

5 ways out of an exercise rut

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(HealthDay)—Do you feel like you're stuck in second gear when it comes to exercise? Maybe you just don't experience the initial thrill of getting in shape anymore. Just as with dieting, it's possible to hit a fitness

plateau.

Here are five ways to re-engage.

To rekindle your enthusiasm for your primary fitness [activity](#), shake things up, the American College of Sports Medicine suggests. If you typically cycle on a stationary model, get outdoors on a real bike (make sure you gear up for safety with a helmet and follow all road rules). If you're used to running on the local high school track, go to a park trail instead and soak in the new scenery. If you love stress-reducing yoga, add tai chi on alternate days of the week for additional benefits.

You can rev up any form of aerobics with interval training—a great way to burn more fat. You simply alternate intervals of low- to moderate-intensity activity with high-intensity activity, starting with a 3-to-1 ratio.

Another way to challenge yourself is by setting a new fitness goal. That could be anything from bench pressing another 20 pounds to competing in your first 10K run. Draw up a plan that gets you to the goal line in stages.

Or you might pick a target area, like weak triceps, and work on muscle definition through strength training. Have you been neglecting flexibility and balance? Turn your attention to these key [fitness](#) components and work with a trainer or take a class to improve them.

Above all, don't be discouraged when taking up a new activity or a new twist—enjoy the journey to mastering it.

More information: The American College of Sports Medicine has more suggestions for [rebooting your exercise regimen to reap more fitness benefits](#).

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