym workout, power walk or run, for example.

**BEST EXERCISE CHOICE:** Combine cardio and resistance work.

**50s** This may be the first time you've had the chance to think about what exercise you may like to do, rather than doing whatever exercise fits in best with others.

- Consider taking up something you've always wanted to try but have never had the time to commit to such as a tennis lesson, dance class, yoga course or pilates.
- Exercise is important as it helps alleviate menopausal symptoms, boost wellbeing and helps control weight.

**BEST EXERCISE CHOICE:** Weight-bearing exercise.

**60s** In your 60s, exercise should be about participation rather than competition. It's about giving things a go and not necessarily winning. The more you do, the better you'll feel.

- Take up a weekly planned activity and join a group or class such as tai chi, line dancing or aqua aerobics.
- Try to be physically active every day by walking as much as possible, using the stairs and continuing to do labour intensive things like washing the car or cleaning windows.

**BEST EXERCISE CHOICE:** Light resistance with weights in a gym, at home or in the water.

**70s+** As the saying goes, 'use it or lose it'. It's so important to keep exercising now because if you let your routine go, it'll be harder to become active again.

- There are many ways you can be active whether it's through planned activities such as bowls and golf or incidental activities like walking, cleaning, housework and gardening.
- Choose something that you can manage easily and intersperse the regular, planned activities you have in the diary with daily incidental movement.

**BEST EXERCISE CHOICE:** Walking.