



Outdoor gym

National
Trust

Exercising outside is priceless, even at this time of year when many of us just want to stay inside and hibernate.

Just five minutes in the outdoor gym every day can lead to an immediate improvement in mood and self esteem, as well as physical fitness.

Invigorate

This 31 day plan has been devised by personal trainers and outdoor exercise specialists Eco Fitness. It has been designed to give you a real sense of the enjoyment, freedom and refreshment you can experience from exercising outside, so you can kick start the New Year feeling energised and invigorated.



Key benefits

- Training outdoors can burn up to 20 percent more calories!
- Outdoor workouts are even more challenging due to your body having to work harder with uneven surfaces and the natural elements
- Outdoor training provides the perfect total body workout!
- Training with the uneven surfaces improves your balance and core skills
- Being outdoors provides us with essential vitamin D, which helps us maintain strong healthy bones, by retaining calcium, not forgetting a healthy glow!

Top tips for exercising outdoors

- Wear plenty of layers. Training outside is unpredictable, the weather conditions change frequently. Wearing layers insulates the body and keeps you warm
- Be seen, be safe. Wear a high-vis jacket so others can see you
- Buddy up and train with a friend or family member and make exercise a social occasion too!
- Carry a mobile phone at all times in case of emergency
- Be aware of your surroundings, the terrain, environment, wildlife and any livestock
- Water – drink plenty. Hydration is very important not only in hot conditions but in the cold too
- Towel – training with a towel is a great tool, especially when it rains!
- Gloves – will keep your hands warm and offer protection in the outdoor gym
- Torch or head torch – if you're training after work you don't want to get caught out in the dark

Whatever the weather



Don't be wet...

If it's raining, try not to be put off. Wearing the right clothing will mean you can still get outside to exercise and feel the benefit. It's just a case of being prepared. You'll still feel great afterwards.

If it snows...

Wrap up warm and keep active. The snow will bring a whole new dimension to your work out. If it snows during January, adapt the plan accordingly. Also;

- walking in the snow is more challenging to your core
- snowballing is great fun for all ages and a great upper body workout too
- why not dust off the sledge, sledging up and down hills is the perfect way to burn calories

The plan

Much of the activity in the 31 day plan is based around walking, jogging and running.

But, if you suffer from dodgy knees, have any hip or general joint problems, then we recommend trying Nordic Walking. It reduces the strain on joints by 30 percent plus it will burn over 40 percent more energy than ordinary walking, and give you a total body work-out, see www.nordicwalking.co.uk

Calorie counting

If you want to know what calories you're burning, visit <http://www.webmd.com/diet/healthtool-fitness-calorie-counter>



Starting off

Find your nearest green outdoor space

Warming up

Before any exercise (outside of walking) follow these basic steps.

Warm up by walking briskly for 5-10 minutes.

Perform the exercises opposite for 60 seconds each:



Squat reach

Stand with your feet hip width apart with your arms out in front at shoulder height. Squat down as though you are going to sit on a bench, moving your arms down to your sides. As you reach the bottom of the



squat, extend your arms back behind you; push down through your heels. Then return to a standing position and swing your arms forwards and raise them above your head. Repeat.



Half jacks

Stand with your feet together, arms by your side. Step your left leg out to the side and raise your left arm to the side at the same time. Do not take your arm above shoulder height. Return to the start position and repeat on the right side.



Rotations

Stand with both arms out to the front at chest height, keep facing forward and maintain a good posture. Swing both your arms to the left and then to the right. Repeat.



Step backs

Stand tall with your arms at your sides, maintaining a good posture. Step back with your left leg and raise both arms over your head and return to the start position. Then, repeat on the opposite side.

Cooling down

Cool down by jogging or walking slowly for 5 minutes.

