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Ditch the gym every day of the week

Mar 02, 2011



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A week of outdoor workouts

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Do you struggle to drag yourself into the gym on warm, sunny days? Don't bother. Exercising outdoors – a literal breath of fresh air – can reinvigorate a previously “blah” fitness plan and help you avoid the dreaded plateau. Every day of this no-gym workout plan includes a different cardiovascular exercise, and a strength-training exercise you can do on children's playground equipment.



Exercise guidelines: For optimal fitness results, aim to do 20 to 30 minutes of cardio and 8 to 15 repetitions

for strength-training exercises

Monday's outdoor workout

Stairs or hill climbs with lunges and squats

Start your week off with confidence by walking laps on stairs or a steep hill. If you're advanced, jog or run up and walk down. Following up with side lunges guarantees that your inner thighs will burn as much as your quads. Step to the side and squat down on that leg, keeping your other leg straight.

Form Check: Don't be shy; thrust your hips back as if you were sitting down in a chair.

Tuesday's outdoor workout

Cycling or skating with push-ups

Rev up for the rest of your week by bicycling or inline skating. Then park your bike or skates next to a park bench for push-ups. If you're a beginner, place your hands on the back of the bench. If you're intermediate or advanced, put your hands on the bench seat, or do full push-ups in the grass.

Form Check: Keep your body straight and don't lower your shoulders below your elbows.

Wednesday's outdoor workout

Walk or run with pull-ups

Energize yourself for "hump day" with a brisk walk or run along your favorite multi-use trail, then hit the monkey bars for [pull-ups](#) . If you can't do full pull-ups, use any sturdy horizontal bar that's low enough to let you push with your legs, too.

Form Check: Think of pulling the top of your chest up to the bar.

Thursday's outdoor workout

Frisbee with pendulum lunges

Celebrate making it over the hump by recruiting friends to play Frisbee. The worse their aim, the more exercise you get! Then pay them back with punishing pendulum lunges. Step forward into a lunge, push off with your front leg to stand back up, then step back on the same leg and drop into another lunge.

Form Check: Both knees should be bent at 90 degrees in the "down" position.

Friday's outdoor workout

Group or solo exercise with bench dips

Attend an outdoor exercise or dance class. If you're shy, put on your favorite music and bust a few moves at home in your backyard. Your goal is to work up a sweat and get a little bit out of breath. When you have a few minutes, sneak in a quick set of bench dips. Sit on a bench or bed, place both hands beside you, fingers facing forward, and scoot your hips forward off the seat. Lower your body straight down, then use your arms to push yourself back up.

Form Check: Keep your hips close to the seat and don't let your shoulders go lower than your elbows.

Weekend workouts

Let Saturday and Sunday be your open-choice days, when you choose your favorite outdoor activity or take a day off. This gives you the freedom to mix and match moves and stay motivated to sweat.

More outdoor exercise ideas

Swing-set fitness: Exercise with a playground swing

Swing-set [fitness](#) is a form of resistance training that is perfect for weight loss or strength training. Watch this video for examples of swing-set exercises for the legs, chest, shoulders, arms, butt, core and other muscles.



More outdoor fitness tips

- [Outdoor exercises to bust you out of your gym rut](#)
- [Fun fresh-air workouts for busy moms](#)
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