

Keeping Your Fitness Up During Winter

The days are getting shorter and there is definitely a nip in the air. Winter is coming.

Accepting that the cold weather is on its way and that it is going to be cold for a few months is the first step towards successfully maintaining your fitness activities during winter.

Don't let your fitness regime lapse now or you may wake up in the middle of winter and find that it has been several weeks or months since you've exercised, and it is very hard and cold to start again.

Progressively adjust your fitness routine and activities to suit the changing weather. As it gets colder and colder you need to rug up more, and you may need to change when you exercise and the kinds of activities you do. Rather than seeing this as an inconvenience or disincentive to exercising though, look at it as an opportunity to build some seasonal variety into your fitness activities. You'll be surprised at how much of a difference this kind of attitude can make to successfully adjusting and enjoying your winter exercise.

Here are some other tips:

- If possible, warm up indoors before heading outside to exercise.
- Take more time to warm up before doing your exercise sessions.
- Dress in layers so that as you warm up you can discard outer layers, and try to make sure that the layers closest to your skin are made of fabrics that keep the moisture away like microfibre fabrics.
- If you are going to exercise outside consider covering your head and hands. You can lose up to 40% of your body heat from an unprotected head, and having your head and hands covered will significantly increase your overall level of comfort.
- If you are going to exercise outside consider doing your exercise sessions in the warmest part of the day – eg, lunchtime or early-mid afternoon.
- Consider doing some exercise sessions indoors – eg, gym workouts, circuit training, aqua aerobics, swimming, indoor sports etc.
- Drink plenty of fluids. Even though you may sweat less in the cooler weather you still lose fluid during exercise.
- If exercising outdoors, warm down as soon as you are finished your session and then go indoors.
- If you are exercising in the dark make sure you wear reflective clothing so that passing traffic can see you.

Keep fit all year – including winter. It's cold but it's not too cold to keep exercising. In fact, exercising will help keep you warm.