Hold each of the stretches opposite for 30-45 seconds:



Quad stretch

Stand side or face on to a tree, park bench, or wall. Place your left hand onto the tree for balance. Raise your right foot behind you and hold it in your right hand. Keep your knees together; maintain a good posture whilst pulling your foot towards your bottom. Repeat on the opposite side.



Hamstrings

Stand with one leg just in front of the other. Bend your back knee and rest your weight on the bent knee. Tilt your hips forwards at the same time push your bottom backwards. Repeat on the opposite side.



Triceps and calves

Standing tall take a step back with your left foot, keeping your left leg straight, slightly bend your right leg, gently push down through your left heel. At the same time, raise both arms above your head. Bend your right arm, then bend your left arm to hold your right elbow with your left hand and gently push your elbow behind your head to stretch your triceps. Reach down towards the middle of your back with your right hand. Repeat on the opposite side.



Chest and shoulders

Stand with your feet hip width apart. Maintaining a good posture, place your palms at the base of your back, elbows pointing behind you moving your shoulder blades down and your chest open. Repeat.



Hip flexors

Stand with your feet together. Hands on your hips, keep your back straight. Step forward with your left leg and lower your right knee to the ground behind you. Maintain a good posture. Repeat on the opposite side.



31 day exercise plan

National
Trust

Happy New Year!

Get outside to get rid of that fuzzy head.
Breathe in some fresh air and enjoy!

Week 1

1

Long walk with family and friends
– ah yes, you won't even notice you're exercising
40-60 minutes

2

Experience something different outdoors – the options are endless. If you have a bike, we suggest wrapping up and going for a 60 minute cycle ride with friends or family. Search www.nationaltrust.org.uk/walks where there are over 220 walking trails to choose from.

3

Warm up
5-10 minutes
Walk, jog or run
20-30 minutes
Cool down

4

Power walk
20-30 minutes

- Standing tall, as you walk, roll through the whole of your lead foot, heel to toe action and swing your opposing arms whilst maintaining a good posture
- Swinging your arms will help to increase your overall speed, as well as ensuring a complete body workout

Power walking is a low impact alternative to jogging that will help to strengthen your bones and help protect against osteoporosis.

Cool down

5

Warm up
5-10 minutes
Walk, jog or run 30 minutes to include:
20 seconds (secs) jumping jacks
(Total body workout, cardio and coordination)

- Stand with your legs together and arms by your sides
- Jump opening your legs to shoulder width apart with your arms raised just above your shoulders to the side
- Jump back to the start position
- Repeat

20 secs squats

- Stand with your feet hip width apart, arms by your sides
- Push your hips backwards, as you would to sit in a chair, keeping the weight in your heels and lower. Ensure your knees remain behind your toes and lift your arms in front of you to shoulder height
- Return to the start position
- Repeat

20 secs spotty dogs

- Stand tall with your feet together arms by your side
- Step forward with your left foot and raise your right arm
- Step or jump right foot forward and raise your left arm
- Repeat, be sure not to over stride

20 secs alternative lunges

- Stand with your feet together. Hands on your hips, keep your back straight
- Step forward with your left leg and bend both legs until both knees are approximately at 90 degrees to the ground
- Keep the weight on your front heel without letting your knee go too far past your toes
- Return to the start position
- Repeat on the opposite side

Repeat x 6
Cool down

6

Reward yourself with a rest day. Well done you! Six days in and going well.

7

Lunch time
Warm up
5-10 minutes
Power walk
20 minutes or **skipping intervals** to include skipping on the spot for 20 secs (no rope required).

- Stand with feet shoulder-width apart, knees slightly bent, arms at a comfortable angle four to six inches from your sides, elbows slightly bent
- Maintain a good posture: shoulders should be down and back, chest up and out, back straight
- Jump or skip lightly on the spot, rotating your wrists and forearms to mimic the movement of a skipping rope

Power walk
for 60 secs
Repeat x 12
Cool down

Happy New Year!



Week 2

8

Warm up
5-10 minutes
Walk, jog or run
30-40 minutes to include:
30 secs jumping jacks
30 secs squats
30 secs spotty dogs
30 secs alternate lunges
Repeat x 6
Cool down

9

A Fitness Revolution
Experience something different outdoors – the options are endless.
Try Nordic Walking, see www.nordicwalking.co.uk or visit www.nationaltrust.org.uk/walks

10

Warm up
5-10 minutes
Power walk or jog or run, 20-30 minutes to include:
30 secs tree press ups

- Find a stable tree, stand directly in front of the tree
- Keeping your hands shoulder width apart, place hands directly onto the tree, maintain a good posture, lower yourself towards the tree then push away
- Repeat

30 secs tricep dips on a bench

- Sit on the edge of a bench with your hands either side of your hips
- Slide yourself forward until you are supporting yourself with your hands. Bend your elbows until your upper arms are almost parallel to the ground
- Return to the starting position
- Repeat

Repeat press up and dips x 3
Cool down

Rest – Yippee!!

11

Head for the hills (or find some park steps if you're in Norfolk!)
Warm up
5-10 minutes
Beginners:
Power walk to the top of the hill and recover on the way down
Repeat x 4
Cool Down
Intermediate:
Jumping jacks x 10
Jog to the top of the hill recover on the way down
Repeat x 6
Cool down

12

13

Rest – twice in one week, yep, you deserve it as we're nearly two weeks in!

14

Warm up
5-10 minutes
Power walk, jog or run 30 minutes
Interval workout

- Pick a landmark tree, lamppost, bench or gate in the distance
- Increase your pace until you reach it
- Recover for 1-2 minutes

Repeat x 6
Cool down
5-10 minutes
Or
30 minutes moderate walk
Cool down

Tricep dips



Tree press ups



Week 3

15

Warm up
5-10 minutes
Walk, jog or run
40-50 minutes to include:
45 secs jumping jacks
45 secs squats
45 secs spotty dogs
45 secs alternate lunges
45 secs tree press ups
Repeat x 4
Cool down

16

Wake up your body, check out your local area for outdoor fitness workouts in a green area near you. A brilliant way to shape up, make new friends and have fun in the great outdoors. Or for something a little gentler why not try Tai Chi. The first, and most familiar, aspect of Tai Chi Chuan is the Hand Form. This is the series of slow movements you see performed in the parks, in China, early in the morning. There are many benefits to be gained from practising the Hand Form. Tai Chi Chuan is accessible to all ages and physical abilities and can be practised on many levels, from a simple 'meditative' exercise to a realistic martial art. For more information visit www.taichifinder.co.uk

17

Warm up
5-10 minutes
Power walk or jog or run, 20-30 minutes to include:
45 secs tree press ups
45 secs mountain climbers
• Start from a press up position with your hands on a bench, step or the grass
• Lift your right foot off the floor and slowly raise your knee towards your chest. Return to the starting position before repeating on the left side
• Repeat
45 secs tricep dips on a bench
45 secs step ups on a bench
• Stand in front of a bench, step or tree trunk
• Starting with your left leg, step up onto the bench, then step up with your right leg, step down with your left leg and down with your right leg. (Make sure your heel doesn't hang off the edge of the bench)

• Maintain a good posture throughout; keep your back straight and abs in
• Make sure to swap your lead leg half way through
Repeat x 4
Cool down

18

Rest day – or for those that are really getting into their stride:
Moderate 30 minute walk or jog (can be fitted into your lunch hour)
Swing your arms to ensure an upper body workout.
Cool down

Squats



19

Head for the hills!
(Choose a hill at least 50 metres in length) – or find a park with some steps!
Warm up
5-10 minutes
Beginners:
Power walk to the top of the hill, perform 5 squats and recover on the way down
Repeat x 4
Cool down
Intermediate:
Jumping jacks x 15
Jog to top of the hill, perform 15 squats and recover on the way down
Repeat x 10
Cool down

Rest day

20

21

Brisk walk
30 minutes
Remember to swing those arms!

Week 4

22

Warm up
5-10 minutes
50- 60 minute walk, jog, or run to include:
60 secs jumping jacks
60 secs squats
60 secs spotty dogs
60 secs alternate lunges
60 secs tree press ups
Repeat x 6
Cool down

23

Why not try Geocaching?
Geocaching is a treasure hunting game where you use a GPS to hide and seek containers with other participants in the activity. There are various geocaching trails on National Trust land. See www.geocaching.com for more information. Also, consider orienteering. Orienteering is a challenging outdoor adventure sport that exercises both the mind and the body. The aim is to navigate in sequence between control points marked on a unique orienteering map and decide the best route to complete the course in the quickest time. It does not matter how young, old or fit you are, as you can walk, jog or run the course and progress at your own pace. See www.britishorienteering.org.uk

24

Warm up
5-10 minutes
Power walk or jog 40-50 minutes to include:
60 secs tree press ups
60 secs mountain climbers
60 secs tricep dips
60 secs step ups on bench
60 secs shadow jabs
Repeat x 3

- Standing tall, with one foot in front of the other, tightly clench your fists and bring them to chest height. Jab your right arm forwards at shoulder height, then bring it back to the start position, and repeat with your left arm.
- Be sure not to over extend the arms

Cool down

25

Rest day – or moderate 20-30 minute walk, jog or run (can be fitted in to your lunch hour).
Swing your arms to ensure a total body workout
Cool down

26

Head for the hills!
(Choose a hill at least 50 metres in length) – or find a park with some steps!
Warm up
5-10 minutes

Beginners:
Jumping jacks x 10
Power walk to the top of the hill perform 5 squats and recover on the way down
Repeat x 6
Cool down

Intermediate:
Jumping jacks x 20
Jog to top of the hill, perform 20 squats Recover on the way down
Repeat x 10
Cool down

27

Rest day

Shadow jabs



28

Brisk walk
30 minutes

Week 5

29

Warm up
5-10 minutes
Power walk, jog or run 30 minutes
Interval workout

- Pick a landmark tree, lamppost, bench or gate in the distance
- Increase your pace until you reach it
- Recover for 30 seconds – 1 minute

Repeat x 6

Cool down
5-10 minutes
Or 60-90 minute
moderate walk

30

The challenge
Cycle, exercise, cycle
cycle to your chosen green venue (approx 20-30minutes)
Complete a 30 minute brisk walk, jog or run and cycle home.
Cool down
Enjoy a long soak in the bath as a reward!
Other challenging activities available at National Trust sites include climbing or surfing. Or, for something still challenging, but a little more sedate, why not try golf? Visit www.nationaltrust.org.uk/visit/activities and www.nationaltrust.org.uk/outdoors

31

Brisk walk
30 minutes
Congratulations!
Phew – give yourself a pat on the back. We hope you feel invigorated and refreshed and keen to do more!

Well done everyone! This isn't the end it is just the beginning. Set yourself a goal, keep it realistic. Walk, jog or run 5 or 10k by the end of March. You can do it!

Repeat weeks three and four for the next few weeks, increasing the overall time you exercise by no more than 10 percent each week. Think about different goals to aim for throughout the year, and adapt the plan accordingly to help you reach your target.

Before starting any form of physical exercise, it is always advisable to check suitability with your Doctor.



If you require this information in alternative formats please call 0844 800 4955 or email press.office@nationaltrust.org.uk



About Eco Fitness

Jennie Antell and Paul Ryman are both qualified personal trainers with a passion for outdoor fitness. Eco Fitness designs outdoor exercise programmes to suit all levels of fitness and to suit individual goals. Eco Fitness hosts events which are suitable for all abilities to attend including; outdoor workouts, bootcamps and fun runs, jogs and walks.

For more information visit www.ecofitness.co.uk